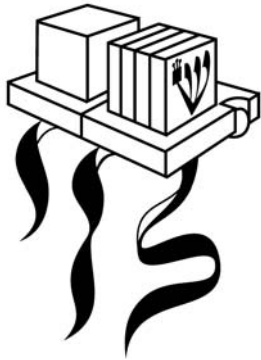


BAR MITZVAH OF LEVI BLESOFSKY

חגיגת הבר מצוה של
לוי הכהן שיחי' בלעסאפסקי
חג האולה י"ג תמוז ה'תשס"ט
שנת הקהל



*Bar Mitzvah Celebration of
Levi Blesofsky
July 5, 2009*

*Thank you for joining me at my Bar Mitzvah
Levi*

BAR MITZVAH OF LEVI BLESOFSKY

*A Guide to a
Chasidic Bar Mitzvah*



*Bar Mitzvah Celebration of
Levi Blesofsky
July 5, 2009*

*Thank you for joining me at my Bar Mitzvah
Levi*

Dear Friends,

With gratitude to the Almighty and joy in our hearts, we welcome you to the celebration of our dear son Levi's Bar Mitzvah. Your presence here today enhances our Simcha, making it a truly wonderful and memorable occasion.

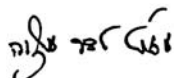
In Judaism, the Bar Mitzvah marks a most significant moment. Levi has reached a milestone in his life. He is no longer a mere boy, today he becomes a man! As a Bar Mitzvah, he makes an eternal commitment to follow the beautiful tradition of our ancestors, to serve the One Above.

In honor of Levi's Bar Mitzvah, we are presenting you with a Bar Mitzvah handbook containing information and commentary associated with the celebration. Included are various short stories and helpful insights about the Mitzvah of Tefillin. We hope that you find it interesting and inspiring.

With prayerful wishes for the imminent Redemption through Moshiach, when in the words of the Prophet, "The world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d, like the waters cover the seabed." May this take place speedily in our days!

We look forward to sharing many Simchos together.

Rabbi Yossi and Dina Blesofsky



"Mazal Tov! for the Bar Mitzvah"
(Text of the Rebbe's handwritten blessing)

what is a bar mitzvah ?

Bar-Mitzvah literally means "Son of Mitzvah," which describes the boy now responsible to do all Mitzvot (commandments).

The G-dly soul enters man in its entirety at the age of 13. The boy then attains his religious maturity and becomes responsible to fulfill all Torah commandments.

This occasion is cause for great celebration and gratitude to G-d, and hence the Bar-Mitzvah ceremony. One becomes Bar-Mitzvah automatically on one's thirteenth birthday, with or without a party!

Among his many new responsibilities, beginning from his Bar-Mitzvah day and onward, he must wrap Tefillin every day of the week besides Shabbat and certain holidays.

The number 13 has the same numerical value as the word Echad — one. This demonstrates that at the age of Bar Mitzvah the boy becomes one with his people, united in their task of making the world an abode for the Divine. This unity is further demonstrated in that the boy may now be counted for a Minyan (quorum).

The number 13 also shares the same numerical value as the word Ahavah — love. It is therefore appropriate that the Bar Mitzvah boy dedicate his first actions toward happily helping another Jew in the spirit of Ahavat Yisrael. This applies to material assistance, such as Tzedakah, as well as helping in a spiritual sense by positively influencing a friend in the performance of good deeds.

Traditionally boys are called up to the Torah on the day of their Bar-Mitzvah (or the Shabbat afterward), reflecting their new status as adult participants in the prayers. In some communities, the boy reads from the Torah and/or chants the Haftorah on the Shabbat after he becomes Bar-Mitzvah.

The Torah reading is not an obligation and does not replace the much more important Mitzvot ushered in on the Bar-Mitzvah day. In fact, some consider the time needed to train a 12 year-old too precious and opt to use the preparation time to teach the young man about many of his upcoming responsibilities and their meaning.



what is a mitzvah?

The idea of 'Mitzvot' is fundamental to the Jewish experience and identity. We all know that Jews perform Mitzvot. But what is a Mitzvah?

Good Deed: In popular usage, to 'do a Mitzvah' is to do a good deed. The operative word is 'deed'. To be a Jew is to be actively involved in doing good things. Good ideas and speech are important, but good deeds must result from our thoughts and words; the action is what counts.

Commandment: Linguistically, 'good deed' is an inaccurate translation of the word 'Mitzvah'. The Hebrew word 'Mitzvah' actually means 'commandment'.

Mitzvot aren't just acts that we deem to be important. They are G-d's instructions for life. So fulfilling a

Mitzvah is obeying a command. It is an act of obedience to a higher authority: G-d.

Bond: In its deepest sense, Mitzvah means 'connection' or 'bond'. The human spirit has a transcendent dynamic; the soul wants to escape the shallowness of physical life. We want to connect with G-d.

But how? How can a finite creature bond with an infinite G-d?

The answer is 'Do a Mitzvah'.

Each Mitzvah is another bridge to the creator, another connection with the divine. In this sense, Mitzvot are seen as opportunities not just obligations.

As a Bar-Mitzvah, the boy officially enters the 'Mitzvah-system'. As a child, he wasn't a full participant in this system.

He was certainly able to perform good deeds, but he was still missing a crucial part of the Mitzvah concept. He didn't have a true experience of the latter two Mitzvah definitions.

Why?

G-d doesn't expect more than we can deliver.

A child is not yet mature and lacks proper self-control, so it is not surprising when he acts out of line. We want him to perform, but we also understand that he can't be fully expected to behave like an adult. G-ds' commands are real obligations, and a child doesn't have any religious obligations per se. It is only post- Bar Mitzvah that a young man becomes obligated in the Mitzvot. At a Bar Mitzvah, we celebrate the fact that the commandment/bond elements of Mitzvot begin to apply.

BAR MITZVAH – ENTERING ADULTHOOD

By Aron Moss

“**T**his won’t be just another party,” we tell ourselves. We spend time and money to make sure the Bar Mitzvah we are hosting will be an event that stands apart from the other 40 Simchas being celebrated that week.

But perhaps the greatest challenge is to make the day unforgettable not for the guests but for the real center of attention – the Bar Mitzvah boy. For many, the Bar Mitzvah experience determines their attitude to Judaism. If the event is shallow and pretentious, they will see Judaism as shallow and pretentious. But if it is meaningful and inspiring, their Jewish identity will be reinforced and they will be proud of their heritage. What can we do to ensure that our children will be positively affected and transformed by the experience?

As for everything else, children look to their parents for guidance on how to view the Bar Mitzvah. They take their cues from us, and our attitude will define theirs. By the parents taking time to understand what a Bar Mitzvah really is, they can develop an approach that will highlight the uniqueness and power of their child’s special day.

How can a 13 year old be considered an adult?

Some Bar Mitzvah boys expect to wake up feeling different on the morning of their Bar Mitzvah. They run to the mirror to see if any sign of a whisker has appeared on their chin, or start talking to themselves

to check if their voice cracks. But the change that happens on the Bar Mitzvah day is much more subtle than that. The maturity reached at age 13 is not one that allows you to buy alcohol or decide your own bedtime – it is a spiritual maturity.

What do you mean by spiritual maturity?

The definition of spiritual maturity is the ability to experience the depth and complexity of life. Let’s explore what that means.

A child can only see the world in one way. If his parent forbids him to eat a chocolate, he says, “I hate you!” with venom. At that moment, he means it. You can’t rationalize with him by pointing out that you always buy him sweets and he will be able to have it after dinner and it is for his own good and you are his parent... These are meaningless words. There is only one reality for him: you didn’t let him have the chocolate so you are BAD. Of course, if you give in and allow him to have the chocolate, you are “the best parent in the world” and all is forgotten. For the child there are only extremes. In his yet under-developed mind, every situation is simple and one-sided, black or white. There are no shades of gray.

This is a reflection of the purity of childhood. Children experience pure and unadulterated happiness, all-consuming sadness, extreme anger and uninhibited excitement. This is a necessary stage for them to develop as wholesome beings. Each of these emotions must find its independent place in the child’s identity before they can start to work together.

With maturity comes the ability to sense subtlety

and nuance. Our minds expand to be able to appreciate that even though something seems painful, there is a deeper good. And the things that feel good are not always good for us. An adult can say, “Although I am upset at you, I still love you.” Or, “Although I want it, I know it’s wrong.” We can see beyond the surface. Life is no longer one-dimensional; it has a depth and a complexity of which children are blissfully unaware.

What suddenly happens at age 13?

The Kabbalah teaches that until age 13, we are primarily conscious of our body and its needs. Our reality begins and ends with what we see in front of us, and we are preoccupied with the demands and appetites of our physical nature. Suddenly at Bar Mitzvah another voice is heard – the voice of our soul. The needs, yearnings and feelings of our spiritual inner self are allowed to emerge. We begin to seek meaning, fulfillment, connection, inspiration. We meet a side to our personality that we never knew existed – a deeper side.

This is what makes us an adult in spiritual terms. We now have the tools to appreciate a multi-layered world because we ourselves are now multi-layered – we have an active body and an expressive soul. Until now our character was one-sided and shallow; only the body had a say. From now on we can also see things through the eyes of our deeper self - our soul. Then the choice is ours – to continue to live superficially or to develop our spiritual awareness.

So if the child is now spiritually mature, what is the parents’ job?

Once we reach spiritual maturity we begin to make

choices as to how we want to live our lives. The factor that most defines the type of life we will lead is our value system. It will influence who we marry, our career choices, and our attitude to every aspect of life. Much of this system is developed in the years following Bar Mitzvah. The questions that accompany the onset of adolescence demand answers, and if we don’t provide them, popular society will.

Here’s where parents play a vital role. These newly matured souls seek nourishment from their elders. The Bar Mitzvah experience must be presented not as an end to a long process of Hebrew lessons, but an initiation into a lifetime of spiritual discovery. Once it is over, start giving your child opportunities to express his or her soul. Suggest ways they can give of their time to help others, to volunteer for worthy causes – to use their fresh young energy positively. Discuss questions of morality with your child; bring up real issues such as G-d and the soul, the challenges of growing up, the pain and beauty of true love. Welcome your child into the world of living thoughtfully.

You don’t need to know all the answers. Share your own experiences. Find a book on Jewish values or Jewish wisdom, and set aside a time every week to read a short section and discuss it together with your child. Ask them how they think the ideals you read about can be applied practically. This can become a family custom and be seen as a post-Bar Mitzvah privilege. I can think of no more powerful way to guide your child into adulthood.

When planning the Bar Mitzvah, remember that

the really important stuff begins after the fanfare has died down. People will forget who the caterer was a week after the event, and the table decorations will mostly be destroyed by the time the main course is served. But the values you pass down to your children are eternal. That is a gift that they will cherish every day of their lives – the gift of spiritual maturity.



tefillin and its significance

By Alexander Cowen

Tefillin is one of the most important Mitzvot (precepts) of the Torah. It has been observed and treasured for thousands of years, right down to the present day. The Torah mentions it more than once, but most explicitly in Deut. 6:8 “You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they should be for a reminder between your eyes.”

Tefillin consists of two small leather boxes attached to leather straps. The two boxes each contain four sections of the Torah inscribed on parchment. These passages cite:

(a) The Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) — pronouncing the Unity of The One G-d.

(b) Vehayah (Deut. 11:13-21) — expressing G-d’s assurance to us of reward that will follow our observance of the Torah’s precepts, and warning of retribution for disobedience to them.

(c) Kadesh (Ex. 13:1-10) — the duty of the Jewish people to always remember the redemption from Egyptian bondage.

(d) Vehayah (Ex. 13:11-16) — the obligation of every Jew to inform his children on these matters.

One of the boxes (the “hand Tefillin”) is placed upon the left arm so as to rest against the heart - the seat of the emotions, and the suspended leather strap is wound around the left hand, and around the middle finger of that hand. The other box (the “Head Tefillin”) is placed upon the head, above the forehead, so as to rest upon the cerebrum. In this manner our attention is directed to the head, heart and hand. It teaches us to dedicate ourselves to the service of G-d in all that we think, feel and do. It is also to teach us not to be governed solely by the impulse of the heart, lest that lead us into error and transgression. Nor are we to be governed by reason alone, for that may lead to harsh materialism.

Placed on the arm opposite the heart, and on the head, the Tefillin signify the submission of one’s mind, heart and actions to the Almighty, as well as the rule of intellect over emotion.

A fundamental principle of Chabad Chassidic philosophy is that the intellect must control the emotions. Unfortunately, there exists a schism between the mind and the heart. Moreover, often the emotions control the mind, and the intellect is utilized merely to provide justification, rationalization, and excuses for this “instinct-emotion centered” existence. The Mitzvah of Tefillin and its practice facilitates the at-

tainment by the individual of unity of mind and heart, intellect and emotion.

Most of life's regrets, sorrows and pain could be avoided if we would but learn this important lesson - the application of head and heart to our every day problems. Besides, such wholesome balance constitutes the very first step on the road to self-assurance, courage, hopefulness and inner peace; those eternally precious soul values the Jew must develop, the better to serve G-d and mankind. Tefillin will cultivate these blessed characteristics, if observed in a spirit of true reverence.

Tefillin and the Exodus from Egypt

It has been pointed out that the four Torah excerpts to be found in Tefillin comprise the Shema and the Vehaya, while the other two have almost exclusive reference to the Exodus from Egypt. Some may wonder why the Exodus should be assigned such signal honor as to accompany the verses that pronounce our very concept of G-d. Hence the following explanation:

There can be no question that for the Jewish people the Exodus was to be an everlasting, unforgettable "Remembrance." Our sages even went so far as to incorporate the words "In remembrance of the departure from Egypt" in the Kiddush that ushers in every Sabbath and Festival. Careful deliberation, moreover, will clearly show why they ascribed to it such singular significance.

The Exodus, it must be recalled, is the story of a people enslaved for hundreds of years by a mighty nation. Although they were unarmed and overwhelmingly outnumbered, this enslaved people finally marched

out to their freedom without having to resort to violence. Not only were they freed, but their departure was hastened by their erstwhile overlords, now terrified lest more plagues be meted out to them by the retributive justice of the G-d of Israel.

All available historical records disclose nothing to equal this unique event. The case of a miraculous redemption of an entire people numbering over two million souls, each of them an eyewitness to the protecting benevolence of Divine Providence. It was this event that convinced all the Jewish people, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that their faith in the G-d of their ancestors was well founded. It was the miracle of the Exodus that gave emphatic meaning to the words of the Shema: "Hear, O Israel, The L-rd is Our G-d, The L-rd is One." Note carefully how the very first commandment connects the two. "I am the L-rd your G-d Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."



BINDINGS

By Zalman Posner

Tefillin is a distinctively Jewish way of worship; it is the central mitzvah with which boys are initiated into Jewish manhood. It represents an act rather than a sentiment or a word. But what, you may ask, is the message of tefillin for our own day?

The threat confronting civilization today is not rhetorical. Acts of violence are real and increasing in both frequency and intensity. Not too long ago, the university, that exemplar of rationality, turned out to be a hotbed of terror. Professors of philosophy, graduate students, some of the finest minds America has cultivated, engaged in indiscriminate violence, using guns and bombs. Violence as such is nothing new, but that people of learning should engage in it is something new — and deeply disturbing.

It is worthy of note that the first direct quotation from Moses in the Torah is his protest against a Jew who had raised his arm to strike another. “Why do you strike your fellow?” Moses is introduced to us as a protester against an act of violence.

What do the tefillin symbolize? The straps are wrapped around the arms. As a result, the arm loses its freedom of movement; it can only move as the straps permit. Man is not free to do as he wishes. He can move his arm — that is, he can use his ability to act — only in ways that are in consonance with the spirit of the tefillin, of the Sh'ma. Some acts, such as taking that which belongs to another, or harming a fellow man or an animal, or even willfully damaging inanimate objects, are evil. Arms and hands have the power to heal and help, to create and build, and they must be used only for these purposes. This is what the tefillin tell us each morning, and the Bar Mitzvah youth enters life, just as we ourselves enter it anew each day, with the reminder that all our actions must be in character with these principles.

One box of our tefillin is placed upon the left arm, near the heart, symbolically the seat of our emotions. There are certain emotions which the Torah prohibits. “Do not hate your brother in your heart,” for hatred is a sin. “Do not harbor a grudge,” even when you have been wronged. “You shall love the stranger” with all his alien-ness, and certainly, “you shall love your fellow as yourself.” Our emotions are not beyond our control. We are responsible for our emotions. We are to be their master, not their pawn. This is another message that our tefillin hold for us today.

The tefillin give us a glimpse of the magnificent potential inherent in every one of us, not only to do what is right, but also to remain in control of our emotions. That common but feeble excuse, “I couldn't help myself,” is not acceptable to anyone sensitive to the message of the tefillin. A heart touched by the tefillin and fired with the command to “love your G-d with all your heart” will reject such pettiness.

The other box of the tefillin is placed upon the head, the seat of the mind. Man's mind is his finest gift and at the same time the most ominous threat to the world in which he lives. If he uses his mind properly, he can create a paradise; if he does not, he can bring utter destruction to the planet. He must use his mind in accordance with the teachings of the Torah, his thoughts must be pure, he must not plot and scheme against others, and he must not utilize his brain for self-aggrandizement at the expense of others.

Almost everyone in the Western world today is

able to read and write, but when it comes to moral literacy we are still scarcely beyond the caveman stage. The educated but immoral are not governed by their intellect; their minds are enslaved by their base instincts. The tefillin declare to us that the mind must have direction; lacking such direction, it can lead man to his ruin.

The Torah tells us to place our tefillin “between the eyes.” How we use our eyes shows what sort of people we are. When the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (1880-1950), was still a little boy, he asked his father why G-d gave man two eyes. Would not one eye have been quite sufficient? “G-d gave us two eyes, a right eye and a left eye,” his father replied. “The right eye is for seeing the good, and the left eye is for seeing faults. Use your right eye to look at others, and your left eye to look at yourself.”

Tefillin are a bond and a “sign” binding the American Jew, the Russian Jew and the Israeli Jew together into one inseparable whole, and at the same time tying the hand, the mind and the heart of the Jew to G-d and Torah, to ideal and principle. The tefillin strap spans oceans and continents, binding a scattered people into one strong unit.

An awesome picture: a barracks in Auschwitz, and inside it a line of Jews, hurriedly putting on a single secret pair of tefillin, then taking them off again at once without a chance to recite the Sh'ma, because the Germans could come in at any moment. While some of the inmates put on the tefillin, others sta-

tioned themselves at the barracks door to watch out for the Nazis. A member of my congregation was in that group.

And then another picture appears before my mind: a line of thousands of Jewish students stretching for blocks around a Chabad House at a large American university, waiting for an opportunity to put on tefillin, unhurried, and without fear . . . Is it fantasy? Is there a better way of demonstrating that the Jew who is free cares about his brothers — wherever they may be?



spiritual security

By Yossy Goldman

It was May 1967. Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser had mobilized his troops and was threatening to “drive the Jews into the sea.” The United Nations Peace-Keeping Force was dismissed and sheepishly left the region, prompting Abba Eban, Israel’s eloquent Foreign Minister, to question the purpose of an umbrella if as soon as it started raining one closed the umbrella. Syria and Jordan, too, were preparing to join the war and Israel was once again threatened with annihilation by its neighbors.

I was in New York. Lag B’Omer that year fell on a Sunday, the 28th of May. Thousands of Jewish school children assembled on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn for the Lag B’Omer Parade. The highlight of the event

was the address to be delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Rebbe spoke passionately about the mortal threat to Israel and her people. But his talk was filled with a fiery faith and unambiguous optimism about the outcome. He assured us that Israel would prevail. Previously, he had instructed American Yeshiva students in Israel to remain there and not return home although their parents were extremely — and understandably — anxious. At the same time, he urged Jews the world over to do something practical to help Israel overcome this dire threat to her very existence.

What could we do? Besides material support for the war effort, and in addition to tanks and fighter jets, Israel also needed spiritual support. There is a spiritual defense system, too, said the Rebbe. It was then that he launched the International Tefillin Campaign. By as many Jews as possible observing this hallowed Mitzvah, it would contribute in a tangible way to Israel's security. He called upon Jews around the world to encourage their brethren to begin putting on Tefillin, even if they were not religious or hadn't done it since their Bar Mitzvah, or ever in their lives. People responded instantly and Jews, in unprecedented numbers, embraced the campaign.

Nine days later, the battles began. Israel made military history when it decimated the Egyptian Air Force and defeated the armed forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan in lightning speed. Jerusalem was reunited under Jewish sovereignty and the Six Day War would be recorded for posterity as Israel's finest hour.

Without in any way minimizing the heroic efforts of our brave soldiers or the brilliant military strategies of our High Command, this amazing, miraculous victory surely pointed to a higher force. I firmly believe that the protective cover of G-d was inspired by the many thousands of new mitzvahs performed by our people.

But why tefillin? Of all mitzvahs, why should the Rebbe have chosen tefillin specifically to ensure Israel's security?

The answer is in the Parshah (weekly Torah reading) of Ki Tavo: And all the nations of the world will see that the Name of G-d is upon you and they will fear you (Deuteronomy 28:10). What does it mean that "the Name of G-d is upon you"? The Talmud (Brachot 6a) quotes Rabbi Eliezer the Great who explained that the verse refers to the tefillin worn on the head, which bear the letter Shin symbolizing G-d's name. These are visible to the eye and have the spiritual power to inspire fear in the hearts of our enemies. Indeed, one of the most powerful images of the Six Day War, still vivid in my mind, is of the Egyptian soldiers fleeing the Sinai in total disarray.

They may not be massing armies on our borders today. But no one can deny that Israel's security is still at very high risk. Thank G-d, since its launch the Tefillin Campaign has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of our brothers. If tefillin are not yet part of your daily routine, may this story inspire you to begin observing it now. If you are already a regular, then share the mitzvah with a friend. Besides all the won-

קטע משיחת כ"ק אדמו"ר בנוגע לבר מצוה

ש"פ ויק"פ, פ' החודש, ה'תשט"ו

הנחה בלתי מוגה

אויפן פסוק והי' אור הלבנה כאור כחמה ואור החמה יהי' שבעתים כאור שבעת הימים (בהמאמר נתבאר אודות ענין זה) שטייט אין זוהר אויפן פסוק צאינה וראינה . . במלך שלמה בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו ביום חתונתו וביום שמחת לבו, זאגט דער זוהר אז דאס איז ביזא דאיכשר למיעבד מצות, ד.ה. דעם טאג פון בר מצוה, אז אין דעם טאג דארף זיין די שמחה וחדוותא אזוי ווי צו א חתונה.

איך ווייס ניט פארוואס דאס בריינגט זיך ניט אראפ אין שו"ע, אויך דער שער הכולל וואס בריינגט אראפ א זוהר וועגן בר מצוה, בריינגט ער א אנדער זוהר וואס ס'איז פריער מיט א פאר בלעטלאך, אז ר"ש בן יוחאי האט געמאכט א גרויסע שמחה צום טאג פון זיין זון'ס בר מצוה, ס'איז אבער פאראן נאך א זוהר מיט א פאר בלעטלאך שפעטער, וואס דארטן רעדט ער וועגן אלע אידן, אז בא אלע אידן איז אין דעם טאג פון בר מצוה דארף זיין א שמחה אזוי ווי בא א חתונה.

בא א חתונה דארפן דאך אלע משמח זיין דעם חתן און זיין שמה, איז אויך בא א בר מצוה, איז דאך דער חתן אליין טרוד וועגן דער דרשה מסתמא, אבער דער גאנצער עולם דארף דאך זיין שמח, אז עס קומט צו נאך א איד אויף דער וועלט, וואס וועט מקיים זיין תומ"צ.

ישראל זיינען דאך ערבים זה בזה, און בשעת עס קומט צו נאך א עובר, ווערט דאך גרינגער די ארבעט אויף די איבעריקע, איז דאך דאס א חשובן אפי' אין גשמיות מען זאל זיין בשמחה, מצד דעם וואס עס קומט צו נאך א עובר וואס וועט ארויסהעלפן אין דער ארבעט.

(להתוועדות היי' אחד בר מצוה [זקנו של חתן הבר מצוה], וניגנו א פריילעכן ניגון).

Free Translation

(*Farbrenge of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pikudei, 5715 – March 19, 1955*)

On the verse (Song of Songs 3:11) "Go forth and gaze...at King Solomon, at the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, and on the day of the joy of his heart," the *Zohar* (central work of the Cabbala) explains it to refer to "the day

when one becomes qualified to practice the commandments of the Torah, which are the joy of the righteous...at the age of thirteen. On that day," says the *Zohar*, "it is the duty of the righteous to celebrate with joy of heart just like the day when one enters the wedding canopy." In other words, on the day that one becomes *bar-mitzva*, he should rejoice just as at his wedding.

I don't know why this passage is not quoted in the *Shulchan Aruch* (code of Torah law). The *Shaar Hakolel* (commentary on the prayer book by Rabbi Avraham David Lavut) quotes another passage in the *Zohar*, a few pages further back, that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (the Sage of the Talmud whose teachings comprise the *Zohar*), made a great celebration on the day of his son's *bar-mitzva*. The *Zohar* passage quoted above, however, has the advantage of referring not only to Rabbi Shimon's son but to every Jew, that on the day of his *bar-mitzva* he should rejoice just as at his wedding.

At a wedding, **everyone** has a duty to make the bridegroom happy, and to be happy oneself. The same applies to a *bar-mitzva*. Probably, the *bar-mitzva* boy himself is concerned about his speech. But everyone else present should be happy for the additional Jew who has joined the worldwide Jewish community to observe the Torah and its commandments.

Our Sages tell us that all Jews are responsible for each other. Therefore, when another "worker" joins in, the task gets easier for everyone else. This is a reason even on the mundane level for rejoicing at a *bar-mitzva*, because another "worker" has joined us,

who will help everyone else in accomplishing our G-d-given task.

(A bar-mitzva boy was present [grandfather of Levi], and everyone joined in singing a joyous melody.)



the maamar

A Maamar is a Chassidic discourse regarding the deep mystical theme of Tefillin. The maamar that Levi will deliver today was first delivered by the Rebbe Rashab, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe at his Bar Mitzvah, and repeated by his son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, the Previous Rebbe, at his Bar Mitzvah.

In preparation for the maamar, the assembled sing a moving melody, called the Nigun Hachanah. The maamar focuses on the unique spiritual influences aroused by tefillin, explaining that the natural order of the world reveals the supernal middos, G-d's emotional qualities. Emotion has a limit. A person's intellect, by contrast, enables him to expand and reach new horizons. So too, tefillin, which draw down G-d's intellectual faculties, elevate the person and the creation as a whole, to new heights.

a BRIEF synopsis of "ISSA B' MIDRASH TEHILLIM"

Rabbi Elazar says in Midrash Tehillim: The Jewish people said before G-d, "Master of the universe! We would like to study Torah by day and by night, but we don't have any time." Hashem replied, "Fulfill the mitzvah of Tefillin and I will consider it as if you have labored in Torah study by day and by night."

It is self-understood that if one thing can substitute another thing, there must obviously be a common denominator which connects both of them. In our case, there must be a connection between the diligent study of the Torah by day and night, and the donning of Tefillin, so that wearing Tefillin can free the Jewish people from the study of Torah.

This can be understood through the following introduction. It is written in Psalms (chap. 147): *Maggid devarav leYaakov chukav umishpatav leYisrael*, which means, that G-d "tells His word to Jacob, His statutes and ordinances to Yisrael." Our sages comment on this verse: There are those who command others to fulfill their wishes, but they don't do so themselves, however that which G-d Himself fulfills, He commands others to fulfill. This is why the verse says "His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances..." The word "His" implies that these are commandments which G-d also fulfills Himself.

We can therefore conclude that since the Jewish people are commanded by G-d to wear Tefillin, G-d Almighty Himself also wears Tefillin. So, each time a Jew dons Tefillin, he causes that G-d dons His Tefillin.

The concept of G-d wearing Tefillin can obviously not be taken literally. We cannot portray G-d who is infinite and indescribable, the same way we would refer to a human being, with a head, arm, feet, limbs, etc. G-d does not possess an arm or head on which to wrap Tefillin. So, when it is said that G-d wears Tefillin, we are alluding to the *effect* that the wearing of Tefillin by humans achieves.

When a human being puts on his tefillin, he puts them on his arm, close to his heart, and on his head, close to his brain. This forges a union between his intellectual capabilities (represented by the Tefillin on his head) and his emotional attributes (represented by the Tefillin on his arm, near the heart). Similarly, when G-d “puts on” Tefillin, there is a connection made between the G-dly intellectual attributes — so to speak — with His emotional attributes - so to speak.

The difference between “emotional” and “intellectual” capabilities in reference to G-d is similar to the difference between them in human beings. An emotional characteristic is an external display. For example, the performance of an act of kindness — a characteristic — can only be achieved with someone or something else, which is external of oneself. [Just like our father, Abraham, (the epitome of kindness) who was distressed when he didn’t find a passerby with whom to perform acts of kindness]

Intellect, on the other hand, the faculty of the mind, is internal. The intellectual capabilities of a person’s mind are connected to the essence of the person. One may sit and think all day, and not be

effected by external surroundings. So, when we refer to a G-dly emotional characteristic, we are referring to an external level of G-dliness. When we refer to a G-dly intellectual characteristic, we are referring to the internal, “essence” of G-d.

The world in which we exist was created for us by G-d in a physical and limited manner. Everything in our world has its boundary and space. The world was formed this way since it was created through a manifestation of the Divine emotional attributes. As it says in Psalms (chap. 89) *Olam chessed yibaneh*, the world was created with kindness, an emotional characteristic. Should G-d have revealed His intellectual characteristic, i.e. His essence, during creation, the world could not exist in its current physical, finite state.

The Torah, however, is the intellectual manifestation of G-d. Since intellect is the essence of a person, as mentioned above, this means that the Torah would be connected with the essence of G-d. Therefore, when a person existing in this finite world studies and fulfills the Torah, he is able to connect G-d’s essence, the Torah, with the world.

Due to lack of time, though, the Jewish people do not have the opportunity to study Torah by day and by night, and cannot achieve this great synthesis and bond between the finite and infinite. Therefore, G-d tells the Jewish people, “fulfill the Mitzvah of Tefillin and I will consider it as if you had labored in Torah study by day and by night.” When a Jew puts on Tefillin, G-d is also wearing Tefillin, which also

achieves the fusion of G-d's intellectual characteristic (through the "head" Tefillin) and His emotional external characteristic (through the "hand" Tefillin). [This explains why only boys age 13 and up wear Tefillin, not a "Koton", a young boy. Since Tefillin essentially affect the intellect, the commandment is to wait until the child has achieved a degree of maturity in his intellect, which occurs at the thirteenth birthday].

It should be understood, though, that the donning of Tefillin doesn't fully achieve the same outcome as the study of Torah. When the Midrash presents the Mitzvah of wearing Tefillin as the G-dly substitute for studying Torah day and night, it employs the word "*keilu*" or it is "as if" you studied Torah. The reason for this is that when a person studies Torah diligently, the effects are felt in this world. The wearing of Tefillin, however, only affects the spiritual source of creation of the world and the person wearing the Tefillin. We must rely upon G-d almighty Himself to cause the lower world, this world, to be effected through the Mitzvah of Tefillin.



For your enjoyment, we have included various stories connected with one of the central Mitzvos that Mendel will now be performing – Tefillin

a pair of tefillin for sandy koufax

By Dovid Zaklikowski

October 6, 1965, the first game of the '65 World Series, the Los Angeles Dodgers versus the Minnesota Twins. It's Yom Kippur night at Metropolitan Stadium, 47,797 in attendance. Sandy Koufax, lead pitcher of the LA Dodgers, refuses to play.

Koufax's refusal to pitch on Yom Kippur gained him the respect and admiration of many Jews. His courage gave many Jews the strength to not be ashamed of their Judaism.

The day after Yom Kippur, Koufax received a visit in his S. Paul hotel room from Rabbi Moshe Feller, regional director of the Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch — the educational arm of the Lubavitcher Hasidic movement. Feller congratulated Koufax for not playing on Yom Kippur and for "the great assist he gave Rabbis and Jewish educators the world over."

Rabbi Feller also brought Sandy a pair of tefillin. "Since you bat right and throw left," he told the pitcher, "I wasn't sure what type to get you." (Tefillin are worn on the weaker arm — right-handed people wrap them around their left arm, and lefties on their right arm.) "But considering what your left arm has accomplished, I decided to get you the type you put on your right arm."

Koufax accepted the gift and thanked Rabbi Feller for visiting. “The Talmud says that tefillin is representative of all the Mitzvot of the Torah,” Feller later explained. “So I could not think of a better way to honor a person for enhancing Jewish values, than by presenting him with a pair of tefillin.”

Two weeks later, at a Simchat Torah gathering, the Lubavitcher Rebbe spoke about the Jewish pitcher who refused to play on Yom Kippur (the following is a free translation from the Yiddish). “The first condition in influencing a child,” said the Rebbe, “is that the child must see a living example by his parents. If the child sees the parent studying Torah at a time when the parent would otherwise be involved in business dealings, thereby surrendering a few dollars of profit, and perhaps causing that he won’t be written up as one of the top dealers — this is an example of self-sacrifice for the child.

“Or when the parent gives up a half hour of watching television, reading the newspaper and discussing politics... even though he thinks that knows what [President] Johnson ought to do, and if Johnson would ask him, he would tell him to do it this way.... When he renounces all of this, and he doesn’t even know what the World Series is, that’s an example for your child... (Those who don’t know what ‘World Series’ is — good for them. I wish that I didn’t know...)

“There was a young man, and in fact he had a beard, he went to see the pitcher who wouldn’t pitch on Yom Kippur and he told him that he does not play baseball on Rosh Hashanah either. The young man

told the pitcher that he would like to give him a present. He gave him a pair of tefillin. The pitcher told him that he still remembers tefillin, however, he did not want to put them at that time. The young man left, and that day the pitcher lost the game... But at the end it turned out that he won the World Series, and on his table there were the tefillin. In the end, even ‘a distant individual will not be distanced’ and he will merit to put them on, and another Jew will be added to those who have donned tefillin...”



heart to heart

The bearded Chassidic Jew contemplated the passenger sitting beside him on the airplane. A middle-aged man, balding slightly, and obviously Jewish. “I must try to get him to put on Tefillin,” thought the Chassid. He turned to his neighbor, smiled, and tried to strike up a conversation but the attempt failed, for the Chassid, a recent immigrant to the new world, knew very few words of English. He tried Yiddish—the man looked at him blankly; he switched to German—the same result. In desperation he tried Russian—his fellow passenger just stared and shook his head.

The elderly Chassid furrowed his brow and stroked his beard in concentrated thought. Then, he reached into his suitcase and took out a small velvet bag. Under the watchful eye of his neighbor he withdrew the black leather boxes of the Tefillin. The Chassid took a

deep breath, turned to his neighbor, and mustering all his meager English vocabulary pointed his finger first at himself and then at the passenger. “I Jew, you Jew” he said. Then, pointing to the Tefillin he said, “I Tefillin, you Tefillin.” It was a call from one Jewish heart to another and a heart has no language barrier.

A few moments later the middle-aged businessman was allowing the bearded Chassid to wind the straps of the Tefillin around his arm in the middle of the crowded airplane and he was fighting back tears as he realized that he had long forgotten how to do the Mitzvah himself.

The businessman later discovered that his experience had been shared by millions of other people all over the globe as a result of the Tefillin Campaign launched by the Lubavitcher Rebbe at the time of the Six Day War in the Holy Land. A Tefillin booth has been set up by the Lubavitcher Chassidim at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and more than a million Jews from all walks of life, have performed the Mitzvah of Tefillin at that booth alone. To say nothing of the daily efforts by Chassidim all over the world to re-educate their fellow Jews in the fulfillment of this vital precept of the Torah.



hi-tech connectivity

By Tzvi Freeman

This was back in the early sixties, when the first mainframe computers were being introduced into business. Professor Abraham Polichenco, a pioneer in computer technology, visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe and posed a question to him:

“I know that everything that exists in the world, even something that we discover later in history, has its source somewhere in the Torah. So, where are there computers in the Torah?”

Without hesitation, the Rebbe answered, “Tefillin.” The professor was perplexed.

“What’s new about a computer?” the Rebbe continued. “You walk into a room and you see many familiar machines: A typewriter, a large tape recorder, a television set, a hole puncher, a calculator. What is new?”

“But under the floor, cables connect all these machines so they work as one.”

The professor nodded enthusiastically. He hadn’t realized it before, but yes, this is all that a computer is: A synthesis of media and processing devices.

“Now look at your own self. You have a brain. It is in one world. Your heart is in another. And your hands often end up involved in something completely foreign to both of them. Three diverse machines.

“So you put on tefillin. First thing in the day, you connect your head, your heart and your hand with these leather cables — all to work as one with one intent. And then when you go out to meet the world, all

your actions find harmony in a single coordinated purpose.”



the bulkhead

By Yaakov Brawer

There are Chassidim who relish davening on airplanes. Immediately after takeoff, a Chassid of this breed stands up in the aisle (the farther forward, the better), intones a thunderous brachah, and with a great sweeping motion, envelops himself in a tallit, causing nearby passengers to flinch as flying tzitzit miss their eyes by millimeters. He then prays with an ardor rarely seen in shul, blocking the aisle and attracting the attention of everyone on the plane, and that, of course, is precisely his intent. He is, after all, a Chassid, charged with the mission to reveal G-d's presence within whatever niche of creation he happens to occupy at any given moment. Although the airline is under the impression that it has staged the flight in order to make money, and the passengers think that they are on the plane in order to actually arrive somewhere, the Chassid knows better. The Chassid understands that the objective of the flight is to sequester 150 souls 50,000 feet above sea level so that they can watch him daven and learn that there is a G-d in the world. When finished davening, any Chassid worth his salt works the cabin, entwining Jewish men in tefillin,

reminding Jewish women to light Shabbat candles, and exhorting non-Jews to keep the seven Noahide commandments.

Although my admiration for these stalwarts knows no bounds, I am most definitely not one of them. I just do not have the genes. I abhor public display and I can not bear to make a spectacle of myself, no matter how worthy the cause. It goes without saying that I am useless on mitzvah campaigns, except in those instances in which an adult is simply needed to drive the getaway car.

Thus, some years ago, while en route to LA, my stomach knotted up as I realized that I would have to daven on the plane on my return trip. The homeward flight left too early to pray the morning service beforehand and because of the time change, it would not arrive until well past noon. The fact that the flight was scheduled for the tenth of Tevet, a fast day on which the morning service is unusually protracted, didn't help. While pondering my predicament, I recalled that, when our kids were small, my wife always asked for the bulkhead seats when we traveled. As I remembered, the bulkheads were partitions that separated the last five or so rows of seats from the rest of the plane. I looked down the aisle and confirmed that there were indeed panels partially isolating the back end of the cabin, just as I had remembered. If I could secure a seat immediately behind a panel for the return flight, I could stand facing this partition and pray in relative privacy. Such an arrangement was not ideal, but I could live with it, and I began to relax.

Immediately upon my arrival in LA I rushed to the ticket counter and procured a boarding pass for a bulkhead seat for my homeward flight. Thus assured of a reasonable place to daven, I left for the city with a light heart.

When I arrived at the departure gate for my return flight, I glanced at my precious ticket to semi-invisibility and noted, with some unease, that the seat number seemed quite low for a position at the back of the plane. My uneasiness ballooned into anxiety when I caught a glimpse of the plane. It was much larger than the one on which I had arrived and it had an upper deck. I approached the agent at the gate who examined my boarding pass and assured me that I did indeed have a bulkhead seat. However, when I boarded the plane and showed my pass to the flight attendant, she indicated a seat right at the doorway, facing the cavernous entry to the plane. I stared at her in disbelief and explained to her that I had been assigned a bulkhead seat. Just so, she replied, and pointed to the same seat. It began to dawn on me that the airline personnel and I did not speak the same language. Another brief exchange with the attendant set me straight. The “bulkhead”, as the term applied to this particular aircraft, was nothing other than the door to the plane, behind which were endless rows of seats all facing forward.

My davening that morning would be graced by a captive audience of about 300 people. Pavarotti could have wished for no better.

The plane took off and soon the captain switched

off the seatbelt sign indicating that we had reached our cruising altitude. The moment of truth had arrived, and I had no choice but to pray as best I could. As I stood up and donned tallit and tefillin, I soon discovered that the doorway area afforded plenty of space in which to stand and I found that if I positioned myself hard by the door, I was visible only to a few forward rows. Maybe it wouldn't be so bad after all. However, the revelation that it would be so bad after all was not long in coming.

Just as I finished Baruch Sh'amar, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned to confront two very impatient flight attendants standing by a mammoth mobile bar. “Sir, you can't do that here. This is the bar area”. “See here young lady, it so happens that I am a servant of G-d and a Chassid of the great and holy Rebbe of Lubavitch, and I intend to sanctify this spot by reciting my morning prayers here. So take yourself and your bar elsewhere”. This is precisely what I did not say. In fact I didn't say anything because I was between Baruch Sh'amar and Yishtabach, an interval in which speech is not permitted. I couldn't have spoken in any case because my stomach had lurched up against my diaphragm, and I began to wheeze and hyperventilate. I raised my eyebrows, which had become decorated with fine beads of sweat, and shrugged hoping that the attendants would understand this gesture as an appeal for sympathy, help and understanding. Unfortunately, they were unreceptive. They were clearly annoyed that this apparition from the biblical era had not only commandeered their bar area, but wouldn't

even speak to them. “Sir, you can do whatever you are doing at the back of the cabin near the rear galley.”

So there was a place at the back of the plane where I could do whatever I do. A sense of relief surged through my distraught brain, and my stomach let go of my diaphragm, allowing me to take a couple of normal breaths. I nodded vigorously at the flight attendants, utilizing the opportunity to shake a drop of perspiration from the tip of my nose, and I began untying the strap of my tefillin in preparation for my escape to the refuge at the back of the plane.

Suddenly I froze with the dread realization that Providence was not about to let me off so easily. This was simply one of those shlock disaster-movie interludes, the moment of false hope, in which the poor suckers about to be decimated by an inevitable and inescapable catastrophe are deluded into believing that salvation is at hand.

I would remove my tallit and tefillin and walk to the rear of the cabin, but what then? Did I need to recite a brachah upon re-strapping the tefillin or not? Did a walk down the aisle of the aircraft imply hesech hadaat (loss of conscious attention from the tefillin)? If it did, then a blessing was required. If not, and I recited the blessing on the tefillin, it would be “a brachah in vain” - a severe halachic prohibition.. Although instinctively I felt that a brachah was unnecessary, I wasn’t really sure. Just two weeks before I had listened in on a complicated debate on just this subject at the Yeshivah, and the situation was far from clear. What should I do? My frenzied cogitations were cut

short by the flight attendants, now, openly hostile, who insisted that I must move at once.

There was no way out. I picked up my tallit bag, took my prayer book and walked the full length of the plane, resplendent in tallit and tefillin. My trek down the aisle electrified the entire cabin. “What the...?” “Mommy, what’s that ?” “Hey look Lucy, Moses is back” “Bizarre, man” “What’s that box on his head?” From the corner of my eye, I caught images of bewilderment, shock, and amusement. As for me, the death of a thousand cuts would have been preferable. Somehow I made it to the semisecluded haven at the back of the cabin and tried to collect myself. I started to daven but the only prayerful thought that I could muster was a fervent hope that the rear emergency door would blow open, and I would be mercifully sucked out of the aircraft.

This would never do. I had to pull myself together and daven properly. After all, the brain, by virtue of its innate superiority, rules the heart, right? I thought of Reb Mendel Futerfas (of blessed memory), who managed to perform mitzvot and daven with zeal in a Siberian labor camp surrounded by the dregs of humanity. I reminded myself of the parable in Tanya of the “heathen” whose efforts to distract a Jew from praying were really a Divine gift, intended to elicit from the afflicted individual hidden spiritual strengths. I told myself that this episode presented a golden opportunity to transcend my own personal limitations, and that I should be overjoyed. None of it worked. The emotional turbulence and the effects of caffeine withdrawal as

a result of the fast had dissipated whatever inner resources I might have had. My brain, despite its vaunted innate superiority, did not rule my heart, nor, for that matter, any other part of me. I recited the prayers like a zombie and removed my tefillin and tallit. I cringed at the thought of walking back up the aisle to my seat, and I briefly considered crawling, until I realized that everyone would be able to see me anyway.

I hunched my shoulders, stared at the floor and quickly proceeded up the aisle. The cabin was quiet and fairly dark. It was obvious that the in-flight movie had begun. I glanced up at the movie screen and the marvel that met my eyes stopped me dead in my tracks. There on the screen were Jews, dozens of them, all wearing tallit and tefillin, and all davening. I couldn't get over it. I stood and watched until this extraordinary tableau faded to another scene, and I then continued up the aisle. The movie, which as I later discovered was "The Jazz Singer", had also apparently made quite an impression on the other passengers.

As I made my way, I attracted considerable attention, but it was of a totally different kind than that which I had received an hour earlier. The looks were those of admiration and respect. People nodded knowingly to each other and smiled. I saw one woman pointing to me and explaining something to her small child. People in aisle seats wished me good morning and one man even stood up. When I arrived at my place the erstwhile testy flight attendants deferentially inquired after my comfort.

I was aglow with wonder, gratification, and thank-

fulness. I was also more than a little ashamed of myself. The Almighty did not produce and direct this magnificently orchestrated comedy of errors only in order to apprise 300 people of His eternal and all-encompassing presence. It seems that the 301st passenger, namely myself, was also in need of some serious instruction in this ultimate truth.

I thought of the Kotsker Rebbe. When he was a child someone jokingly told him "Mendel, I will give you a penny if you tell me where G-d is". The little boy answered "I will give you two if you tell me where He is not."



a telling tale

A lively young school boy went with his grandfather to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe one day in 1954. The purpose of the visit was to receive a blessing before his upcoming Bar Mitzvah.

He was surprised when the Rebbe asked him, in English, "which sports do you like best?"

"Baseball" the boy replied.

"Do you ever play baseball with your friends?" the Rebbe asked him.

"Yes" the boy answered.

"And do you ever see professional games?"

"Sure I do." replied the boy.

"What's the difference between your games and the professionals?" asked the Rebbe.

“Rabbi, when we play, it’s just ‘kids stuff,’ but the professional games are for real” answered the young boy.

The Rebbe addressed the boy with a broad smile and said “In your heart you have a big playing field. The two teams are the yetzer tov, the good inclination, and the yetzer hara, the negative drive. Until now they played ‘kids stuff,’ but from now on the game is for real!

Remember, just as in baseball, the side that plays the best will win. If you only want to, you can always overcome your yetzer hara.”



The date of Levi’s Bar Mitzvah coincides with the anniversary of the redemption from Russian imprisonment of the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe of blessed memory in 1927.

We have included a talk by the Lubavitcher Rebbe explaining the significance and message of this very special day.

The Power Of Resolution

The Prisoner Who Refused to be Intimidated

In *Likkutei Dibburim*, the Previous Rebbe — Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn of Lubavitch — describes the details of his imprisonment in 1927 by the Soviet authorities for his efforts to spread Judaism and Chassidism among his fellow Jews. These recollections are significant not only as a

historical record, but also because they reveal the inner spiritual dynamic of his imprisonment and redemption.

From the beginning of his imprisonment, the Previous Rebbe resolved that he would not be affected by the authorities who had imprisoned him. This resolution had implications beyond his commitment not to compromise in Torah observance. The Previous Rebbe did not perceive the Soviet authorities as having any power at all. In his eyes, they were “utter nothingness and void.” He refused to cooperate under interrogation and responded to them with pride and integrity. Despite the physical discomfort and the blows he suffered at their hands, he was not intimidated, nor did he allow them to break his spirit.

“Who Will Teach Whom”

On Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, guards entered his cell and ordered him to stand. He refused. The guards explained that they had information for him and that the prison rules required that he stand to receive it. He again refused. They threatened to beat him, and when he did not obey them, they carried out their threat.

This scenario was repeated three times. Before the last blows were administered, one of the exasperated guards told the Rebbe, “We’ll teach you a lesson!” The Rebbe responded, “The question is, who will teach whom....”

Realizing that their attempts to intimidate him were ineffective, the Soviet authorities invited him into an office and informed him of his sentence — three years’ exile in Kostroma. (On the desk before him, the Previous Rebbe noticed his file. He saw that his sentence had actually been commuted. He had at first been condemned to execution; the second sentence suggested was twelve years’ hard la-

bor; and only the final ruling, three years of exile, was delivered.)

The date was Thursday, the first day of Rosh Chodesh Tammuz. He was informed that he would be granted several hours at home and then he would depart by train to Kostroma. He asked the prison authorities when he was scheduled to arrive in Kostroma and was told that he would arrive on *Shabbos*.

He refused to go. One of the officials warned that if he did not comply with their orders, he would not be granted another opportunity to leave prison. He replied that he was prepared to stay in prison for as long as necessary; he would not travel on *Shabbos*.

Shocked by the Rebbe's defiance, the authorities paused for consultation with leading government officials. After some hours, they agreed to detain him in prison over *Shabbos* and allow him to travel on Sunday, the Third of Tammuz.

"Our Souls Were Never Sent Into Exile"

In preparation for his arrival, the Previous Rebbe dispatched R. Michael Dvorkin to Kostroma. There, this trusted elder chassid promptly collected the local Jewish children and established a *cheder*. He also inspected the local *mikveh* and made it halachically faultless. Ironically, the very activities for which the Previous Rebbe had been arrested were now being carried out with the knowledge and consent of the Soviet authorities.

Before setting out for Kostroma, the Previous Rebbe briefly took leave of his chassidim, urging them to continue their efforts to spread the practice of Judaism:

It must be made known to all the nations on the face of

the earth that our bodies alone were banished into exile and subjugated to the dominion of the nations. Our souls were never exiled, nor were they subjugated to the nations.

It must be publicly declared that no one can exert any influence whatever on our faith, on the Torah, on its *mitzvos*, and on Jewish custom.

A Positive Spiral of Activity Gathers Momentum

This message, its impact heightened by the circumstances under which it was delivered, made a profound impression on the chassidim. Shortly afterward, on the Twelfth and Thirteenth of Tammuz respectively, the Previous Rebbe was notified of his impending release and in fact released from exile entirely. As he himself later pointed out, this series of events indicated that the Soviet government had consented to his efforts to spread Torah observance.

The Previous Rebbe's imprisonment thus bore rich fruit, inspiring further efforts to spread our Jewish heritage. The positive effects of these events continue and are enhanced from year to year, as the commemoration of Yud-Beis Tammuz encourages others to continue along the paths opened by the Previous Rebbe.

The lesson of the Previous Rebbe's redemption is relevant in all situations. When a person resolves that all the obstacles to spreading Torah have no substance, and he perseveres in his commitment in the face of all difficulties, the truth of his resolution will be revealed to him. He will come to understand that "the Torah, its *mitzvos*, and the Jewish people are eternal," and that all the forces which appear to oppose them are temporary challenges. When one

persists in one's efforts to spread Judaism, these obstacles will disappear. Moreover, even the opposing forces themselves will be transformed into influences which contribute to the dissemination of Torah.

One Redemption Leading to Another

The Previous Rebbe's redemption on *Yud-Beis* Tammuz led to his coming to the United States, a change in location that had two effects. On the one hand, being in America enabled him to disseminate Judaism and Chassidism without all the difficulties encountered in Europe. However, the American environment also confronted chassidim with a challenge — that of maintaining the intensity of commitment aroused by a threat to one's existence when that threat no longer existed.

The Previous Rebbe withstood this challenge as well, initiating trailblazing activities which ultimately established America as a major Torah center for our people. With untiring optimism and perseverance, he opened up new frontiers in his efforts to disseminate the observance of Torah.

His redemption on *Yud-Beis* Tammuz was thus not a personal matter; it affected our entire people. As the positive effects brought about by this redemption continue and grow, we are able to see openly, and not only appreciate on a spiritual plane, that his redemption served as a preparation for the ultimate Redemption which we will experience with the coming of *Mashiach*. May this take place in the immediate future.

Adapted from *Likkutei Sichos*



THE PREVIOUS LUBAVITCHER REBBE,
RABBI JOSEPH I. SCHNEERSOH OF BLESSED MEMORY



THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE,
RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSOH OF BLESSED MEMORY

PSALM 108

1. A song, a psalm by David. 2. My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and chant praises even with my soul. 3. Awake, O lyre and harp; I shall awaken the dawn. 4. I will thank You among the nations, Lord; I will sing praises to You among the peoples. 5. Indeed, Your kindness reaches above the heavens; Your truth reaches to the skies. 6. Be exalted upon the heavens, O God, [show] Your glory upon all the earth. 7. That Your beloved ones may be delivered, help with Your right hand and answer me. 8. God spoke in His holiness that I would exult, I would divide portions [of the enemies' land], I would measure the Valley of Succot. 9. Mine is Gilead, mine is Manasseh, and Ephraim is the stronghold of my head, Judah is my prince. 10. Moab is my washbasin, I will cast my shoe upon Edom, I will shout over Philistia. 11. Who brings me to the fortified city? Who led me unto Edom? 12. Is it not God, Who has [until now] forsaken us, and did not go forth, O God, with our armies? 13. Give us help against the adversary; futile is the help of man. 14. Through God we will do valiantly, and He will trample our oppressors.

תהלים קח

« שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר לְדָוִד: ב נְכוֹן לְבִי
 אֱלֹהִים, אֲשִׁירָה וְאֹמְרָה אֶף-כְּבוֹדִי: ג
 עֹרָה הַיַּבֵּל וְכִנּוֹר אֲעִירָה שָׁחַר: ד
 אֹדֶךָ בְּעַמִּים, יְהוָה, וְאֹמְרָךָ
 בְּלְאֵמִים: ה כִּי-גָדַל מֵעַל-שָׁמַיִם חֶסְדְּךָ,
 וְעַד-שְׁחָקִים אִמְתָּךְ: ו רֹמְמָה עַל-שָׁמַיִם
 אֱלֹהִים, וְעַל כָּל-הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדְךָ: ז
 לְמַעַן יִחַלְצֶנּוּ יְדִידֶיךָ, הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינֶךָ
 וְעֲנֵנִי: ח אֱלֹהִים דְּבַר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֶזָה
 אֲחַלְקָהּ, שָׁכֶם וְעַמְּךָ סִפּוֹת אֲמַדְדֶּ: ט
 לִי גִלְעָד לִי מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם מְעוֹז
 רִאשֵׁי, יְהוּדָה מְחַקְקֵי: י מוֹאָב סִיר
 רְחֵצִי, עַל-אֲדוֹם אֲשַׁלֵּךְ נַעְלִי, עָלַי-
 פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֲתַרְוּעֵעַ: יא מִי יִבְלִנִי עִיר
 מִבְּצָר, מִי נָחֲנִי עַד-אֲדוֹם: יב הֲלֹא-
 אֱלֹהִים וְנַחֲתָנוּ, וְלֹא-תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים
 בְּצַבָּאוֹתֵינוּ: יג הֲבֵחַלְנוּ עֹזְרֵת מִצָּר,
 וְשׂוֹא תְשׁוּעַת אָדָם: יד בְּאֱלֹהִים
 נַעֲשֶׂה-חֵיל, וְהוֹא יְבוֹם צָרֵינוּ:

From heaven, may there be invoked upon him and upon us such merit which will bring enduring peace. May we receive blessing from the Lord and kindness from God our deliverer, and may we find grace and good understanding in the eyes of God and man.

On Shabbat:

May the Merciful One let us inherit that day which will be all Shabbat and rest for life everlasting.

On Rosh Chodesh:

May the Merciful One renew for us this month for good and for blessing.

On Festivals:

May the Merciful One let us inherit that day which is all good.

On Sukkot:

May the Merciful One restore for us the fallen *sukkah* of David.

On Rosh HaShanah:

May the Merciful One renew for us this year for good and for blessing.

May the Merciful One grant us the privilege of reaching the days of the *Mashiach* and the life of the World to Come. He gives great deliverance (*On Shabbat, Festivals, Rosh Chodesh and Chol HaMoed substitute: He is a tower of deliverance*) to His king, and bestows kindness upon His anointed, to David and his descendants forever. He who makes peace in His heavens, may He make peace for us and for all Israel; and say, Amen.

Fear the Lord, you His holy ones, for those who fear Him suffer no want. Young lions are in need and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good. Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His kindness is everlasting. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and the Lord will be his security.

If the Blessing After a Meal was recited over a cup of wine, the following berachah is said:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

מְפָרוֹם יִלְמְדוּ עָלָיו וְעָלֵינוּ זְכוּת שְׁתֵּהא לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת שְׁלוֹם. וְנִשְׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יי. וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְנִמְצָא חַן וְשִׁבְלָה טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאָדָם:

בשבת:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יִנְחֵלְנוּ לַיּוֹם שֶׁבִּלּוֹ שַׁבָּת וּמְנוּחָה לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָמִים:

בראש חודש:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יַחְדֵּשׁ עָלֵינוּ אֶת הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לְטוֹבָה וְלִבְרָכָה:

ביום טוב:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יִנְחֵלְנוּ לַיּוֹם שֶׁבִּלּוֹ טוֹב:

בסוכות:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יָקִים לָנוּ אֶת סִבְתֵּי יוֹד הַנוֹפְלֹת:

בראש השנה:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יַחְדֵּשׁ עָלֵינוּ אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת לְטוֹבָה וְלִבְרָכָה:

הַרְחֵמֶן הוּא יִזְכְּנוּ לַיּוֹמֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ וְלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא: מְגִדִּיל (בשבת ויום ור"ח וזוה"מ אומר מְגִדִּיל) יִשְׁוֹעוֹת מִלְּבֹו וְעֵשָׂה חֶסֶד לְמִשְׁיחוֹ לְדָוִד וְלְזֶרְעוֹ עַד עוֹלָם: עֵשָׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יִרְאוּ אֶת יי קְדוֹשָׁיו כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לַיִדְאָיו: כְּפִידִים רָשׁוּ וְרַעֲבּוּ וְדוֹרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא יַחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב: חוֹדוּ לַיי כִּי טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסְדּוֹ: פּוֹתַח אֶת יָדָךְ וּמִשְׁפִּיעַ לְכָל חַי רִצּוֹן: כְּרוּךְ הַנִּבְרָ אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בּוֹ וְתִהְיֶה יי מְבַטְחוֹ:

ומברך על הכוס:

כְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן:

ברוך Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, benevolent God, our Father, our King, our Strength, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Maker, our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, our Shepherd, the Shepherd of Israel, the King who is good and does good to all, each and every day. He has done good for us, He does good for us, and He will do good for us; He has bestowed, He bestows, and He will forever bestow upon us grace, kindness and mercy, relief, salvation and success, blessing and deliverance, consolation, livelihood and sustenance, compassion, life, peace and all goodness; and may He never cause us to lack any good.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One reign over us forever and ever.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One be blessed in heaven and on earth.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One be praised for all generations, and pride Himself in us forever and all eternity, and glorify Himself in us forever and ever.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One provide our livelihood with honor.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One break the yoke of exile from our neck and may He lead us upright to our land.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One send abundant blessing into this house and upon this table at which we have eaten.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One send us Elijah the prophet — may he be remembered for good — and let him bring us good tidings, deliverance and consolation.

Many follow the custom of adding:

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One bless our master, our teacher, and our Rebbe.

הַרְחֵמֵן May the Merciful One bless my father, my teacher, the master of this house and my mother, my teacher, the mistress of this house; them, their household, their children, and all that is theirs; us, and all that is ours. Just as He blessed our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, “in all things,” “by all things,” with “all things,” so may He bless all of us together (the children of the Covenant) with a perfect blessing, and let us say, Amen.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. הָאֵל. אָבִינוּ. מִלְּבָנוּ. אֲדִירָנוּ. בּוֹרְאָנוּ. גּוֹאֲלָנוּ. יוֹצְרָנוּ. קְדוֹשֵׁנוּ קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב. רוֹעֵנוּ רוֹעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל. הַמְּלִיךְ הַטּוֹב וְהַמְּטִיב לְכָל בְּכָל יוֹם וַיּוֹם. הוּא הַיְטִיב לָנוּ הוּא מְטִיב לָנוּ הוּא יְיַטִּיב לָנוּ. הוּא גִמְלָנוּ הוּא גּוֹמְלָנוּ הוּא נִגְמְלָנוּ לְעַד. לְחַן וְלְחֶסֶד וְלְרַחֲמִים. וְלָרוּחַ הַצְּלָה וְהַצְּלָחָה. בְּרַכָּה וַיְשׁוּעָה. נְחֻמָּה. פְּרִנְסָה וּכְלִפְלָה. וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם וְכָל טוֹב. וּמְכַל טוֹב לְעוֹלָם אֵל יַחֲסְרָנוּ:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יְמַלֹּךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִתְבַּרַךְ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִשְׁתַּבַּח לְדוֹר דּוֹרִים. וַיִּתְפָּאֵר בְּנוֹ לְעַד וְלִנְצַח נְצַחִים. וַיִּתְהַדָּר בְּנוֹ לְעַד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִפְרִנְסֵנוּ בְּכַבּוֹד:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִשְׁבּוֹר עוֹל גְּלוּת* מֵעַל צְוֹאֲרֵנוּ וְהוּא יוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאָרְצֵנוּ:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִשְׁלַח בְּרַכָּה מְרַבָּה בְּבֵית זֶה וְעַל שְׁלֹחַן זֶה שְׂאֵכְלָנוּ עָלָיו:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַנְּבִיא זְכוּר לְטוֹב וַיְבַשֵּׁר לָנוּ בְּשׂוֹרוֹת טוֹבוֹת יְשׁוּעוֹת וְנְחֻמוֹת:

כמה מחסידים נוהגים לומר:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אֶת אֲדוֹנֵינוּ מוֹרְנוּ וְרַבֵּינוּ:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אֶת אָבִי מוֹרֵי בַעַל הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה וְאֶת אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי בַעֲלַת הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה. אוֹתָם וְאֶת בֵּיתָם וְאֶת זְרַעָם וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם. אוֹתָנוּ וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָנוּ. כְּמוֹ שֶׁבָּרַךְ אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרְהָם יִצְחָק וַיַּעֲקֹב. בְּכָל מִבְּל כָּל. כֵּן יְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָנוּ (כִּי בְרִית) בְּלָנוּ יַחַד בְּבְרַכָּה שְׁלֵמָה. וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן:

(* נ"א: עול הגוים)

נוֹדָה We offer thanks to You, Lord our God, for having given as a heritage to our ancestors a precious, good and spacious land; for having brought us out, Lord our God, from the land of Egypt and redeemed us from the house of bondage; for Your covenant which You have sealed in our flesh; for Your Torah which You have taught us; for Your statutes which You have made known to us; for the life, favor and kindness which You have graciously bestowed upon us; and for the food we eat with which You constantly nourish and sustain us every day, at all times, and at every hour.

On Chanukah and Purim (and . . . for the miracles) is recited here.

ועל And [we thank You] for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds, for the saving acts, and for the wonders which You have wrought for our ancestors in those days, at this time —

On Chanukah:

בימי In the days of Matityahu, the son of Yochanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Hellenic government rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will. But You, in Your abounding mercies, stood by them in the time of their distress. You waged their battles, defended their rights and avenged the wrong done to them. You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton sinners into the hands of those who occupy themselves with Your Torah. You made a great and holy name for Yourself in Your world, and effected a great deliverance and redemption for Your people to this very day. Then Your children entered the shrine of Your House, cleansed Your Temple, purified your Sanctuary, kindled lights in Your holy courtyards, and instituted these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and praise to Your great Name.

On Purim:

בימי In the days of Mordechai and Esther, in Shushan the capital, when the wicked Haman rose up against them, and sought to destroy, slaughter and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to take their spoil for plunder. But You, in Your abounding mercies, foiled his counsel and frustrated his intention, and caused the evil he planned — to recoil on his own head, and they hanged him and his sons upon the gallows.

ועל For all this, Lord our God, we give thanks to You and bless You. May Your Name be blessed by the mouth of every

נוֹדָה לָךְ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ. עַל שֶׁהִנְחַלְתָּ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ חֲמֻדָּה מְזוּנָה וְרַחֲבָה. וְעַל שֶׁהוֹצַאתָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. וּפְדִיתָנוּ מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים. וְעַל בְּרִיתְךָ שֶׁחֲתַמְתָּ בְּבִשְׂרָנוּ. וְעַל תּוֹרַתְךָ שֶׁלְמַדְתָּנוּ. וְעַל חֻקֶּיךָ שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּנוּ. וְעַל חַיִּים חַן וְחֶסֶד שֶׁחֹנְנֵתָנוּ. וְעַל אֲכִילַת מְזוּזָה שֶׁאַתָּה זָן וּמְפַרְנֵם אוֹתָנוּ תָּמִיד. בְּכָל-יוֹם וּבְכָל-עֵת וּבְכָל-שָׁעָה:

בחנוכה ופורים אומרים כאן ועל הנסים ואם שכח אזי כשיגיע אצל הרחמן יאמר הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו נסים כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה בימי וכו':

ועל הנסים. ועל הפרקן. ועל הגבורות. ועל התשועות. ועל הנפלאות. שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה:

לפורים

ביומי

מִדְרָבִי בְּשִׁשָּׁן הַבִּירָה. בְּשַׁעֲמַד עֲלֵיהֶם הַמֶּן הַרְשָׁע. בְּקֶשׁ לְחַשְׁמִיד לְהַרְגוֹ וּלְאַבְדֵּ אֶת כָּל הַיְהוּדִים מִנְעַר וְעַד זְקֵן סָף וְנָשִׁים בָּיּוֹם אֶחָד. בְּשִׁלְשָׁה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר. הוּא הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. וְשִׁלְלָם לְבוֹז: וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים. הִפְרַת אֶת עֲצָתוֹ. וְקַלְקַלְתָּ אֶת מַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ. וְהִשְׁבֹּתָ לוֹ גְּמוּלוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ. וְתָלוּ אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בָּנָיו עַל הָעֵץ:

לחנוכה

ביומי

מִתְתַּיְחוּ בְּן יוֹחָנָן בְּחַן גְּדוֹל חֲשִׁמוֹנָאִי וּבְנָיו. בְּשַׁעֲמַד מְלָכוֹת וְזֵן הַרְשָׁעָה עַל עַמּוֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁבִּיחַם תּוֹרַתְךָ וּלְהַעֲבִירָם מִחֻקֵּי רְצוֹנָךְ: וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים עֲמַדְתָּ לָהֶם בַּעַת צָרָתָם. רִבַּת אֶת רִיבָם. דָּגַת אֶת דִּינָם. נִקְמַתְתָּ אֶת נִקְמָתָם. מִסְרַת גְּבוּרִים בְּיַד חֲלָשִׁים. וְרִבִּים בְּיַד מַעֲשִׂים. וּמִמְאִים בְּיַד מְהוּרִים. וְרַשְׁעִים בְּיַד צְדִיקִים. וְיוֹדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תּוֹרַתְךָ. וְלֹא עֲשִׂיתָ שָׁם גְּדוֹל וּקְדוּשָׁה כְּעוֹלָמָךְ. וְלַעֲמֻד יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשִׂיתָ תְּשׁוּעָה גְּדוֹלָה וּפְרַקְנָן בְּחַיִּים תְּהֵא: וְאַחַר כֵּךְ בָּאוּ בְּנֵיךָ לְדַבֵּר בִּיתְךָ. וּפְנֵנו אֶת הַיְכָלְךָ. וּמְהֵרוּ אֶת מִקְדָּשְׁךָ. וְהִדְלִיקוּ נֵרוֹת בְּחִצְרוֹת קְדֻשָּׁךְ. וּקְבַעוּ שְׂמוֹנֶת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה אֵלֶינוּ. לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל:

ועל הכל יי אלהינו אנחנו מודים לך ומברכים אותך. יתברך שמך בפי כל חי תמיד לעולם ועד:

Before washing the fingers, the following is said:

זה This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage assigned to him by God.

After washing the fingers, the following is said:

וַיִּדְבֹר And he said to me: This is the table that is before the Lord.

When blessing with a quorum of three or more, the Leader begins:

רְבוֹתַי Gentlemen, let us say the Blessings.

The others respond:

יְהִי May the Name of the Lord be blessed from now and to all eternity.

The Leader [repeats the preceding response and] continues:

When blessing with a quorum of less than ten:

בְּרִשׁוֹת With your permission, esteemed gentlemen, let us bless Him of whose bounty we have eaten.

The others respond:

בְּרוּךְ Blessed be He of whose bounty we have eaten and by whose goodness we live.

[The Leader repeats this response.]

Those present who did not partake of the meal respond:

בְּרוּךְ Blessed and praised be His Name continually forever and ever.

At a wedding feast, the Leader substitutes:

בְּרִשׁוֹת With your permission, esteemed gentlemen, let us bless our God in whose abode there is joy, of whose bounty we have eaten.

The others respond:

בְּרוּךְ Blessed be our God in whose abode there is joy, of whose bounty we have eaten and by whose goodness we live.

בְּרוּךְ Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who, in His goodness, provides sustenance for the entire world with grace, with kindness and with mercy. He gives food to all flesh, for His kindness is everlasting. Through His great goodness to us continuously we do not lack [food], and may we never lack food, for the sake of His great Name. For He, benevolent God, provides nourishment and sustenance for all, does good to all, and prepares food for all His creatures whom He has created, as it is said: You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Blessed are You Lord, who provides food for all.

קודם מים אחרונים יאמר פסוק זה:

זה | חֲלֹק־אֲדָם רֶשַׁע מֵאֱלֹהִים וְנַחֲלַת אִמְרוֹ מֵאֵל:

אחרי מים אחרונים יאמר פסוק זה:

וַיִּדְבֹר אֵלַי זֶה הַשֻּׁלְחָן אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:

אם מברכין בדיומן אומר המברך:

הב לן וּנְבָרְךָ (או בליא רבותי מיר וויעלן פּענמֶשן).

ועונין המסובין:

יהי שם יי מְבָרְךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

ואם הם עשרה אומר המברך:

בְּרִשׁוֹת מְרַגְּנִי וְרַבְּנֵי וְרַבּוֹתַי.

נְבָרְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו.

ועונין המסובין:

בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו

וּבְמִוּבּוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

ומי שלא אכל עונה:

בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּמְבָרְךָ שְׁמוֹ

תְּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעַד.

אם הם פחות מעשרה אומר המברך:

בְּרִשׁוֹת מְרַגְּנִי וְרַבְּנֵי וְרַבּוֹתַי.

נְבָרְךָ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו.

ועונין המסובין:

בְּרוּךְ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו

וּבְמִוּבּוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

ומי שלא אכל עמהם עונה:

בְּרוּךְ וּמְבָרְךָ שְׁמוֹ

תְּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעַד.

לנשואין

בסעודה נשואין אומר המברך:

בְּרִשׁוֹת מְרַגְּנִי וְרַבְּנֵי וְרַבּוֹתַי.

נְבָרְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁהַשְׂמַחָה בְּמַעֲוֵנוּ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו.

ועונין המסובין:

בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁהַשְׂמַחָה בְּמַעֲוֵנוּ שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ מִשְּׁלֹו וּבְמִוּבּוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. תִּזְוֹן אֶת הָעוֹלָם

כָּלוּ. בְּמִוּבּוֹ בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים. הוּא נוֹתֵן

לְחֵם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר. בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ: וּבְמִוּבּוֹ הַגְּדוֹל

עֲמָנוּ תְּמִיד לֹא חָסַר לָנוּ וְאֵל יַחֲסַר לָנוּ מִזִּוּוֹן לְעוֹלָם

וְעַד. בְּעֵבֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגְּדוֹל. בִּי הוּא אֵל זֶן וּמְפָרְנֵם לְכָל

וּמַטִּיב לְכָל וּמַכִּיִן מִזִּוּוֹן לְכָל-בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא:

כְּאִמּוֹר. פּוֹתַח אֶת יָדְךָ וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל-חַי רְצוֹן: בְּרוּךְ

אַתָּה יי. תִּזְוֹן אֶת הַכָּל:

On days when Tachnun is recited, the following is said before washing the fingers:

על By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept as we remembered Zion. There, upon the willows we hung our harps. For there our captors demanded of us songs, and those who scorned us — rejoicing, [saying,] “Sing to us of the songs of Zion.” How can we sing the song of the Lord on alien soil? If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its dexterity. Let my tongue cleave to my palate if I will not remember you, if I will not bring to mind Jerusalem during my greatest joy! Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, when they said, “Raze it, raze it to its very foundation!” O Babylon, who are destined to be laid waste, happy is he who will repay you in retribution for what you have inflicted on us. Happy is he who will seize and crush your infants against the rock!

למנצח For the Choirmaster; a song with instrumental music; a Psalm. May God be gracious to us and bless us, may He make His countenance shine upon us forever; that Your way be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. The nations will extol You, O God; all the nations will extol You. The nations will rejoice and sing for joy, for You will judge the peoples justly and guide the nations on earth forever. The peoples will extol You, O God; all the peoples will extol You, for the earth will have yielded its produce and God, our God, will bless us. God will bless us; and all, from the furthest corners of the earth, shall fear Him.

On days when Tachnun is not recited, the following is said before washing the fingers:

A Song of Ascents. When the Lord will return the exiles of Zion, we will have been like dreamers. Then our mouth will be filled with laughter, and our tongue with songs of joy; then will they say among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for these.” The Lord has done great things for us; we were joyful. Lord, return our exiles as streams to arid soil. Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He goes along weeping, carrying the bag of seed; he will surely return with songs of joy, carrying his sheaves.

לבני By the sons of Korach, a Psalm, a Song whose basic theme is the holy mountains [of Zion and Jerusalem]. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, eternal city of God. I will remind Rahav and Babylon concerning My beloved; Philistia and Tyre as well as Ethiopia, “This one was born there.” And to Zion will be said, “This person and that was born there;” and He, the Most High, will establish it. The Lord will count in the register of people, “This one was born there.” Selah. Singers as well as dancers [will sing your praise and say], “All my inner thoughts are of you.”

אברכה I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise is always in my mouth. Ultimately, all is known; fear God, and observe His commandments; for this is the whole purpose of man. My mouth will utter the praise of the Lord; let all flesh bless His holy Name forever. And we will bless the Lord from now to eternity. Praise the Lord.

קודם מים אחרונים יאמר על נהרות בבל:

על-נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם-כבינו כוכרנו את-ציון: על-ערבים כתובה תלינו כנרותינו: כי שם שאלונו שובינו דבר-שיר ותוללינו שמחה שירו לנו משיר ציון: איד נשיר את-שיר יהוה על אדמת נגר: אם אשכחך ורושלים תשכח ימיני: תדבק לשוני לחכי אסילא אוקרבי אסילא אעלה את-ירושלים על ראש שמחתי: וכו' יהוה לבני אדם את יום וירושלים האמרים ערו ערו עד תסוד ביה: בת-כבל תשרודה אשרי שישלם-לך את גמולך שנמלת לנו: אשרי שיאחו ונפץ את-עוללך אלה-תסלע:

למנצח כננינות מומזר שיר: אלהים יחננו ויברכנו יאר פניו אתנו סלה: לדעת פארץ הרבה בכל-גוים ישועתך: יודוך עמים אלהים יודוך עמים כלם: ישמחו וירננו לאמים ביר-תשפט עמים מישר ולאמים פארץ תנחם סלה: יודוך עמים אלהים יודוך עמים כלם: ארץ נתנה יבולה יברכנו אלהים אלהינו: יברכנו אלהים וראו אתו פלא-אפס-ארץ: ארצה-גו:

ואם הוא יום שאין אומרים בו תחנון אומרים זה:

שיר המעלות בשוב יי את-שיבת ציון היינו כחלמים: או ימלא שחוק פינו ולשונונו רנה או יאמרו בגוים הגדיל יי לעשות עם-אלה: הגדיל יי לעשות עמנו היינו שמחים: שובה יי את-שביתנו כאפיקים כנגב: תודעים כדמעה ברנה יקצרו: הלודך ילך | וככה נשא משה-הגורע בא-יבא ברנה נשא אלמתי:

לבני-קרח מומזר שיר יסודתו כהררי-קדש: אהב יי שערי ציון מכל משכנות יעקב: נכבדות מדבר כף עיר האלהים סלה: אוקיר רחב וכבל לידעי הנה פלשת וצור עסיבוש זה ילד-שם: ולציון יאמר איש ואיש ילד-בה והוא יכוננה עליון: יי יספר כבתוב עמים זה ילד-שם סלה: ושירים כחללים כל מעניי כד: ארצה-גו:

אברכה את-יהוה בכל-יעת תמיד תהלתו כפי: סוף דבר הכל נשמע את-האלהים ירא ואת-מצותיו שמור כייזה כל-האדם: תהלת יהוה ודבר-פי ויברך כל-בשר שם קדשו לעולם ועד: ואנחנו | נברך יה מעתה ועד-עולם תללויה: