

Down to Earth!

On the annual *Yom Hillulah*, day of passing, of a saintly man (Tanya, Iggeres Hakodesh, Epistle 27), "All of his actions, his Torah, and the Divine service in which he engaged all the days of his life," ascend, and, "The illumination of these supernal lights radiates over all his disciples, who became servants of G-d through his teachings and worship," and (ibid, Epistle 28), "All the effort of man, in which his soul toiled during his lifetime (and which remains) above, in a hidden and obscured state, is revealed and radiates in a manifest way, from above downward, at the time of his passing --and so too, every year, on his *Yom Hillulah*, when the illuminations and elicitions of the original day of passing are aroused and drawn down again." Hence, on a *Yom Hillulah*, it is upon us to concentrate on what was the primary focus of the saintly man's, "actions, his Torah, and the Divine service," and glean from it a lesson for our day-to-day life. The Previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yoseph Yitzchak of Lubavitch's (-Link) *Yom Hillulah* (-Link), is the 10th of *Shevat* (5710 - Saturday, January 28, 1950; coinciding with this year's Gregorian Calendar on, Wednesday, February 1, 2023). Therefore, it is upon us to find among the myriads of, "All of his actions, his Torah, and the Divine service in which he engaged all the days of his life," being a Rebbe (-Link), Prince of His Generation, what was his primary focus.

Being that Rabbi Yoseph Yitzchok of Lubavitch wrote a *maamor* (-Link) to be published and learned for the very day of his *Yom Hillulah*, called, *Basi L'Gani* (-Link), hence, we must but look into this *maamor* to find our answer:

- (i) *Promptitude*: At the end of the *maamor*, the Previous Rebbe speaks of promptitude in Torah and Mitzvot, "For who is he who knows his moment and time," as the sages state (-Devorim Rabba, Portion 9:3), "There is no man who rules to say, 'wait for me until I do my calculations and until I give orders to my household, and after that I will come.'"

Hence, the *maamor* is saying that promptitude in Torah and Mitzvot is not just a detail of our service -- such as (-Rashi, Exodus 12:17), "We may not permit the commandments to become leavened¹ -i.e., to wait too long before we perform them-, but if it (a commandment) comes into your hand, perform it immediately"-- but rather, that promptitude is an all-encompassing foundation to all of our service to G-d.

1. Meaning that not only is procrastination not preferred, but even more, it becomes *chametz* (leavened), a negative concept.

- (ii) *Making A Dwelling Place for G-d*: At the beginning of the *maamor*, it is explained that all service to G-d is about (-Tanchumah, Naso, Portion 16) "The Holy One, blessed be He, desired that there be for Him, blessed be He, a dwelling place in the lower worlds." And while this be an all-encompassing concept of each and every service to G-d, be it in Mitzvot-observance, (-Ethics C2, M12 3:6), "All your actions be for the sake of heaven," or (-Proverbs 3:6), "In all your ways know Him," nevertheless, on the day of the Previous Rebbe's *Yom Hillulah*, we must find for which specific guidance he is applying this, in accordance with, "All of his actions, his Torah, and the Divine service in which he engaged all the days of his life."

Let us begin with understanding the three aspects of, (i) "be for Him," (ii) "a dwelling," and (iii) "in the lower worlds.":

- (i) *Be for Him*: The emphasis here is on *Him*, meaning, His very *Essence*, not just for *His Infinite Light* or *Revelations*.
- (ii) *A Dwelling*: According to Jewish Law, this denotes that it must be a *permanent* place of residence, and not a temporary one.
- (iii) *In the Lower Worlds*: In the physical world, which is the most nether of all worlds, and not in the *Upper Worlds* of spirituality.

All three details are intertwined: Being that we are speaking of "A *Dwelling --Permanent*," without any changes, this can exist only within the, "For Him --Essence," for only the *Essence* is (Tanya, Iggeres Hakodesh, Epistle 20), "Whose Being is of His Essence --(His is an essential form of being); He is not, heaven forbid, brought into being by some other cause preceding Himself." However, the *Infinite Light* was, "brought into being by some other cause preceding itself --the *Essence*," and hence, is not of its own volition, and hence, cannot have absolute permanency. And so too, for this reason the *Infinite Light* is limited to only 'taking up residency,' in the *Higher (spiritual) Worlds*, which are befitting of it, while only the *Essence* can reside equally in the *Lower (physical) Worlds*, as well.

And so too, this exists in our service to G-d:

- (i) *Be for Him*: Our service must be with no other intention than that His will be fulfilled. There mustn't be even spiritual intentions of My being connected to G-d, or Me being the one to fulfill G-d's will.
- (ii) *A Dwelling*: Our service must be of absolute permanence, meaning that there is no intellectual or emotional fluctuations in our service, but rather, there must be but the one and permanent "Self-sacrifice," to the will of G-d being fulfilled. --*Self-sacrifice*, means being ready to die for G-d. However, it also means sacrificing any sense of self: My will, understanding, or feelings.
- (iii) *In the Lower Worlds*: Our service must be executed in the 'Lower Worlds' of Torah-study and Mitzvoit-observance, and not just in their 'Higher Worlds'. --Meaning, (a) not just in the *Higher* study of the brilliance of extrapolations and depths of to, (-Isaiah 42:21), "magnifies the Torah and strengthens it," but in the study of *Halacha*, the basic Jewish Law of day-to-day living, and (b) Practical mitzvah-observance, even when there is no feelings and passion.

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And here too, all three details are intertwined: Only when our service is but, "For Him," are all different drives of intentions equal, and hence, "A Dwelling --Permanent," and then, being that it is all and only about, "For Him," and His will is, "In the Lower Worlds," hence, our service is focused on doing the "Lower," Torah-studies and Mitzvah-observance, sacrificing our own greater delight of engaging with *Higher* Torah-study and *Higher* Mitzvah-observance intentions.

All these three details are clearly found in the, "All of his actions, his Torah, and the Divine service in which he engaged all the days of his life," of the Previous Rebbe. The 30 years of his leadership, divided into 3 different eras of, (i) 5680-5690 in the USSR, (ii) 5690-5700 in Poland, and (iii) 5700-5710 in America, in which each demanded a total different type of work in disseminating Torah and strengthening Judaism, in which the Previous Rebbe's with self-sacrifice had applied himself in all three *equally* (a) -Dwelling --Permanence. And his self-sacrifice was not that of Rabbi Akiva, who said, "When will it (self-sacrifice) come to me so that I will (have the chance) to do it!" but rather it was as the self-sacrifice of Abraham, absolutely, (b) "For Him," with no personal desire to have the great merit of *self-sacrifice*, but rather, that if self-sacrifice is needed for G-d's will to be done, then this too, he will do.

And so too, even though the Previous Rebbe's disseminating Torah and strengthening Judaism was on all levels, from *Higher Worlds* to *Lower Worlds* levels, nevertheless, we can see that his primary focus was on the, (c) "In the Lower Worlds."

In Torah-study: The Previous Rebbe himself focused on opening elementary schools teaching Torah, based on its absolute purity, the way the *Aleph-Bet* and the *Torah* was taught in its holiness as in the days of old. So too, the Previous Rebbe had his students study specifically Torah-Law, in order to then be sent around and abroad to become practical rabbis to community, to strengthen the practical Jewish living of a community.

In Mitzvah-observance: The Previous Rebbe sent emissaries --in actual self-sacrifice within the USSR, and then demanding inner-self-sacrifice in Poland and America-- to open Ritual baths, make possible Kosher Meats, open Synagogues, and to be teachers in elementary schools, hence, building practical *Lower Worlds* Judaism for Jews, wherever they may be, physically or spiritually.

The lesson to us, especially on the *Yom Hillulah* of the Previous Rebbe, is to, (a) strengthen our study of practical Jewish Law, and specifically the volume of *Orach Chaim*, which discusses practical day-to-day laws, and (b) to strengthen to *Torah-studies* in Jewish Day Schools, making sure that (i) the Torah-studies come first in the day, before any secular studies, and (ii) that the *Aleph-Bet*, and the *Torah*, with its *Biblical Stories* and all, are taught with the timeless purity and faith of our holy people.