

Pinchas, Eliyahu, the Or Hachayim, and Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin

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"Pinchas is Eliyahu"

That Pinchas is Eliyahu is primarily regarding Eliyahu's role as the harbinger of the redemption. There in the verse it says: "He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children,"² which the Rebbe many times explained means that the children will bring the parents to believe in the coming of the Mashiach and to believe in the immanent complete and full redemption.

Once the child has gone through the *brit* (circumcision), he is no longer afraid of anything in the world. This is the special quality of the children that they need to give to their parents. Eliyahu thus loves the children and acts to encourage the children to affect their parents. Of Pinchas it says that he acted like a נער, "a youth," with the same fearlessness and the rigor of youth in order to do what he did.

Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin

The child whose *brit* it was today was born on the 15th day of Tamuz, the *yahrzeit* (day of passing) of the holy *Or Hachayim*, Rabbi Chayim ben Atar.³ He wrote about himself (parashat *Re'eh*) that the name of the Mashiach is Chayim. Today, the 22nd day of *Tamuz* is the *yahrzeit* of Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin,⁴ which is such a great day that the Chassidim used to say that if they had the power, they would make it permissible to get married on this day even though it is part of the three weeks.

Many great *tzadikim* considered Rebbe Shlomo to be the Mashiach ben Yosef of his generation as he was killed while sanctifying the Name of God.⁵ The *Beit Aharon*⁶ says that there are *tzadikim* who were so great that they were personally redeemed and had the Mashiach revealed to them fully. In this respect he cites the well known passage in the Talmud which includes sayings from various Talmudic academies that the master of the academy's name is the name of the Mashiach.⁷ The next person of whom the *Beit Aharon* says this is the *Or Hachayim*, who wrote the same thing about himself. Each of these *tzadikim* revealed the essence of their soul, the point of the Mashiach within themselves.

In regard to Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin, there are two stories that we would like to relate:

About Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin it is said that before he became famous he would study without caring at all about the livelihood of his family. Things became so bad that his wife thought to take all her children...

There was a doctor who did not keep the Torah at all who came to know the family and seeing their poverty and realizing that Rebbe Shlomo was not providing for them decided to go to the *Beit Midrash* to rebuke him. As he entered, he immediately was overwhelmed with the sweetness of Rebbe Shlomo's learning and prayer and (like Bilam) he changed his mind completely and decided that he himself would give the wife a certain amount of money to provide for the family.

Over time Rebbe Shlomo became famous and their livelihood was easier. It came to pass that the doctor died. Rebbe Shlomo attended the funeral and at the end of the burial stuck a wooden stick in the grave. The angel Duma, the angel that is responsible for collecting the dead that are destined for geihenom, arrived at the grave to collect the doctor's soul. But, as long as the stick was in the grave the angel could not approach—Rebbe Shlomo had done something to the stick. Duma ran to Rebbe Shlomo and asked him: "What have you done?"

Rebbe Shlomo responded: "Come back in three days."

As he had no choice, Duma waited and came back after three days. He approached Rebbe Shlomo again and asked him what was going on. Rebbe Shlomo told him that though this doctor had transgressed every possible commandment in the Torah he had also sustained someone who kept the entire Torah.⁸ So the angel asked him: "Why did you wait three days to tell me this?"

Rebbe Shlomo responded that it took him three days to think about and ascertain that the statement that he had just said was true.⁹



Let us proceed to tell another story:

There was a chassid of the Alter Rebbe who had doubts regarding his belief. They troubled him terribly and he could not get rid of them. He came to the Alter Rebbe (this was in the early years when it was easier to see him). He told him of his problems. The Alter Rebbe closed the door and taught him a private Chassidic discourse, which helped for a period of time, but a short while later the doubts came back. He came back to the Alter Rebbe and the Rebbe again sat him in his room and taught him a second personal discourse. This helped for a bit longer time, but eventually the doubts came back.

This chassid happened to be in Karlin one day and he wanted to see Rebbe Shlomo. He saw Rebbe Shlomo Karliner putting his *tefilin* on and he heard him

say the words: "And I will betroth you in faith."¹⁰ From these three words alone all of his doubts regarding his faith disappeared for good.

He returned to the Alter Rebbe and asked him to explain how this was possible. The Alter Rebbe answered:

"The verse says: 'For the Torah will come out of Zion and the word of God from Jerusalem.'¹¹ There are two types of *tzadikim*: those that are the aspect of Zion do everything that they do through Torah.¹² But there are those *tzadikim* that are an embodied aspect of Jerusalem, meaning that they have complete and total awe and fear of the Almighty—the meaning of the word 'Jerusalem'—and they do what they do with words, short words that are the 'words of God.' Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin is such a *tzadik* and the few words that you heard from him were enough to affect you."



Let us clarify a few things about this second story:

It is well known that everything taught in Chabad is *pnimi*, meaning internal, in its nature. So, we say that there are those things that function as inner light and those as external light. The external light is many times called a "keeper" (*שומר*), meaning that it can save a person from something. In this story it is clear that the external encircling light that Rebbe Shlomo gave the Chassid was to safe-keep him. The chassid had not understood anything new or had a new enlightenment, yet he was saved from his doubts.

But the teachings of the Alter Rebbe are inner light which requires that the person act on his own to receive the light—so that the light can affect. In the story the Alter Rebbe gave him everything that he could, but since the Chassid had not made himself a vessel to receive this light it did not keep forever.

We might think that external light is therefore stronger. But there is another type of light called essential (*עצמי*) light, which can only be integrated like inner light.

In any case this is a beautiful story about the greatness of Rebbe Shlomo Karliner.¹³

Going a bit deeper: In Chassidut we learn that "Zion" is representative of the inner point of the heart.¹⁴ [Incidentally, through the self-sacrifice of the baby that underwent his brit today, the child merits to connect with the inner point of the heart. By the willingness to remove the extraneous foreskin, the child acts to be a vessel for the inner light.] On the one hand in all the Polish Chassidic groups there was always a Rebbe that had many students and many of these students became Rebbes themselves. But in Chabad there was never such a thing.

But in our generation the tables are turned—the Rebbe proclaimed in 1992 that every Chabad Chassid should prepare to become a Rebbe himself. The reason is that as much as the distance between the Rebbe and the chassid in Chabad is infinite—the Chassid cannot compare to the Rebbe—the Chabbad Rabbe'im gave us the essence (the עצם), and somehow over the generations this created a reality in which the essence of being a Rebbe was transmitted to the Chassidim, just as the essence of the father is transmitted to his children through the spinal column.



By Noah's Ark the Torah says: ואל אמה תכלינה מלמעלה. The width of the ark at its highest point was one cubit wide. In the holy books it explains that there are two secrets in this word: אלקינו מלך העולם (Our God, the king of the universe), who initials is אמה, and the second is אליהו מלאך הברית (Eliyahu, the angel of the covenant), whose initials are אמה. We ask that Eliyahu the angel of the covenant stand to the right of the circumciser and assist him.

The covenant of the circumcision is also called לפום אמה, for it is shaped in a similar fashion. The secret of the covenant is the concentration of all of one's essence and lifeforce into one place. From the fact that the crown of the human is in this place in the body this is an indication that from a certain perspective this is the "highest" place in the person. The purpose of the covenant is to lift the habitual, the natural forces of the body upwards.

In Kabbalah, Eldad and Meidad (both of who's names ends with dad, breast) represent the two female breasts of the congregation of Israel, the providers of the milk of the Oral Torah. The Talmud relates that in God's love for man He elevated the breasts of humans to a higher place, to the heart, unlike in animals where the breasts are close to the ערוה. In the same way, the circumcision elevates the procreative organ of the male to a higher place, above his physical head.

Of the BST it is known that Eliyahu (the angel of the covenant) never left his presence. This is the perfect state of the rectification of the covenant.

We mentioned before that Eliyahu loves children and youth, the type of youth that is willing to stand up and fight for its beliefs. Eliyahu encourages the young men to fight in a way that makes a real difference. After Pinchas performs his act of self-sacrifice, in his function of משיח מלחמה (the priest of war) he encourages all the other young people, the soldiers of the Jewish army, to do the same—to fight in order to win, not just to make a lot of noise (as tragically happens often today). As in the verse: ארדוף אויבי ואשיגם לא אשוב עד כלותם.

Eliyahu's life was dedicated to zealotry against idolatry. Pinchas' zealotry was primarily on the blemish of the covenant of holiness. This is the order in life, that

young people are zealous about the covenant of the body, and older people are zealous of the covenants of the spirit and of the mind. But when Eliyahu returns at the end of days, he returns as a young zealot, more similar to his earlier version of Pinchas.

In any case, in order to reach this state, the high point has to concentrate to the size of a single cubit. Maimonides explains that the piece of cedar wood that has to be thrown into the burning Red Heifer must be exactly one cubit long. The sages explain that the mighty cedar represents upliftedness and arrogance while the hyssop represents lowliness—one who is arrogant must lower himself. But the BST explains even more deeply that at the outset of any holy act in the worship of the Almighty, a person has to have an eighth of an eighth of a feeling of arrogance that he can, as it were, get out of bed and actually accomplish something in the world.

It is related that 150 years ago the fathers did not feel an existential pain when their children left the Jewish faith was because there was something asleep, paralyzed in them. This is that state that the little arrogance of the Red Heifer comes to awaken. A person who is asleep is considered profaned (טמא). This was the state that the Jewish people were in when Pinchas acted his act of zealotry. To awaken the people from this slumber one needs to be a youth and act like a youth—this is considered lower mindfulness (מוחיין דקטנות). After the act is performed, the person must lower himself and humble himself, for if he does not, this same youthful vigor, this same little bit of arrogance will come back to make him completely profane. The measure is like what Maimonides says: a single cubit.

This is also the single cubit of the covenant of the circumcision. The covenant serves to waken the Jew (the baby) out of his slumber and make him a vigorous youth. Later, in marriage, it is the youthful vigor that awakens, arouses the brit to cling to one's wife in marital union. One's wife then rectifies this little bit of arrogance and humbles him, thereby elevating him from lower mindfulness to higher mindfulness (מוחיין דגדלות).

Said another way, the "smallness" in holiness is a minimal measure of arrogance and the "greatness" in holiness is humility.

By educating the child and ensuring his safeguarding of his covenant, we ensure that the child arrives at his wedding ready to be truly made great by his wife, as per the verse: *ומה' אשה משכלת*, a woman who knows how to truly "humble" her husband in order to elevate his level of consciousness.

This is related to the kavanah: אלקינו מלך העולם, for this is the consciousness that a youth has of God, that God, in his lower Name, the Name of Elokim, is the Master of the world. This is the type of consciousness that befits young soldiers.

The name חיים complements the name מנחם מענדל. $68 + 332 = 400$, which is a perfect square, a sign of true complementarity. Rebbe Nachman loved this number more than any other as he considered it the end (goal) of all numbers. In Kabbalah, the number 400 represents the highest state of the World to Come which is called the 400 worlds of ביסופין.

It is known that the BST said that if he could have met the Or Hachayim, the Mashiach would have come. In our generation this is the meeting between the name חיים and the name מנחם מענדל.

On the verse: בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם, the Or Hachayim says that these words represent three aspects or stages in the act of Pinchas and in the worship of Hashem.

בקנאו: that he was the one who acted the act of zealotry, not someone else. He has no thought even that someone else may do this act.

קנאתי: that he had no self interest in this act, it was entirely for God.

בתוכם: that he did it in the midst of the Jewish people even though the entire tribe of Shimon were circling him and he was faced with imminent danger.

The first point returns to the same youthful vigor that is the result of a holy covenant with God, the result of the concentrated vigor of the single cubit. According to one version he did not even ask Moshe what the halacha in such a case is. It burned within him and knowing that in a place where God's Name is desecrated he is not willing to sit back, nor is he willing to wait for someone else to do what is needed. This is the type of consciousness that the first emissaries of the Rebbe had, where they did not realize that the point is that the Rebbe's will be performed and that it does not matter by whom. This is a little bit like קופץ בראש.

The final test of a tzadik is how he handles fame. There was once a person who was hung by non-Jews and Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin saw him hanging and told his students: "Look how much arrogance and pride this Jew has in his self-sacrifice." Since Pinchas did this in the midst of all of the Jewish people, he was to become famous. The fact that this did not make him full of pride was his greatest test.

7. ברכה = בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם. Which is connected to the seven blessings of the wedding.

Returning to the final point of the Or Hachayim, קנאה! . 3 = יוסף . 3 = בתוכם, the connection between Joseph and Eliyahu. The first time that this word appears in the entire Torah is ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם. In relation to the Or Hachayim's words this means that a person who comes to sanctify the Name of God, to create a sanctuary to the Almighty in the midst of the people, is faced with the trial of fame, lest the fame cause the person to fall into arrogance and profane his humility.

In the entire Torah this word appears 15 times, יה times. The holy Name that is the essence of the Divine Providence that lies between a couple. If this is not between the couple then the fires of anger and cravings (תאוות) burn the couple. The rectification is that it is God that should dwell between the people—ושכנתי, God should dwell, "between them."

The final mem (ם) is the same mem as in the words ולסרבה המשרה.

Of the 15 times, our verse on Pinchas is the 14th time. 14 of the 15 times the literal meaning בתוכם, "in their midst," is "within the Jewish people." But there is one time where the literal meaning is "between" (ופעמני זהב בתוכם): the bells were placed between the rimonim, not in them. This is similar to the meaning of the phrase שכינה ביניהם. This teaches us that this meaning of between is actually higher than within, for the "in between" relates to omnipresence (השראה), the teaching of the BST as opposed to "within," which is enclothement (התלבשות), the teachings of the Arizal.

The word "bell" (פעמון), comes from the word that means "excitement," the word used to describe how the spirit of holiness excited Samson, the greatest example of a vigorous youth.

Literally, the people within whom Pinchas was were the tribe of Shimon who at that time were resha'im. The rimonim refers to the verse כפלה הרימון רקתך, which the sages interpret to mean that even the greatest rasha in the Jewish people is full of good deeds like the rimon is full of seeds.

The bell, the spirit of holiness, was between the wicked of the Jewish people and it was like he was hitting them like a bell from side to side instilling in the omnipresence of the Almighty.

Notes:

1. Edited by Moshe Genuth
2. Malachi 3:24.

3. Born 1696 (5456). The *Or Hachayim* made *aliyah* to the Land of Israel from Morocco together with 30 of his students in 1741. In 1742 he moved to Jerusalem and there founded two *yeshivahs*. He passed away a year later in 1743 (5503) at the age of 47. It is well known that the Ba'al Shem Tov (1698 to 1760) spoke highly of him and regarded him as the spirit of the soul of the Mashiach. The Ba'al Shem Tov yearned to meet him and said that if they would be able to meet one another the Mashiach would arrive.

4. Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin was one of the greatest disciples of the Magid of Mezritch. He was the adoptive father and Rebbe of Rebbe Aharon Hagadol of Karlin, the founder of the Karliner Chassidut. He was shot by a Kozak on the 16 day of Tamuz in 5552 (1792) and passed away 6 days later on the 22nd day of Tamuz.

5. See also our class from the 22nd of Tamuz last year (5765).

6. Written by the second Rebbe Aharon of Karlin.

7. *Sanhedrin* 98b.

8. This is like what the sages regarding the bones of Joseph that Moshe took with them in the desert: "This one [Joseph] performed everything that is written in this one [the Torah]."

9. i.e., that he himself was someone who keeps the entire Torah.

This is reminiscent of the story with the Alter Rebbe and the person who asked him why he wore different clothing from everyone else, etc.

about love of Israel there were different sayings by different tzadikim:

Pinchas of Koritz: a perfect tzadik is someone who can love a perfect rasha

Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin would say: I wish I could love a perfect tzadik the way that the Almighty loves a perfect rasha.

10. Hosea 2:22

11. Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2.

12. For example Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai who to bring rain taught a verse in the Bible. He did not pray or appeal to the Heavens, he just said Torah on the verse: "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together" (Psalms 133:1) as related in the *Zohar* (III, 59b).

13. The name Solomon, the source of R. Shlomo Karliner's name, means "wholeness," or "perfection" and specifically the wholeness of awe and fear, the reason for which the city of Jerusalem is given its name. In addition, it is known that the Rebbe explained that relatively Chabad is pure love, as its goal is to spread and faces outwards, while all the other Chassidic groups are relatively fear, as their primary goal is the preservation of their communities.

King Solomon was not fully balanced between his love and his fear. He wrote the Song of Songs, the greatest love song in the world, but also had a 1000 wives and concubines (with not enough perfect fear and awe of God to balance his love, and so his love became profaned).

14. Introduction to the Mittler Rebbe's *Sha'ar Ha'emunah*.