

Farbrengen
With The
Rebbe

כז

11 Nissan 5742

Sicha 3

It is expected of every person since God has given him years of life, to always grow. Primarily to grow in matters of the soul – spiritual pursuits, which comes together with growing a year older. The Alter Rebbe emphasizes in Tanya that “the body is secondary and the soul is primary.” The primary growth must be that of the soul, and as a result, the body grows as well.

Many ask about retirement. Unfortunately there are those who don’t even ask, but come to their own conclusions – although, in fact, the question has a proper answer.

They say that since one has become a year older – and he is no longer as strong and energetic as he was a year earlier – this gives him the right to yield and decrease in his activities which are relevant to his mission in life.

How can this be in this country which was founded upon an energetic work ethic, and where it has been turned into an ideal to exert oneself with vigor?

-At times this goal is exaggerated and taken to an extreme – when the object of the pursuit is limited to financial and bodily matters, and that becomes the primary purpose in life.-

By contrast, this same country has developed the custom, that when a person becomes forty-some years old, surely when he turns fifty, and certainly when he’s fifty-something, he “earns” the privilege to think about retirement, to decrease his activities which benefit humanity – the true purpose for which he was created.

And when he is asked: Wasn’t “Man was created to toil,” to spread goodness in God’s world? – So if God gave you fifty years, and then He gives you a fifty-first year, or sixty years, and then a sixty-first year, this is proof that you still have something to accomplish in this world.

It is not, God forbid, to be used as an excuse to do less of the primary mission in life –to reveal Godliness in the world, by revealing the humanity within each person. One may not decrease such activity and justify it simply because he noticed

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

in his birth certificate that he aged another year, that he's now 51 or 61 years old, and that somehow justifies a decrease in activity!

When he is asked: What will you do with your life now? He says, "I toiled until age 50; now I'll enjoy the fruits of my labor!"

The Torah of Truth informs him – and it is also the Torah of Life, a guide for life –that this world was created only for 'toil.' So long as God places a soul within him and gives him life, even if he's already lived fifty years – and Torah itself calls fifty years 'an eternity' – or even if he's lived sixty years – with all the significance that the Talmud gives to sixty years – he must continue to be active! The fact that he has been granted life is proof positive that he must do no less than until now.

On the contrary, since his body grew another year in age, the soul as primary, must grow many times more than the body.

And with what does one satisfy the soul – what 'food' and 'drink' nourishes the soul? Every intelligent person understands that the soul is not nourished by a bit more gold or silver, or even a lot more gold and silver, which would enable the person to eat and drink more and indulge in material pleasures – permissible pleasures of course, which don't cause harm to others; the end result however, would be the pursuit of material satisfaction. God does, in fact, want us to be happy, to have everything we need, to live without concerns.

– This is regarding physical concerns, but in spiritual growth, one may never be content. One can never be satisfied with the accomplishments he achieved before he turned fifty years old before he turned sixty years old, and so on.

On the contrary, the Mishna says, "One who has one hundred wants two hundred." If this is true of physical desires, it is surely true, and much more so, of the soul's needs.

For the soul has no pleasure from gold and silver, food and drink; these are merely means which enable the soul to connect to the body, and carry out its mission,

which is spreading Godliness, by cultivating decency in people, because true decency is based on Godliness – and to do so in ever-increasing measure.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

And when a person asks, “How can I do this, when I feel my abilities at fifty-one are not what they were at age fifty, certainly not what they were at age thirty?” and how much more so if he is turning 61 or older...

The answer is found in the well-known expression mentioned earlier; “When one is connected Above, he does not fall down below.”

The explanation and inner meaning of this is, that when a person connects himself to Above, – to that which transcends time and space, then even while the individual is confined within time and space – and by God’s will he is a mortal living person, bound by the limitations of time and space, and by his body’s limitation, God nevertheless gives him the ability to connect to ‘Above,’ to God, by accepting upon himself to add in everything Godly.

– Within this material world to carry out God’s mission, not to be content with yesterday’s or this morning’s accomplishments; but in the future to continuously increase in his connection to God, to Above. And then he is assured that he will not “fall below” – although it appears his strength has decreased, this is only a perception of the physical eye; when one measures with the naked eye, using material dimensions only, this can be the impression.

But when one takes the physical and connects it “Above”...

In ordinary words: Every day the person ages, and certainly a year or a number of years, God tells him he has increased strength – he must become even stronger, because God instructs him to do so. And because God directs him so, He also grants the ability to succeed. However, to accomplish this, the person must toil and spare no effort, doing all that is dependent upon him, and then God helps him to succeed. Particularly since a Jew is not alone – he’s connected to God, and through God, to the people around him.

The Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya chapter 32, that when one considers the Godly source of another person’s soul, one cannot discern who is giving God greater satisfaction, you or he. It may be that God is more pleased with him.

This is also the explanation for Moses’ humility; Torah says “Moses was humble before all people on earth.” The Alter Rebbe, in a wonderful interpretation, explains that “all people” includes gentiles as well – Moses was humble before every single

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

person. This is the verse's literal meaning. The Alter Rebbe writes this, and it has been published and spread around the world.

How could it be that Moses – who received the Torah at Sinai, including the Seven Noahide Laws for all of mankind – felt humble before every person – even before a person whom God created as a member of another nation?

The Alter Rebbe explains in simple words which are understandable to all: Moses reasoned, "If another person had the same abilities given to me, he would have accomplished more than I have with my abilities." Raw abilities are gifted by God, however, it's the person who develops and uses them.

(In general, we haven't the ability to talk of Moses' feelings. The Alter Rebbe however, can comment – as a Jewish leader and an authority on both the exoteric Torah – as seen in his Code of Jewish Law– and on the esoteric Torah – as he authored the Tanya. And unlike in earlier times, many of his Chassidic discourses are available today in print, as well, amongst them this discourse which speaks about Moses' humility.)

It is a part of Torah and a practical lesson to every person: As one ages, and God gives him years; God – Creator of the world, who created man and his destiny – says additional years must bring additional strength! They are granted in order to increase all the good things he did previously.

One should not think that because there is a place 'below,' he could permit himself to fall to that lower place. On the contrary, he must be connected 'Above,' and because the One Above wants him to be connected, once the person makes the decision to grow, God helps him to succeed in fulfilling his promise to its fullest.

Particularly, as explained earlier, he is no more a lone individual: The fact that he is growing older and it appears to him that he's becoming physically weaker, this is only if he considers himself a separate entity.

However, when he unites with the people around him, through connecting to Our Father in Heaven who created all people on earth – when one takes into account all the people around him, he sees the youth – a young generation is growing who are part of the same body to which he belongs. So though it may seem to him – and

פארברענגען עם הרבי

might actually be true – that as an individual he became weaker, but an individual Jew is never alone – he is part of one nation.

And the same applies to all of humanity, who were created by One God, the true Oneness, from Whom everything came into existence. This is Maimonides' opening

statement in his code of Jewish law. And this statement, as everything in his code, has Halachic authority: "All existence came into being by God, and after that they remain completely dependent on God." For He gives life to all of existence, and expects of them to unite and become one with the common purpose of serving Him together as one.

And in this way, with each passing year, one becomes younger and stronger, for he is continuously increasing in good deeds.

It was once explained at length that when a person falters, God forbid, and commits a sin, the sin has no real existence – the negative is only temporary because we are guaranteed that "no soul will be lost" – he will certainly return to God. The undesirable be annulled – but much more than that, through repentance it will

be transformed into good.

A good deed however, becomes an eternal legacy, an eternal possession of the Jewish People, in addition to being the eternal possession of the individual.

And this is the straightforward response to the suggestion of retirement: One should not fear and therefore, God forbid, contemplate retirement – "retirement" meaning

to do less than before.

It is contrary to Torah, which teaches that "the deed is primary," and Torah, being eternal, is an eternal lesson for all people in all times and places, as true and strong as when it was said.

Moreover, you are assured that if you only want and decide to carry it out, you will continue to grow and advance, not only in thought and speech, but also in

התועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

increased action. For they are truly good deeds; good for the community, and therefore also good for the individual.

And through good deeds, the scale of judgment of the entire world is tilted toward the good, bringing about the ultimate goodness for the entire world, – that the world will serve God in harmony, and we will see the fulfillment of the promise, “They will be redeemed in Nissan,” in this present Nissan, of the year 5742.

May the Jewish People, and the entire world, be freed from all limitations, enjoying true freedom to fulfill our Godly mission in this world, and may we do so freely, liberated from all distractions – all this, tangibly, actually, and with growing strength.

After having reached this level of strength we continue to grow in greater and deeper levels of goodness. Beginning with the reflection found in the beginning of the prayer book and recited at the beginning of each day – and this applies to Jews as well as to non-Jews – to remember and accept upon oneself the authority of God, Creator and Director of the world.

With this start, one has a successful day, a successful life – and brings success to the entire world. As mentioned before, the whole world becomes freed of all undesirable events, limitations and unrest.

We see that the world is shaking and trembling, and to those who don't believe that God created the world and oversees it, it appears that the world is about to collapse.

The truth is, however, that “The Shepherd is Great,” He leads and protects every individual and the entire world. He created the world to be an inhabited and civilized place – and “The word of God stands forever,” His plan will surely come about.

This is the great merit and privilege of every person who does everything they can,

utilizing their abilities, progressively growing from strength to strength doing more and more in pursuit of goodness and justice.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

God then blesses him, and as mentioned before, He frees him of all other worries. The only worry remaining is how to best carry out his mission in this world – which is not a true concern because he has absolute trust in God that if he will only try in earnest he will certainly succeed.

And from the onset he begins with a ‘victory march,’ as Psalm 81 begins, “Sing joyously to the God of our strength,” – God gives each person full strength, we need only receive it with true joy and gladness.

There is a famous parable, related by my father-in-law, the Rebbe: It is the common and widespread practice that when soldiers head out to battle, they embark with a victory march. One could ask: The battle has not yet begun, why do they already celebrate with song? The answer is that in order to ensure that they triumph, they must have confidence in victory before the battle begins – if they truly desire, they will surely be triumphant.

So this is a military strategy to train a person to be a successful soldier who constantly grows stronger, who goes “From strength to strength.” This makes the soldier so sure of victory, that it instills fear upon all the negative elements he must face, in fact causing that the battle need never take place at all. Rather, “fear and dread falls upon them,” for it is by “the Great strength of God’s arm” – not, God forbid, by “my own power and might.”

It is by the strength of “God’s arm,” He Who gave him the mission to reveal God’s presence in the entire world, by following Torah’s peaceful instructions, by following the Seven Noahide Laws, and for Jews, by following the 613 Mitzvos of Torah each with all its details.

In this manner we will achieve our mission with true peace, “One nation will not lift

a sword against another,” “And they will beat their swords into plowshares.” The swords and equipment intended for military use will instead be used to harvest food to feed the world.

This is a mission for all of mankind, and it is also the particular mission of every individual, as pointed out in commentaries that the Ten Commandments – the words which commenced the giving of the Torah, were all addressed in singular

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

form: "I am Lord your God," and the other commandments are addressed in the singular rather than in plural form. This underscores that the commandments were directed to each person as an individual, just as God took every individual Jew out of Egypt.

And just as He took each person out of Egypt's physical constraints, He took them out of all spiritual constraints.

And this becomes an eternal lesson in our daily lives, that we connect to "I am the Lord your God" the name 'Elokim,' referring to the Divine strength within nature which orchestrates the world and every detail of creation – it is not, God forbid, the person's own strength.

And the result is: "Sing joyously to the God of our strength," and we go into "battle" with a victory march. Then the Shofar will sound, as Rabbi Saadia Gaon explains, the Shofar's sounding alludes to the Shofar sounded at the coronation of a king, which is related to Rosh Hashanah, when God is crowned as King of Israel and the entire world – until "every creation recognizes that You are the Creator."

With joy and enthusiasm, as mentioned before, with anything distracting from this mission completely silenced, and we progress in all good things – which begins first by reflecting on and acknowledging God, as mentioned earlier.

This will help to make the world – even before Moshiach's coming – worthy and prepared to accept Moshiach's ways, for he will lead the world "with righteousness

he will gird his loins" along with all the prophecies and blessings including "The wolf will live with the sheep," as explained in Maimonides' Laws of Kings and their Wars.

By Divine Providence, this section is known only as "The Laws of Kings" – without the mention of 'wars.' Maimonides explains that the wolf and the lamb are a metaphor that all the nations will dwell in harmony.

However, in his Letter on Resurrection he writes: The metaphor of "nations dwelling in harmony" will surely happen, yet it is possible the prophecy will be fulfilled literally, as well, – wolves dwelling with sheep, peace amongst all animals, as well.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

The literal meaning of the verse was later confirmed, first by Nachmanides, then in Kabbala and Chassidism, that in addition to its allegorical meaning, we will also experience what Maimonides presented in his Letter on the Resurrection – the literal fulfillment of this prophecy.

Torah instructs that before Shabbos – and the Redemption is compared to Shabbos – before Shabbos we taste of the food which was prepared for Shabbos, and not just one food, but of every dish, as the Alter Rebbe says in his Code of Jewish law.

May we merit, by increasing in all the above activities with added strength, that we taste today – certainly no later than tomorrow, and surely no later than that – of all the “delicacies” of the future, even during this present era which is designed “to toil.”

This will help us increase in our deeds, as Maimonides writes that all the prophecies of physical reward mentioned in the Torah – their true purpose is to allow ever greater tranquility to strive in Torah and Mitzvos. When this is fulfilled, it will result in the best, most important and most necessary action – even in these days when “the world is covered in darkness, and the nations in obscurity” – the coming of Moshiach “Today, if you obey My voice,” may it be literally today.

May we merit to “Go in God’s light” the light emanating from Godliness, speedily in our days, in the words of Maimonides: “May they immediately be redeemed!”

L’chaim.



Sicha 4

We mentioned before that “action is the essential thing.” There are many different things that every person must accomplish in his life. That is also why his physical needs, too, are divided into many, many details.

Everything originates from the spiritual – because he has so many spiritual things to accomplish, his life is therefore also connected with many physical needs. But according to the Torah of Life itself – our guide for daily life – among Mitzvos and good deeds there are those which have a special relevance at different times.

התועודות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

They are all important and good, but precedence must be given – in English, ‘priority’ – to the ‘demands of the times’ that they not be delayed until tomorrow, and not delayed even for later the same day if it can be done immediately. One such matter is Jewish education.

We’ve discussed many times that the young generation is growing up – whether they are young in age or “young” in knowledge – they aren’t waiting around for anyone... Every moment that a young person grows demands real-time guidance and direction so that he will know how to behave the next moment.

If you are not there for him, he will lack the immediate direction that he needs now. If it is put off until tomorrow or the day after, if they are left to their own devices today, then it will need to be done tomorrow, and there won’t be time left for his next stage. And if the student himself is not asking for guidance it does not mean, as some mistakenly think, that he does not need it.

Quite the contrary: If the student isn’t demanding on his own, that is the greatest proof that he is totally lacking in education, that it has been denied to him to such an extent that he doesn’t know that he’s missing something!

Education itself comes in many forms: First and foremost is to provide a living example. The best way to influence someone is when all those around him – especially the educator himself – practice what they preach to others.

In fact, we see that God made human nature in such a way that in order to prevail upon a student to adopt a certain level of good behavior, it is necessary for the educator to be a role model for much more, because the student automatically assumes that he can’t be expected to be as great as his teacher – the teacher is older and wiser than him, and he is just a student at the beginning of his education. In order to influence the student to be good on the most basic level, the educator must show an example that is many times above the standard. The first element in education, then, is to provide a living example.

Then you must also speak to him and educate him with words, words that come from the heart, and “Words that come from the heart enter the heart, and have their effect” – as brought down in Rabbeinu Tam’s Sefer HaYashar and in other places.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

This is all tried and true. Now, when it comes to being a living example, there are certain times that demand a specific example be shown.

We are standing now just a few days before Passover. The eight-day Festival of Passover begins with the Seder, and the Seder itself opens with an announcement: “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and conduct the Passover Seder.”

It is obvious, then – as the Code of Jewish Law rules, that thirty days before the holiday and particularly on the Shabbos immediately preceding Passover, each rabbi speaks publicly and reminds his community of the Festival laws, starting with the Mitzvah to provide food for those in need – so the call of the hour is to seek out those who unfortunately do not have all their Festival needs – and provide them, generously and with a smile, with all that they need in order to truly rejoice in the Festival.

Joy is a key element of all the three major Festivals. But especially on Passover, which is “The Time of Our Freedom,” one must certainly also be free of all worries of what one will eat on the next day of the Festival... At the very beginning of Passover, when he recites the Evening Prayers, he calls it: “The Time of our Freedom.” At that very moment, he must be able to experience freedom from all concern, because he was provided with all his holiday needs already thirty days before, or at least two weeks before, according to the two opinions in Jewish law.

Especially since we are now already a day after Shabbos Hagadol, and now it is already night, going into Monday after Shabbos Hagadol. So if there are still any who have not been completely provided for, this must be the campaign of this hour. “Action is the essential thing.” Well-meaning thoughts are not enough, And words are not enough... It must be accomplished in actuality.

And to ensure that the person will feel comfortable in accepting the assistance it must be given, as the Code of Jewish Law requires, “With a smile,” and a generous heart which will, in turn, causes one’s hand to be generous. And not only will the giver not find himself lacking by giving charity, on the contrary God, will repay him many times over, in addition to the spiritual reward he earns for fulfilling God’s mission.

התועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

Every Jew's Festival needs are prepared by God Himself, as we bless God in the Grace After Meals: "Who in His goodness, provides sustenance for the entire world, with grace, kindness and mercy." "The entire world" means all people of the world, all animals and vegetation, and even inanimate matter – the Arizal teaches that even inanimate matter has a soul and a Divine force which constantly brings it into existence and gives it life. With this we begin the Grace After Meals, in fulfillment of the verse: "And you shall eat, and you shall be sated, and you shall bless God" for providing sustenance for the entire world.

And when one provide another person's Passover needs from the money that God has given you, realize that all along God intended that money for him – God gave it to you temporarily for safekeeping. You are completing your mission by passing the charity along to its rightful owner – and you have the merit of being God's messenger.

And from one campaign to another – to all the Mitzvah campaigns, beginning with those which are especially relevant to Passover: First the Kosher Campaign, which has an added dimension during the eight days of Passover, and which carries a unique reward which is not found by any other Mitzvah: It is brought down in Jewish law in the name of the Arizal that he who is scrupulous to avoid any trace of leaven over Passover, is guaranteed from Above that no sins will come his way the rest of the year. Not, God forbid, that his free will is taken from him, for man's highest attribute is his free will – "Behold, man has become like one of us" – but even with his free will he merits a guarantee from Above that "the righteous will not be brought to sin."

And what earns him this merit?

Extra-scrupulous observance that his food and drink are Kosher for Passover, that he avoids any trace of leaven. And the holiday is brought in through the lighting of the Festival candles, with the added blessing of Shehechianu.

This is the special mission entrusted to Jewish mothers and daughters. Although when the

woman is not able to kindle the husband lights the candles instead, but in general, this is

פארברענגען עם הרבי

the special mission for which Jewish mothers and daughters have been chosen. This mission begins, as discussed many times, immediately when a girl reaches the age of education, as soon as the little girl can be taught to understand the meaning – at least the general meaning – of lighting a Festival candle.

And she recites the Festival blessing along with the special blessing recited on the first days of Passover, the blessing of Shehechyanu. And we explain to her what it means: that she is thanking God for giving us life, and for sustaining us, and for bringing us to this time so that we may fulfill God's commandment to brighten the Jewish home with a holy light – a light that all can see, even with their physical eyes, and a light “which prevents” – in the words of the Code of Jewish Law – “that no one should stumble on a piece of wood or a rock,” that no one should stumble on anything that does not belong in the Jewish home because it is not healthy for the Jewish home.

We can thus understand the great enthusiasm and joy that this little girl has when she makes the Shehechyanu blessing joyously and out loud, in addition to the first blessing, the blessing of the Festival. And her joy brings enthusiasm to her teachers and educators beginning with her father and mother.

Similarly with the other Mitzvah campaigns, first and foremost, the Campaign to Love One's Fellow Jew. This Mitzvah is emphasized right at the beginning of the Seder:

At the very beginning of the Seder, the Haggadah makes clear that “The Torah speaks of four sons” – that all four sons must be present in order to fulfill the Seder. A Jew is commanded to gather not only the wise son, but all four sons to the Seder table. And they must know that this is coming from Torah itself! – that Torah itself commands that all four sons be included, that the Seder should not, God forbid, be pushed off until they all become “wise,” neither should it be conducted without them...

Torah instructs you: If you want to conduct the Seder, Torah instructs and commands you – and gives you the abilities – to gather together the wise son and all the other three types of sons.

And when you follow Torah's command and you explain to them what the Haggadah is, and the mission that the Torah has given us to recount the story of the

התועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

Exodus from Egypt on Passover night – for according to all Halachic authorities this is a Biblical obligation, unlike mentioning the Exodus every other day of the year, concerning which there are various opinions – we then have God's promise – when all four sons are invited to the Seder, and the Seder is conducted properly in all of its details, then all four sons conclude the Seder together, proclaiming in unison, with one voice, at the same time, the same words, in the same way, wishing each other, with certainty: "Next year in Jerusalem!"

This does not mean, God forbid, that we must wait until next year to be in Jerusalem, we are still anticipating the fulfillment of the "Next year in Jerusalem!" that we proclaimed at last year's Seders, in 1981. "Every Jew is presumed be upright" – they surely fulfilled Torah's instruction last year, as well, to gather all four sons at the Seder. And they certainly proclaimed together as one, with brotherly love, equally proclaiming the same words: "Next year in Jerusalem."

Then we will surely succeed, and God will fulfill His promise – as Maimonides rules: "Torah promised that at the end of the exile the Jews will return to God and they will immediately be redeemed." God keeps this promise, and we will bring this year's Passover offerings – this year, Passover, 1982, in God's Holy Temple, in the undivided Holy City of Jerusalem, which is the capital of the undivided Land of Israel.

And the entire Jewish nation will ascend to Jerusalem, even the youngest children, out of love for God's Mitzvah; especially since in this day and age there is no other option – if the father makes the pilgrimage and the mother makes the pilgrimage, whether out of obligation or out of custom – depending on the various opinions in the matter – they cannot leave their children alone at home so the children join them in the pilgrimage as soon as they're born, even before they are able to walk on their own to the Temple, because the mother is there and a child needs its mother. So we will have the complete Jewish People, in the complete Land with the complete Torah, and the fulfillment of Mitzvos in their fullest and finest manner.

This is all along with the Campaigns for Jewish Education and Torah Study, and Tefillin – which is equal to all other Mitzvos combined. When the Mitzvah of Tefillin was first given it was given as a remembrance to the Exodus from Egypt, and we were told that "The Mitzvah of Tefillin is equal to the entire Torah."

פארברענגען עם הרבי

And the same for the Mezuzah Campaign. The Mittlerer Rebbe writes in his commentary to the prayer book that it, too, is equal to all other Mitzvos – as is also understood simply by the fact that the Mezuzah protects the Jew and protects his home and everything within it.

And the Zohar writes further, that when you affix a Mezuzah to your doorpost, “God will guard your comings and goings, now and for all time” – even when you leave the home and you are away for a certain length of time, the Mezuzah that you have affixed to the doorpost of your house protects you even outside in the world – “for all time.”

And of course the Charity Campaign, “Charity is great for it hastens the Redemption” – and “In Nissan they will be redeemed.”

This is connected with God’s promise: “I will sprinkle upon you pure waters, and you shall become pure.” Ezekiel prophesies that this is one of the preparations for the future Redemption – which is connected with the Campaign for Family Purity.

And with all these good deeds together, we go out of exile with “great wealth,” for the final Redemption will parallel the Exodus from Egypt... They were redeemed after great suffering – but we have suffered in this present exile for over 1,900 years, on and on! No one can fathom the explanation for it... The explanation that it is not surprising that we do not understand God’s ways, is a valid answer – but when something hurts, the rationalization does not ease the pain!

Torah itself says: “I thank you, God, for chastising me” – we will indeed thank God for the wrath of exile, but this will happen only after Moshiach comes and removes the suffering!

Now, however – every single day – we beseech God: “Cause the scion of David Your servant to speedily flourish!” – Not that he flourish at the end of time, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, or, God forbid, sometime after that... “Speedily flourish!”

And, “We hope for Your salvation all day long” – even though some hours of the day have already passed and Moshiach has still not arrived, we haven’t even heard yet Elijah’s good tidings announcing Moshiach’s arrival tomorrow, nevertheless,

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

“We hope for Your salvation all day long” – that the words we recited in the Evening Prayers, “We hope for Your salvation all day long,” will be fulfilled yet this very day.

And if you ask, “But first Elijah the prophet must come?” – the Talmud answers that he may have already arrived in the High Court but we haven’t heard about it yet. And more importantly, it isn’t so terrible if we have one more question to add to all the other questions that Elijah will answer after Moshiach comes, as explained by the Sages. So we will have one more question for Elijah to answer...

The most important thing is for this to materialize in reality, most important of all – that after over 1,900 years of suffering, when a “great treasure” of Torah and good deeds has already been amassed by each and every Jew, and all Jews together – already in these last moments of exile all Jews should have “light in their dwellings.” “And immediately they will be redeemed” – they will march out of exile with heads held high.

And “Kings shall serve you, and princess shall attend to you” – as the prophet, Zechariah, prophesies: the nations of the world will return the Jewish People to the Land of Israel as one brings a pure offering to the Temple – speedily, in our Holy Land, with the true and complete Redemption.

May it be speedily in our days.

L’chaim.

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Sicha 5

We spoke earlier about an issue at hand: Preparations for Passover, the “Festival of our Liberation.” A preparation must be similar to the occasion for which it is preparing.

Immediately following the first day of Passover, as a continuation to the festival – and related to the Exodus – we begin counting the Omer. “You shall count for yourselves following the day of Shabbos,” the Talmud tells us this refers to the second day of Passover.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

This has a particular connection to the Exodus as Rabbeinu Nissim explains at the end of Tractate Pesachim quoting the Midrash on how the counting of the Omer came about: It began while the Jews were still in Egypt in exile, God said to Moses: “When you will take the Jews out of Egypt you will serve God at this mountain” – Mount Sinai.

The purpose for leaving Egypt was to worship God at Mount Sinai. God referred to it as “this mountain,” because He was speaking to Moses at Sinai prior to his return to Egypt to inform the Jews of their redemption. He told Moses then as Rashi explains, that the Jews would merit redemption from Egypt because the intention and the express goal of the Exodus was “to serve God at this mountain.”

Rabbeinu Nissim cites the Midrash, which states that directly upon leaving Egypt the Jews began counting the days. They said, “An entire day has already passed since we left Egypt, when will we finally arrive at the mountain to serve God?”

The counting began on the second day of Passover, immediately after leaving Egypt on the fifteenth of Nissan, they were already impatient, counting the days; “One day of the Omer! – An entire day has passed and we’re not yet at the mountain to hear the Ten Commandments and to receive the Torah from God!” The same happened on the second day – they counted two days of the Omer. And so on and so forth.

There is a well-known question: Why do we count “two days of the Omer,” when it should be described as “the second day of the Omer?” “Second” denotes that it is a new day, separate from the first, whereas “two days” implies two of the same, not a sequence.

Also “the third day,” would seem more appropriate than “three days”? But the wording coined by the Rabbis of the Great Assembly for all Jews, is “two days of the Omer?”

The explanation: When the second day came, their yearning to receive the Torah was no longer just the buildup of one day, nor was it just the longing of a second day – albeit more intense than the first. Rather, the intensity of their thirst to receive the Torah was now doubled, it was two days combined. And so it was with three days – not only did their yearning intensify – for it is simple human nature that when three full days pass in anticipation of some good event,

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

the anticipation is greater than it was on the first or second days – but here the yearning not only increased, it compounded. When they counted two days, they yearned with the combined yearning of two days – it was doubled, and then three days of yearning... And each day they went “From strength to strength” in their yearning for Torah.

In this way, counting the Omer is connected to the Exodus, as Passover and the entire month of Nissan are related to the Exodus from Egypt. Particularly after Shabbos Hagadol, the Shabbos preceding Passover, when the Jews in Egypt were preparing for the Passover sacrifice.

This took place on the 10th of Nissan. This year – as in the year of the Exodus – the 10th of Nissan is also the Shabbos before Passover. The preparations for Passover begin at that time, including preparations for the essence of the holiday – the longing for Torah and Judaism, a yearning that continuously grows.

But how can one yearn to receive the Torah, if he just “received Torah” anew this very morning, for he blessed God “Who gives the Torah” – today? The answer: Torah is infinite, for it was given by God who is Infinite. As much as one studies Torah, he has only studied a finite, limited amount. Even if one was very studious, he can only learn as much as a finite human can possibly learn in the course of a lifetime from early childhood on, from the time he learned to speak, and his father taught him Torah.

And since he belongs to “the wise and understanding nation,” surely he studied diligently. But his diligent study is still limited to his human capacity, in the words of Maimonides in the Laws of Kings, “To the full extent of man.” So no matter how much one studies in the or years of his lifetime, and no matter how diligent the study was, it is still a finite amount, which can be measured.

It is a mathematical rule, and it is also self-evident:

No matter how large a finite number may be, it is totally insignificant compared to something infinite. If we take the greatest number, millions upon billions and compare it to millions upon billions multiplied by that same amount, the smaller amount is clearly insignificant in comparison the larger amount.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

Likewise, although a person studies Torah diligently, and this very morning he blessed God “for giving the Torah” – today, and then he began to study Torah, beginning with the Priestly Blessings, followed by a quote from the Oral Torah and other Torah sessions throughout the day; still, at any moment of the day, when he realizes that Torah is “God’s delight” and it pre-existed the world, that it is “longer than the earth and wider than the sea,” that it is infinite and truly endless, one can imagine – when it comes to a member of the “wise and understanding nation” – how great a desire and yearning he will have to Torah, although he has just finished studying a section of Torah, and studying it properly.

And this is the lesson from the counting of the Omer, during these days of preparation for Passover, when we also prepare for the counting of the Omer: We’ve mentioned numerous times that although the Exodus from Egypt is celebrated primarily on Passover, we nevertheless mention it twice every day, morning and night. We derive the main strength for this daily Exodus from Passover.

So too, the lessons we learn from the counting of the Omer, the longing expressed in the counting, and the lessons from the preparation to the counting, are meant to give us the strength and energy to affect the entire year; to instill a yearning for Torah, and to bring it to fulfillment – “Study is great for it leads to action” – “Torah” means instruction that we should observe the Mitzvos with extra care. And this yearning should continue to grow every day, – one day becomes “two days” and then “three days” as explained above.

In addition, we have a wondrous lesson, highly relevant to every day of the year. Every subject in Torah has its literal application: Sefiras Haomer entails the counting of days.

We don’t count actions, we don’t count words, we don’t count thoughts; we count days. First we have one day. Then, when twenty-four hours go by, we count “two days.” Twenty-four hours pass, and we count “three days.” When one concentrates on the literal meaning of the words he is reciting, even before one reaches the words “of the Omer,” what does the commandment entail? Counting days.

This defies logic. When you think about it, why does a person count things? To maintain control over possessions that they not be lost, or that no one should steal

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

them; or to know where you stand in order to accomplish something with them. The one single thing in the world over which a person has absolutely no control – it can't be taken away from him and he can't lose it – is time.

A person has no control over the passing of a moment or a day; whether this day will pass or not is not dependent on you. "The world continues ceaselessly." God decreed that

the cycle never ceases. He determined that one moment follows another, not more and not less; there are no two moments at once, and never is a moment lost; for the Torah of Truth declares, it is ceaseless. A wise person may ask, "What do you gain from counting the days?"

You can't lose them – no one can take them away from you, and you can't add to them." Nevertheless, Torah tells us that it is a Mitzvah – a Jew is obligated to count days. The explanation is that the days have a purpose. In this case, "for the Omer" – to remind us of the Omer offering in the Temple with all its particulars. And if you don't count this day of the Omer, you've lost the day!

From this we derive a practical lesson, a wonderful lesson and an extremely vital lesson. When a person looks at the clock, and it does not stir him that a moment is passing and he is doing nothing, it is not only a missed opportunity to perform a Mitzvah, but he has lost the moment! "Man is born to toil." He was given this moment to fulfill God's mission, by turning this moment into a living thing, filled with meaning, a meaning suggested by the Creator of time.

The Maggid of Mezritch taught, and it is a fundamental principle of Torah, brought in several places, that just as God fashioned all creations, He created time. "Nothing God created in His world was for naught." When God creates this moment in time – for "in His goodness, He constantly renews the works of creation," as the Baal Shem Tov explains, at every moment the entire process of creation is repeated, including time itself.

And in this Mitzvah, God appoints every person and the Jew in particular, to be His emissary to count the days; to ensure that every day produces something positive. In these days, it is the counting of "the Omer," but at all times, to keep an accounting of his own doings.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

The books of Mussar put it this way:

“Man worries about the loss of his money, but does not worry about the loss of his days.” They are not suggesting that this is as it should be, Heaven forbid. Rather, it is the strongest form of protest: “How can this be?!” If you worry about the loss of money, how much more must you worry about the loss of your days!

The claim that “nothing was lost” is not true. You’ve lost a day of your life. It could have been a complete day, a full day. Regarding the first Jew, Torah writes: “Abraham was old, coming along in days.” The Zohar explains that Abraham came “with all of his days” – he had something to show for every day, each day was recognizable that it belonged to

“Abraham the Jew.”

And we call him Abraham our Patriarch because we inherited from “Abraham who loves Me” the inborn love that every Jew has for God. But every Jew must manifest this inheritance and put it to use, that the love should not remain inborn and hidden love, but should be expressed in actual deeds.

Similarly, we have inherited from Abraham the ability, along with the responsibility, to ‘posses’ every day, for every day to be whole. And when a moment of the day goes by and our own activities were, Heaven forbid, not permeated with service of God then he’s ‘missing’ this moment, this day – it is not his.

The day belongs to nature, but it is not ‘Abraham’s day,’ not a ‘Jewish day’ fitting for a descendant of Abraham who “passed on to his children the way of God,” by following God’s instruction, acting by Abraham’s example and guidance. When a Jew is ‘lacking’ a day, so to speak, it affects the perfection of our Patriarchs as well, because they are “affected by all our troubles.” We see that a father is pained by his son’s shortcoming, when his son is not what he should and could have been.

How much more so of our Patriarchs – and “only three are called Patriarchs,” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. so if we lose a moment, or an entire day, by failing to fill the day with goodness and Judaism – which ultimately is Godliness – then that day is not whole. “Abraham was called ‘Hebrew,’” derived from the word ‘other

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

side,' because the entire world was on one side and Abraham was on the other. The whole world can go about its ways, but a Jew must be of the 'other,' higher, sphere, the sphere of the One God. And this is why Abraham is called 'One.'

This begins from a person's first day, including every moment of the day. When is the day complete? When every moment of the day is complete. Otherwise, it is twenty-four hours minus one moment – it is an incomplete day.

And since this is demanded of a Jew, every Jew is given the ability to live up to this. Particularly during these days, when we study the laws of counting the Omer, as part of the laws of the Festival of Passover which we began learning thirty days before Passover, on Purim.

And the Megillah states "the Jews' beliefs are different from all nations." As a nation "scattered and dispersed among the nations," they are "One People." – They are mortal living people, they exist in this material world, but their existence is unique, "One Nation in the land."

In studying the Laws of Counting the Omer we see how concerned we must be over "the loss of days" seeing to it that every moment is filled with content – not to say: "there's time, I can do it in the future," or tomorrow, or at least a bit later today.

Torah says: You are losing this moment, and then the day is no longer whole, the day is lacking. This is the wondrous lesson we derive in these days following Purim, when we begin to study the Laws of Passover and the Laws of Counting the Omer.

The learning should bring to actual deed – we must contemplate how every moment is precious and that it should be filled with true substance, permeating it with the true Being, Godliness, and with God Himself.

And this must be expressed in action: every moment, every hour and every day should be filled with a true and living content. And this will hasten the coming of Moshiach, when "all flesh will see the word of God" – how God's word gives life to every being, including the existence of time, including the existence of the person who must live according to Torah's instruction.

פארברענגען עם הרבי

May we do this joyfully and gladly, which increases the success of the above-mentioned efforts, and we will proceed with joy and gladness, to the moment that follows, when we fulfill this resolution, growing progressively in all things holy and filling our every day with achievement.

And then we 'possess' all our days, just as Abraham did in his time, the "one Abraham." Then every night, when the soul ascends On High to give a daily accounting, it can give an honest report that every moment was alive and so his day was truly alive. Then even his sleep is a meaningful sleep.

Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer states that at night the soul ascends On High to draw life. The soul is not truly 'asleep'; only part of the person is asleep, so his essence can go back to its source and refresh itself with renewed life to suffice for the entire next day, to be more alive than before the sleep.

We see practically that when a person is well-rested, he has greater vigor and enthusiasm

to achieve all kinds of good deeds. And when you recite before going sleep, "I place my soul in Your Hands," after a true accounting, and after the day was as it should be, then God "brightens the whole world with His honor," and he has a radiant preparation for the following day.

It is similar to the sleep the Jews had at Mount Sinai the night before receiving the Torah, when the Jews had completed counting the Omer, and they were together

with our teacher, Moses – they slept in order to draw energy and additional life to be able to receive Torah with renewed energy and new enthusiasm.

In the same way, a Jew's sleep should be such that it is not only a peaceful sleep in the literal sense, but that it brings Godliness "to illuminate the world," and the soul to "derive life from Above." Then the following day will be more alive, because the evening is concluded appropriately with good resolutions for the following day.

Then it is a sweet sleep, a proper sleep. Although the exile is described as 'sleep' we should not have an 'exile sleep,' but rather a 'Jewish sleep,' during which we

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

draw renewed life for the Torah of Life and its commandments “with which we live.”

My father-in-law, the Rebbe, said: those who prepare for sleep and sleep properly, during their sleep they are enlightened with new insights in all aspects of Torah, including the laws of Torah which enable the fulfillment of Mitzvos – for “Study is great, because it leads to deed.”

This concept was passed on to each and every one of us for it to become a lesson in each of our own lives. And we surely are given the ability to fulfill this – that every day should be alive and every moment alive; that one’s nights, as well, including the hours during which he sleeps, should be a ‘living sleep.’ The soul renews its life not only for the hours of sleep, but also for the following day.

With this we amass the “vast wealth,” that will end this exile because there will be nothing more to accomplish in exile. We’ve already gathered “A vast wealth of Mitzvos,” and this is the only thing prolonging the exile.

As it says, when the Jews were leaving Egypt they asked to be freed from exile immediately, but God said they weren’t meant to only suffer in exile, He wanted them to also go out “with great wealth.” In our case, after more than 2000 years of exile, in spite of which Jews have not abandoned their Judaism; they have accumulated Torah and Mitzvos – “great wealth.” As mentioned in the past, something cannot be ‘great’ if it is finite, because one can add to it and make it even greater.

But the “great wealth” amassed in exile is truly great; it is immeasurable – a wealth accumulated over, years in exile’s darkness.

And although we are ‘asleep’ in exile, the heart of the Jew “is awake to God’s Torah and Mitzvos.” Having fulfilled Mitzvos and studied Torah and raised children who recognize Godliness, legions of Jewish children who study Torah and fulfill Mitzvos. And through them the promise will be fulfilled that when Moshiach comes, “the children will recognize God first.”

May the exile come to an end instantly, peacefully and pleasantly, and may we immediately be taken out of exile with the children leading the way, the boys and

פארברענגען עם הרבי

girls who study Torah, each studying Torah relevant to them, as the Alter Rebbe writes in the Laws of Torah Study.

They will lead the way for the “Legions of God;” all Jews and every Jew. At our lead will be the children who are not yet Bar or Bat Mitzvah, who in spite of their youth have devoted themselves to act in God’s service.

As explained in Midrash regarding the army, one is counted as a member as soon as he is in the army, even before going out to battle as soon as he is eligible. So too, every Jew is considered a member of God’s Army.

And the children will recognize God first. And “God will return with the exiles” – the Talmud explains that God will go out of exile with all Jews, and with each Jew individually, “I will gather you one by one.” And it will be the children who will recognize God first, and they will illuminate their parents’ awareness.

And may we go to the Redemption with the “light of God” with our heads held high to the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, who will “put an end to the darkness” of exile.

Then will immediately begin the commencement of the Redemption, followed immediately by the true and complete Redemption, just as it was when we left Egypt.

May it be speedily in our days.

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Sicha 9

As mentioned at the beginning of the Farbrengen, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to all those who made the effort to participate in this Farbrengen for many long hours. There are those who attended as a sign of respect for an individual – while in truth, as mentioned, the gathering celebrates Chabad’s philosophy, movement, and activities; and those who deserve most credit are the “soldiers,” – not so much the “officers,” as explained in Chassidism at length, and mentioned many times. Whatever the reason one attended, even if it is for a different motive it is still connected to honoring an individual, and for that, I must express gratitude.

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

It is appropriate that the thanks should mirror the favor: When many Jews gather it becomes a gathering of "Your righteous nation." Whenever Tzadikim gather, it "benefits them and the world at large." Particularly when the gathering is for Torah, by every Jew acquiring a letter in one of the communal Torahs. All communal Torahs are one, united with the first Torah written by Moses – "Write for yourselves this Torah." Moses wrote the first Torah which was united with the

Torahs he wrote afterwards, as discussed numerous times. In Torah itself we find diverse opinions, arguments and questions. In general, this is only true in the revealed part of Torah, Torah law.

But in the Zohar – "The book with which Jews will be taken out of exile with compassion" – in the esoteric dimension of Torah, there are "no arguments nor challenges." Within Torah, which is one, this is an even deeper level of unity – the inner part of Torah. This inner part of Torah can be studied by the individual, each person for himself. There is a book of the inner teachings of Torah which is relevant to everyone, understood by the person's every intellectual level allowing one to unite with this wisdom in a "unity unlike any other in the world." By publishing the Tanya wherever Jews live, even at "the edge of the world," publishing the same book, with the same sections and text, and with the same purpose:

To make known that serving God is "Very close to you, in your mouth and heart to do it, with the help of God Almighty." – These are the Alter Rebbe's words. This will unite everyone, by studying the inner dimension of Torah; although each person will study in his particular place, each individual's thoughts connect with the same concept being studied by other Jews, thereby binding all Jews together.

In order to hasten the coming of Moshiach, an additional suggestion has been offered: To print a Tanya which includes all Tanyas printed around the world.

The text of all editions are identical except for the title-page; so this Tanya brings together every available title page of every edition of Tanya. Then the unity and oneness of all Jews through the inner dimension of Torah becomes all more visible and clear. When this Tanya contains all other title-pages, and it becomes one's personal property and he studies it and lives by its teachings, one connects through

פארברענגען עם הרבי

the title-pages, to all the Tanyas printed the world over, and through this, with all Jews studying Tanya, wherever they are.

This emphasizes and strengthens – at least in my humble opinion – not only the unity of all Jews, but the oneness of all Jews, young and old, since Torah study is for everyone, including the study of Tanya. When the Rebbe, my father-in-law, was being taught the Alef-Beis, he was shown the letters from the title- page, or from the inner pages, of a Tanya. This is why as an expression of my gratitude and thanks to all who have gathered tonight – or who intend to unite – and to include also those who are not physically present, we will present this all-inclusive Tanya to all.

Tanya relates to spreading the wellsprings of Chasidism, which will bring the ultimate Redemption through our righteous Moshiach. And “Zion will be redeemed with justice and charity” – charity also hastens the Redemption, and we will therefore also distribute a dollar bill upon which is printed “E Pluribus Unum – From Many, One.”

And only through the ‘many,’ does the ‘one’ becomes truly strong. In that case, we have both “justice,” which the Sages explain means Torah – the Tanya, as well as “charity” – the dollar for charity. Each person will surely accept it happily, just as it is given happily.

In addition – and this is most essential: the Tanya should be used so much, that you should soon require a second copy. “Study it and study it, for everything is in it,” in ever-increasing manner, and then, naturally, a new Tanya will be needed,

for this one will be worn from excessive use. May it be God’s will that even before we can learn in it, before we “grow old and gray over it,” before the book wears and tears and we require a new one – for one must “glorify God,” through a manuscript “on nice parchment,” or for printed matter, with a nice print – before all this, may Moshiach come, and “teach Torah to the entire nation.”

Therefore, following the after-blessing by those who are required to do so, and after singing the Alter Rebbe’s Niggun one time, to those who wish, I will

express my gratitude,

התוועדות י"א ניסן ה'תשמ"ב

in addition to the verbal expression, by giving each person this Tanya which contains the title pages of all other Tanyas, along with a dollar bill to be given charity. And may it be God's will, that from this Farbrengen we should begin to prepare for the Farbrengen in which we will welcome our righteous Moshiach, who "will come and redeem us and lead us to our Land."

May it be speedily in our days.

L'chaim.



Sicha 10

Whoever has to make an After-blessing will certainly do so. We ask that nobody should push, there are enough Tanyas for everyone. And the line should go in order, on this side of the table in this direction. Everybody will receive their Tanya with a dollar – either a bit earlier or later, there's no difference. Disorder is the opposite of the Redemption, which will specifically be "Without rush."

And if you have to wait a few extra minutes, I will also wait with you, until every last Jew here receives. I will also add, in line with what I said before: I wish to express my gratitude also to the women who are here. So after the men have received their Tanya, those women who wish, should come downstairs and the men should leave first, so that there will not be chaos, and they can receive, each of them, a Tanya and a dollar.

A scholar once argued with me against the study of Chassidism by women. I presented the following response: Among the six commandments that everybody is obligated to fulfill – both men and women – are belief in the unity of God, love and fear God, belief in Him, and to know of His existence. These Mitzvos are incumbent on women just as on men. How does one achieve love and fear of God?

Maimonides rules that there is only one way: By contemplating the greatness of God, which is what the study of Chassidism is all about – the study of God's Divine attributes, how to serve Him, etc. A scholar pointed out to me that this is also stated explicitly by Maimonides. In the tenth chapter of his Laws of Repentance, Maimonides writes about the various levels of serving God: "The highest form

פארברענגען עם הרבי

of serving God is Torah study for its own sake – out of love for God,” not for the Heavenly reward of the study.

This is a very high level indeed, and to achieve it one has to study much Torah. That is why women and men should be taught Torah even if they begin for the sake of reward – and Maimonides specifically points out “women” here – for they will eventually come to study Torah for its own sake “out of love for God.”

So the same applies here: just as women are obligated to give charity, and they are obligated to learn all the laws that pertain to them, as the Alter Rebbe writes in his Laws of Torah Study, obviously the study of Tanya is relevant for women as well, for through this type of study one achieves, as the Alter Rebbe testifies, a “closeness” to the service of God in speech, thought and action – which is an equal obligation upon every men and women, with no difference whatsoever.

As mentioned, there will be no pushing. Pushing will only cause it to take longer.

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לזכות

ר' אליעזר חיים וזוגתו רבקה בתי'

יוצאי חלציהם וכל בני משפחתם שיחיו

לפידות

בוענאס איירעס, ארגענטינא

Dedicated to the Rebbe with love.

Thank you for your teachings, devotion,
endless counsel, selflessness and for sharing
with us so many hours of your precious time.

May we merit to see you once again soon.

By Benjamin & Rochel Federman & Family
