



# A World in Balance

לפיכך צריך כל אדם שיראה עצמו...כאילו חציו זכאי וחציו חייב...עשה מצוה אחת--הרי הכריע את עצמו ואת כל העולם כולו לכף זכות, וגרם לו ולהם תשועה והצלה!.

“A person should always see himself as being equally balanced between merit and sin, and the world also being equally balanced between merit and sin...If he performs one mitzvah, he tips his balance and that of the entire world to the side of merit, and brings deliverance and salvation to himself and others.”

Every Chossid is fluent in this passage of Mishneh Torah. In *sicha* after *sicha*, *farbrenge*n after

*farbrenge*n, the Rebbe quoted the Rambam's *psak din*, which obligates a Yid to constantly be on his toes; every thought, speech and action that he does affects his surroundings, and can be the singular action that will tip the scale and bring about the ultimate salvation.

Delving a bit deeper into the Rebbe's Torah and the Chassidus of the previous Rabbeim, one might notice a difference. While the Rambam's passage is quoted in Chassidus of the Rabbeim, it does not compare to the vast amount of times that the Rebbe incorporated it into his *sichos* and

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*maamarim*. In the Rebbe's Torah too, one might notice that as the years progress, its mention becomes more and more common, as the Rebbe becomes ever more vocal about the imminent coming of Moshiach and our obligation to hasten his arrival.

During the Purim farbrengen in 5747<sup>2</sup>, the Rebbe spoke about this phenomenon, and explained:

"Throughout the generations, there have been numerous *sefarim* that have set *kitzin*—dates for the coming of Moshiach. Among them, the *kitzin* of the Alter Rebbe, Rebbe Rashab, and most recently, the Frierdiker Rebbe. Nevertheless, generations have passed, and we have remained in *golus*!

"I searched for a possible explanation, and the only reason I could find was that now the role has moved from the *nosi* to the nation, and is now the job of every single Yid."

The Rebbe explained that in previous generations, being that Yidden were dedicated to their *nosi*, they were able to rely on his work to hasten the coming of Moshiach. For those Yidden, the Rambam's message could remain in theory, and its fulfillment was through its study as a *halacha* in Torah.

Now however, every Yid has become personally responsible to bring Moshiach. It is therefore imperative to impress the Rambam's message upon each and every man, woman, and child; they must constantly remember that the destiny of the entire universe rests on their shoulders, and every action they do might be the one to tip the scale.

## A HEADACHE

"If he performs one mitzvah, he tips his balance and that of the entire world to the side of merit, and brings deliverance and salvation to himself and others."

This passage sounds like a soundbite from an inspirational

sermon; perhaps the creation of a expert *maggid's* imagination. Does the whole world really rest on my shoulders? I go about doing numerous mitzvos throughout the day; why has it not brought about the desired effect?

The answer to this question, the Rebbe said, can be derived from a discussion regarding the cure that the Gemara says will heal all of our ailments. If you have a headache, the Gemara says "learn Torah." If you have a throat ache, "learn Torah." If you have a stomach ache—you guessed it—"learn Torah."

Generations of *yeshiva bochurim* have been reminded about this timeless cure from their *mashgichim*, *roshei yeshiva*, and *mashpi'im*, but when they actually attempt to bring it into action, they are often disappointed. Their ailments remain obstinately entrenched in their bodies, and the Gemara's cure seems to remain entrenched in theory, lost amongst the many large pages of Gemara which lay before them.

In the same Purim *sicha*, the Rebbe explained that the problem is not in the cure; the issue is that we simply do not know which part of Torah relates to our heads, which to our throats, and which to our stomachs. Each part of Torah corresponds to a part of the human body, and to cure a specific ailment, one simply needs to learn the corresponding part of Torah. It is only incidental, that we have no knowledge in this field, and which remains a mystery to us; our only option is therefore, to learn as much Torah as possible, and hope that we will cover the necessary segment as well.

The same applies to the scale of the universe; the Rambam's quote is not inspirational talk; Torah is after all *Toras emes*! The whole world really does rest on his shoulders, and all we need is one more specific action to bring about the *geula*. But the identity of that one action remains a mystery;

we must accomplish as many good deeds as we possibly can, and hope that we will manage to catch the one last elusive action.<sup>3</sup>

## THE MIDGET AND THE GIANT

Going about the chase for the mitzvah that will tip the scale, a Jew might be bogged down by doubt. Is it really possible, being just a small person within a universe of endless proportions, for him to change the entire world? It would seem that a transformation of such proportions would have to be the result of a mammoth group effort, accomplishing immense projects of goodness and kindness that affect people the world over. It is unfathomable, that the future of so large a universe, be dependent on so small an action.

The answer is that the question is, in fact, valid; to bring about Moshiach's arrival, millions upon millions of mitzvos are needed. But those mitzvos have already been fulfilled; we are thousands of years into the job, and previous generations have fulfilled the main bulk of the work. We are like midgets on the shoulders of giants: the height of the mammoth creature below, gives a diminutive being the power to see distant sights, beyond his normal capabilities, and even beyond the view of the giant carrying him. We, and our actions, are quite small; but we come with the backing of thousands of years of *avodas Hashem*.<sup>4</sup>

The Rebbe added meaning to this explanation:

"A person is obligated to say 'the world was created for me,'" says the Gemara. This, as the above statement of the Rambam, is not merely an idea meant to inspire the simple folk. Chassidus explains that a Yid is created parallel to the entire world; each part of the universe corresponds

to a part in him, and every action that he does can affect the entire world.<sup>5</sup>

In another *sicha*, the Rebbe explained the relation of a singular action to the specific occurrence of the redemption:

The highest element of our *neshamos*, the level of *yechidah*, is interconnected and one entity with the *yechidah* of the Melech Hamoshiach, which is the *yechidah haklalis*. Every thought speech and action of mitzvos that we do reveals our *yechidah*. And based on the Baal Shem Tov's teaching, that "an *etzem*, when you grasp part of it, you grasp it in its entirety," the revelation of Moshiach's *yechidah* should be taking place many times at every given moment! This being the case, the question of "how can I affect the whole world?" loses its potency; in its place come an opposite claim: We have fulfilled more than just one mitzvah; our *yechidah* has been revealed many times over. How is it then, that Moshiach has yet to have arrived?!<sup>6</sup>

### WHO CARES?

It is now clear that the Rambam's statement is factual; your next move has the potential to be the one that will flip the switch for all of us and for all past and future generations. We no longer doubt the

power of our seemingly minute and inconsequential actions.

This knowledge is important. Each mitzvah that we do comes along with its proper intent and *kavanah*, without which the mitzvah has not been accomplished in its full sense. The general intent is the fact that he is fulfilling the will of his creator; the particular intent varies, depending on the nature of the mitzvah. And with this *halacha*, the Rambam taught us the third element of *kavanah*, which must accompany us in every part of our lives. "A person should always look at himself"— he must recognize the power of his next action, and complete each one with the knowledge that it will have everlasting effect, and bring about the ultimate redemption, may it be speedily, in our days.<sup>7</sup> **T**

1. Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Teshuva chapter 3 halachos 4.

2. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2 p. 613-626.

3. See also Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 2 p. 458.

4. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos vol. 51 p. 319.

5. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 352.

6. Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol. 1 p. 240 footnote 123.

7. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 1 p. 309-314.

8. See A Chassidisher Derher, Iyar 5775 interview with Rabbi Itche Meir Gurary p. 70.

### BACK TO BASICS

Rabbi Itche Meir Gurary, the *mashpia* of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Montreal, entered the Rebbe's room for *yechidus* on 19 Teves 5730.

In his letter, he asked the Rebbe for advice:

Farbrengens have always been a venue for giving over values of Chassidus, he wrote to the Rebbe. Stories of Chassidim who lived in past generations, and *chassidisher hergeshim* were always the staple of his farbrengens. Now, however, he sees that *bochurim* sometimes need to hear about basic concepts in *yiras Shamayim* and Chabad *minhagim*, but he was not sure how to go about doing it. Which *osiyos* should be used, he asked the Rebbe, when encouraging them to fulfill the bidding of Shulchan Aruch?

The Rebbe told him (among other things) that his message should be based on the Gemara in Kiddushin, "לעולם שקול וכל העולם כולו שקול"—he should impress upon the *bochurim* that each action that they do, no matter how small or insignificant, carries with it great opportunity; it could be that small action that will bring the *geulah ha'amitis vehashleima*.<sup>8</sup>