

## Turning “Mourning” into “Morning”

*We long for the coming of the Mashiach, anticipating the day when the world will achieve its ultimate tikkun. How wonderful it will be to see this world of conflict, exploitation and spiritual ignorance transformed into a realm of peace, lovingkindness and Divine wisdom!*

○ God and God of our fathers, have mercy on us and send our righteous Mashiach right away, and perfect this world and all worlds – from the highest to the lowest – all of which depend on this world of action. Have pity on him and on us, and bring him speedily, in peace. For the Mashiach will rectify everything with a most wondrous and awesome tikkun. He will enlighten us with true sublime knowledge and open our eyes and hearts to Your Torah. Through him we will come to understand the words of the Torah lucidly, according to their true meaning. No doubt or question about any law or practice among the laws and practices of the Torah will remain confusing to us, but everything will be “as clear as a white cloth.”<sup>1</sup>

Even all the questions and doubts which perplexed the great tzaddikim of former times – concerning which our sages said, “*Teyku*”<sup>2</sup> – will be straightened out, clarified and made comprehensible to us. The Mashiach will rectify the paradigm of *teyku* that includes all doubts in the world – both those doubts of an encompassing nature that perplexed the eminent sages of Israel regarding the laws and practices of the Torah, and those doubts and inner conflicts that beset each person, from the greatest to the smallest.

So many of Your children long and yearn to return to You, yet the paths of teshuvah and the paths of Torah are hidden from them because their hearts are torn by all sorts of doubts and conflicting ideas. This especially applies to me today. You know how much I have suffered because of my doubts and uncertainties about almost everything! Even now, my heart is torn by confusion and conflict about so many matters. My mind is so agitated that it seems almost unbearable.

Master of the Universe, Lord, God of truth, “great in counsel, and great in deed!”<sup>3</sup> Have mercy on the Jewish people and on me, and send us a wondrous illumination from the World of Tikkun, an illumination brought about by our righteous Mashiach. Then the problem of *teyku* will be solved at last – all questions will be resolved, all doubts and the slightest “doubts of doubts” clarified, and we will attain perfect advice in truth, constantly and in all circumstances.

In Your mercy, show us the true way to mourn and lament over the destruction of the Holy Temple, particularly every night at the actual moment of chatzot, as well as during the Three Weeks; and especially on Tisha B'Av, help us to recite the Book of Lamentations and the *kinot* with a truly broken heart. “Let us pour out our hearts like water before God’s Face.”<sup>4</sup> “Let us put our faces to the dust; perhaps there is yet hope!”<sup>5</sup>

It has been so many centuries since our city, Jerusalem, was razed, the site of our Holy Temple left desolate, and God’s glory removed from the House of our life. Every day’s troubles seem worse than those of the day before<sup>6</sup> – especially now, when exceptionally harsh decrees have been imposed on the Jewish people that

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are beyond our endurance. Our lives hang by a thread due to the dread in our hearts when we hear of still more harsh decrees that our oppressors wish to impose on us, God forbid. May the Merciful One spare us! Woe unto us for what has befallen us!

God full of mercy! Help us to take to heart the sufferings of Israel, as well as our own spiritual plight, until we break our hearts before You in truth, and “pour out our hearts like water before the Face of the Lord, God of Hosts,” over our iniquities, our many sins and our stiff-necked refusal to change, which have prolonged our exile and caused all our troubles.

“Let us lift up our hearts in our hands unto God in Heaven!”<sup>7</sup> Let us emulate our holy ancestors, and cry and scream and wail bitterly! Let us “wander through the market stalls and the streets”<sup>8</sup> and pray, beseech, cry out and entreat, until God “looks down from Heaven and sees”<sup>9</sup> – until He awakens His compassion toward us and consoles us speedily, and delivers us from all affliction and suffering, collectively and individually.

Shine upon us, even now, a wondrous illumination from our righteous Mashiach. Sweeten all harsh judgments and remove all suffering, affliction and evil decrees from us and from all Israel. Enlighten us with the light of truth at all times, perfect us constantly with new and wondrous tikkunim, and clarify and make comprehensible to us all doubts, questions and conflicting views. May we always attain perfect advice, in truth, so that we may return to You speedily, sincerely and wholeheartedly, and engage in Torah study, prayer, mitzvot and good deeds all the days of our lives.

Protect us and save us constantly from all sins, transgressions and evil deeds, and may we never veer from performing Your will, “neither to the right or the left.”<sup>10</sup> Arouse Your compassion on behalf of Your children, speedily bring us our righteous Mashiach, and redeem us with the Final Redemption, the Eternal Redemption. Then You will transform the aspect of *teyku* to tikkun, to the ultimate degree of perfection. The letter *nun* from *kinot* will be added to the word *teyku* to form the word *tikkun*. Thus all *kinot* will be removed from the world and transformed into tikkun.

Merciful One, Master of Deliverance, Master of Consolation! Console us after all our sufferings and assist us in all our strivings. Spread over us Your tent of peace, send us good advice, and save us quickly for the sake of Your Name. Show us the absolute truth. Save us from doubts and conflicts that deter and confuse our attempts to serve You. Send us the right advice at all times so that we may return to You in truth, and adhere to Your benevolent will, now and forever. Amen!

(LT I, 142)

#### Notes

- 1 Cf. Rashi on Deuteronomy 22:17.
- 2 *TeYKU* is the acronym for “*Tishbi Yetaretz Kushiyyot U’ba’ayot* – The Tishbite (i.e., Elijah the Prophet) will answer difficulties and questions,” a formula used by the Talmudic sages as a last resort when they confronted irresolvable contradictions. The reference to Elijah portends the coming of Mashiach, who will resolve all contradictions and enable the Jewish people to fulfill the Torah in its entirety.
- 3 Jeremiah 32:19.

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- 4 Paraphrase of Lamentations 2:19.
- 5 Paraphrase of Lamentations 3:29.
- 6 Reb Noson alludes to one of the “birth pangs of the Mashiach,” recounted in the *beraita* of Rabbi Pinchas ben Ya’ir, appended to *Sotah* 9:15.
- 7 Lamentations 3:41.
- 8 Paraphrase of Song of Songs 3:2.
- 9 Paraphrase of Isaiah 63:15; et al.
- 10 Paraphrase of Deuteronomy 17:11. In Kabbalistic terminology, the “right” represents the attribute of Chesed (Kindness), while the “left” represents the attribute of Gevurah (Judgment).

## Light Conquers Fire

*Based on the lesson of Likutey Moharan II, 67, Reb Noson composed this heartfelt lament over the destruction of the Holy Temple and the death of the tzaddikim, in particular Rebbe Nachman. Giving vent to all his feelings of devastation after his teacher's passing, Reb Noson underscores the nature and magnitude of his loss and how it could be remedied. Many Breslover Chassidim recite this prayer on Tisha B'Av in addition to the traditional laments.*

“A voice is heard on high, a lament, bitter weeping. Rachel cries for her children. She refuses to be consoled over her children, for they are gone.”<sup>1</sup>

“For these I weep. My eye, my eye pours forth tears, for my comforter, the restorer of my soul, is far from me. My children are devastated, because the enemy has prevailed.”<sup>2</sup>

Master of the Universe! Master of the Universe! Teach us how to compose bitter eulogies over the vastness of our tragedy, which we have suffered because of our straying hearts. We have lost the delight of our eyes, our majesty, our crowns, our splendor, our radiance, our beauty, our life and length of days – the source of our spirits and souls! Are these not our masters, our teachers and our sages? They were our light, our greatness, our holiness, our hope, our destiny, our consolation, our joy, our Torah and our prayer. To eternal rest their souls departed without warning, leaving us to grieve and mourn.

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Woe for what has happened to us! What can we say? What words can we speak? Who can compose bitter laments for us, so that we may mourn and cry over these tragedies that affect every member of the Jewish people and all the worlds, from the highest to the lowest? Woe unto us!

Master of the Universe! It is known and revealed before You that no human being is capable of composing befitting eulogies over the demise of tzaddikim such as these, who passed away in our generations due to our sins. However, this I must surely mourn, because it is a loss that affects me and the entire Jewish people.

There is no loss for the holy tzaddikim who have ascended to far loftier planes, for they are greatly esteemed in the supernal worlds where they continue to perform their service on high. Fortunate are they – fortunate is their lot!

But as for us, this orphaned generation, this spiritually impoverished generation, our plight is pathetic. Upon us, upon us, all sickness has fallen! “Woe unto us, for we have been vanquished!”<sup>3</sup> O God, we are bowed down in anguish, our arms are weak, our knees totter, our hearts have melted and turned to water on this day when the sun sets at noon! “We are stricken with confusion, tremors have seized us, pangs have overcome us like the travail of a woman in childbirth.”<sup>4</sup>

Heavenly Father, Merciful Father, Lord, God of truth! Where shall we go? Where shall we turn for help? Who will assist us? Who will take up our cause? “Where has our Beloved gone, where has our Beloved gone? Let us seek Him with You!”<sup>5</sup> All day long our words are embittered; our arms weigh heavily upon us, due to our groaning.

Would that our heads flowed with water and our eyes gave forth streams of tears so that we could weep day and night over the vastness of our tragedy! “Over this our hearts were sick, over these our eyes were dimmed!”<sup>6</sup>

Master of the Universe! Truly Merciful Father! You know that all our vitality depends on the tzaddikim, our holy rabbis of blessed memory. We need to speak with them, receive holy words from them, and see them all the time. Now what will happen? What can we do, people of low stature like ourselves, who are like “hyssop that grows out of the wall”<sup>7</sup>? What can we do? What can we accomplish?

Master of the Universe, Master of the Universe! You alone know the anguish of my soul within me, how my soul is embittered over this. But due to my many sins, I am unable to express my feelings in words before You, O Merciful One.

Master of the Universe, what is past is past. Beginning now, teach me how to cry and supplicate and plead before You, so that even now I may draw forth their holiness by means of the after-impression of holiness that remains in this world through their holy books and precious disciples. They are present in the world to an even greater degree after their passing, as is written in the holy *Zohar* and other sacred works.<sup>8</sup> For the soul achieves completeness primarily when it ascends above to the supernal worlds, yet at the same time remains below to arouse, awaken and enliven all souls, even those sunken in the lowest depths of hell, so that they never succumb to despair in any way.<sup>9</sup>

Master of the Universe, have compassion for the sake of the tears of our mother Rachel, who personifies the



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Shekhinah and Knesset Yisrael (the collective soul of the Jewish people). She cries inconsolably over our suffering and spiritual anguish, as it is written: “Rachel cries over her children”<sup>10</sup> – those who have been banished from their Father’s table and sent away from their Land. “She weeps bitterly in the night, and her tear lies upon her cheek; from all her lovers, she has no comforter”<sup>11</sup> – because all her friends – the tzaddikim of every generation – have passed away, due to our many sins. We remain forlorn “like a mast atop a mountain, and a banner on a lonely hill.”<sup>12</sup> “We have become like orphans without a father, our mothers are like widows,”<sup>13</sup> and there is no one to console us.

Master of the Universe! Who will show us pity? Who will show us compassion? Who will deplore our plight? Who will turn aside to inquire after our welfare? Who will shore up a rampart or stand in the breach? Who will attend the roads we must travel in life, and who will pave our paths? Who will heal our souls? Who will bring us back to You in sincere repentance? Who will awaken us from our spiritual sleep, that we may return to You in truth?

Woe unto us in these generations! For we were privileged to behold such awesome and wondrous lights, such pure and radiant lights, that no words or combinations of holy letters could recount their praise, their magnificence, their might, their exaltedness, their loftiness and their splendor!

How many incarnations have we been granted in Your world? How many Heavenly worlds were overturned for our sake? How many miracles and wonders beyond measure did You perform in order to bring to the world

such luminaries as these, such holy tzaddikim, such spiritual guides, such teachers of wisdom, such experts in knowledge, such masters of advice! You were with them throughout their holy lives, and You increased Your wonders through them, beyond measure – for many stood up against them every day, but You saved them immediately from all their enemies and persecutors.

In Your extremely hidden and wondrous ways, You did whatever You did, and mercifully preserved them, until they accomplished and acted, began and finished, and performed amazingly new and awesome tikkunim affecting all the worlds, from the highest to the lowest, and healed countless souls – souls of the living and the dead!

You know all these tikkunim and the delight that You derived from the tzaddikim who lived in these generations, from the day the “hidden light” was revealed – the light of Israel and its holy one, scholar and sage, most awesome man of God, our master and teacher, the eminent Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, of blessed memory, who illuminated the face of the earth and established many disciples, holy and awesome tzaddikim and chassidim. He left behind him a blessing,<sup>14</sup> a “planting of his delight,”<sup>15</sup> holy progeny his vitality,<sup>16</sup> the “holy fruit of his loins, more precious than fine gold and pearls,”<sup>17</sup> which all desirable things cannot equal. Together with his disciples and descendants, he revealed Your Godliness in these generations and disseminated Torah among the Jewish people.

They enlightened our eyes and opened our hearts, taught us straight paths, and gave us wondrous advice to come close to You in truth. “Fortunate is the eye that

beheld all this!" Is it not for the sake of hearing that our souls grieve?<sup>18</sup> For our entire hope was that they would prolong their days and years in this world, and that we might yet stand before the beauty of their holiness and hear from their awesome mouths more "words of the Living God,"<sup>19</sup> which were new and wondrous every time, when we were privileged to stand before them and hear their words all the days of their holy lives.

However, due to our many sins and our great iniquity, darkness eclipsed the light of our eyes, the desire of our souls. Woe that "the angels overcame the great ones below"<sup>20</sup> and took from us prematurely such awesome "holy arks" as these!<sup>21</sup> Woe, what has happened to us! "The crown of our heads has fallen! Woe unto us, for we have sinned!"<sup>22</sup>

Even though we know – we surely know – that even now these tzaddikim are engaged in the tikkun of our souls, nevertheless, it is so bitter for us. For we no longer have the merit to behold their holy faces, to hear their awesome words, to draw from the well of their holy mouths, or to gaze upon their splendor, their beauty, their radiance, and the holy and awesome majesty of their faces, thus to become subsumed within their true grace! Indeed, they were the beauty and grace of the entire world! And whoever was enveloped within their holy grace, within their splendor, within their holy names, could gaze deeply into himself and be truly awakened to return to God!

But now, now, due to our sins, we have lost what we have lost. How much harm sin causes! What will happen now? What can such persecuted people accomplish, such poor and destitute people, such a nation that is "dragged

and plucked”<sup>23</sup>—such a poor and destitute nation as Israel? “Therefore, I said, ‘Leave me alone, I will weep bitterly!’”<sup>24</sup> My bitter spirit I will assuage, “my voice will resound like the sea,”<sup>25</sup> I will speak and it will be a relief for me. I will speak unto the Lord, God above, come what may.

Master of the Universe, Master of the Universe, Master of the Universe! “You are holy, and awesome is Your Name,”<sup>26</sup> and Your Name is combined with the names of the true tzaddikim! Act for the sake of Your Name, sanctify Your Name, and reveal the truth to the world! Confer merit upon us in Your abundant mercy, and let us know in truth who is the *rosh bayit* in the world today, having been empowered by the true tzaddikim we have mentioned before You. Confer merit upon us, in Your great compassion, so that we might truly draw close to them and be constantly absorbed in the name, beauty and grace of the true tzaddikim. Let us bind ourselves and cleave to them in truth, with a mighty bond that will never break!

Then we will be able to gaze into ourselves and recognize all the character traits and passions that derive from the four elements of fire, air, water and earth,<sup>27</sup> in order to purge them of evil entirely and return to You in wholehearted teshuvah for what occurred in the past. From now on, we will strengthen ourselves with all our might to break and nullify all evil traits and desires from all four elements, and to acquire all virtuous traits. Thus we will serve You constantly in truth, with all our soul and with all our might, until all four elements of our bodies are truly purified and become entirely good, with no admixture of evil at all. All four elements will be

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transmuted to their supernal source – the four letters of Your holy Name, *YHVH*.

May we gaze deeply into ourselves at all times, take stock of our actions in this lowly world, and examine all our character traits in order to improve, purify and sanctify them to the utmost degree. Let us contemplate the greatness of the Creator and His awesome wonders, for He is doing new and wondrous things every instant; and let us reflect upon ways to perfect the world.

May we draw lofty and pure perceptions from the holy names of the true tzaddikim. From now on, may we succeed in purifying our minds, never allowing our thoughts to wander beyond the bounds of holiness, and even more, never succumbing to evil fantasies, God forbid. May we immerse our minds in the Torah and constantly innovate original and true Torah insights in abundance, according to Your beneficent will.

Let me sanctify my eyes from now on, never again gazing at things that we are forbidden to see, and never even glancing at anything that could lead to lewd thoughts, God forbid. Show me how to conduct myself at all times so that such thoughts and fantasies will not overcome me, due to my very fear of them (as when I overreact by shaking my head or squeezing my eyes shut, as is all too familiar to You). Rather, may I attain true discernment to know how to use my eyes in holiness and purity, according to Your beneficent will, in a manner that will protect me and save me from all evil. Spiritually protect my eyes from now on, in truth, according to Your profound kindness, and help me to refine all four elements with great sanctity. May I continually add holiness upon holiness until I attain absolute goodness.

Then nothing in the world will be able to harm my eyes, wherever I may gaze. No matter what I happen to see, no improper thought of any kind will arise in my mind, and no sight will disturb or upset me. Rather, I will cleave to Your holiness constantly.

Master of the Universe! Help me to attain all this speedily, even though I am so far from all this right now that I am ashamed to entreat You for such things. Yet I trust in Your abundant mercy and rely on the power of the true tzaddikim, and ask that You speedily grant me all this. Indeed, “You can do anything, and nothing can hinder Your objective.”<sup>28</sup> You perform miracles in every generation, and nothing is too wondrous for You.

Therefore have compassion toward me, All-Merciful One, abounding in kindness and truth, beneficent beyond measure, magnanimously pardoning sinners and forgiving transgressors, performing acts of charity toward all creatures! Help me, save me, strengthen me and fortify me in Your wondrous ways, so that from now on I may arise every night exactly at chatzot and recite the prayer of Tikkun Chatzot – and mourn, lament and cry profusely over the destruction of the Holy Temple, the House of our holiness and splendor, the House of our life and length of days, the House of our desire, our precious jewel, the glory of our might, our brilliance, our radiance, our beauty and our sanctity! Woe for what has befallen us! Woe that with our sins we brought about the destruction of our Holy Temple, the dwelling place of Your might, the channel for Torah and prayer, and the revelation of Your Divinity! There we were able to attain perceptions of Godliness, to know and perceive You even in this physical world, and to cleave to You forever!

Master of the Universe! Master of the Universe! What's past is past. Our Holy Temple was destroyed long ago, and our tzaddikim passed away, due to our sins. What happened has happened. But over this I surely weep! "Over these I weep; my eyes, my eyes flow with tears!"<sup>29</sup> Due to my many profound and grievous transgressions, both quantitatively and qualitatively, I am responsible for having forestalled the rebuilding of the Holy Temple – and who knows? Perhaps in a previous incarnation, I caused the destruction of the Holy Temple.

Woe unto me for the sins I committed in this life and in other lifetimes! Woe for what have I done, that a foul and despicable person like me destroyed the Holy Temple, delayed its rebuilding, and impeded the redemption of the Jewish people and our return to our Land! Woe unto me that I razed the Holy Temple through my evil deeds, set fire to the Sanctuary, drove the Jewish people into exile among the nations, and prolonged our exile for so long due to my evil and bitter passions!

Master of the Universe! Master of the Universe! Teach me how to cry out before You now! How to bewail my broken and bitter plight now! How to raise my eyes toward You now! How to spend my days in true goodness now!

To where can I flee? To whom can I turn for help? What can I do or accomplish? How can I devote myself to living a true life, in true holiness? How can I save my soul from destruction and escape Your judgment, Your wrath, and Your severe and bitter punishment? How can I spare myself disgrace and shame, now and in the future?

Master of the Universe! Master of the Universe! Act for the sake of Your Name! For the sake of Your glorious

Name, sanctify Your Name! And grant us the merit to magnify and sanctify Your great Name in the world through our deeds!

Merciful One! Master of All! Knower of Hidden Mysteries! You know “all that transpires under the sun,”<sup>30</sup> right now in these generations – how the world has become mixed up and confused beyond all measure. For all the true tzaddikim, glorious ones of the generations, departed from this world in our days, due to our many sins. You alone know their exalted spiritual stature, their might and their holiness, for “Your Name is bound up with their names,”<sup>31</sup> and the more their names are made great, the more Your Name is made great. However, because of our unworthiness, they departed this world before their time. Woe for what has befallen us in these generations! And because of our insensitivity and obtuseness, no one realizes the magnitude of this tragedy and the full ramifications of this terrible blow, this astounding disaster, this “affliction not written in the Torah, which is the death of Torah sages”<sup>32</sup> who perished in our times, due to our sins and transgressions!

Woe unto us for what we have lost! Woe for what has been lost and cannot be found! “The tzaddik perishes, and no one takes it to heart; men of kindness are gathered in, while no one understands that because of the approaching evil the tzaddik was taken away.”<sup>33</sup>

Master of the Universe! Master of All! After the damage we incurred through our sins, after causing the destruction of our Holy Temple and the death of the true tzaddikim, help us from now on – so at the very least we may arise each night exactly at chatzot and break our hearts and weep profusely over our enormous sins which produced all this, leaving us like orphans without



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a father, like lost souls that no one seeks, like those who are far that no one tries to bring near, and whose cause no one takes up!

Master of the Universe! Have mercy on us for the sake of Your Name! Behold our lowliness and disgrace! Gaze down from Heaven and see how we have become a laughingstock, a source of derision. Not only are we scorned and downcast among the nations “which arise each day to seek our destruction, but You save us from their hand”<sup>34</sup>; but even among the Jewish people, strife has proliferated to the point that there is bitter contention between our Torah sages. Their hearts are divided against each other, and each is considered despicable and worthless in the sight of his fellow, until we cannot bear it any longer.

Master of the Universe! God full of mercy! Awaken Your compassion toward Your children! Arouse Your inner feelings for us! Have mercy on the remnant of the refugees of Your nation, the House of Israel!

O Merciful One! How can You restrain Yourself from pitying our oppressed souls – the souls of Your people, Israel, who wander the streets, marketplaces and roads? Such precious souls, yet they have been scattered at the head of every street. As the prophet Jeremiah bewailed with repeated laments over each and every soul: “Alas, the gold is dimmed, the exquisite gold is changed! Sacred stones are scattered at the head of every street. The precious children of Zion, comparable to fine gold – alas, they are now treated like earthen jugs, work of a potter’s hands!”<sup>35</sup>

Master of the Universe! You alone know the inestimable beauty and holiness of these precious souls,

these holy stones, which are now scattered at the head of every street, and no man gathers them up and takes them into his house. Due to our sins, the true tzaddikim have departed – those who are called *rosh bayit*, the “masters of the house” of the world. When they were present in the world and their names were made great, the world had a *rosh bayit* and we all were called *bnei bayit* (family members). But since the day they passed away, due to our sins, and their holy and awesome beauty, splendor and true grace became hidden, we have wandered derelict and bereft; the precious souls of Your people, the House of Israel, are scattered at the head of every street. For the masters of the house of the world have departed, those great tzaddikim who are called *rosh bayit*, and even the faintest trace of their names that remains through their holy books and precious disciples has become obscured through so many layers of concealment, beyond measure.

Meanwhile, the names of famous false leaders who have no connection whatsoever to the Name of God continually become great in the world; indeed, they eclipse the Divine Name. The names of forces outside the domain of holiness prevail, God forbid. Due to our many sins, the world has become so mixed up that we can no longer tell who truly follows God’s Torah; whose name derives from the Divine Name, and whose does not; and who is a mixture of both aspects, good and evil, “Luminaries of Light” and “Luminaries of Fire.” We do not know what has happened, but our eyes are fixed upon You!

Grant us the privilege of awakening every night precisely at chatzot in order to mourn the destruction

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of the Holy Temple, which was razed because of our transgressions. In this way, may we awaken Your mercy, so that You will speedily console and gladden our spirits, and for “the mourners of Zion, exchange ashes for splendor.”<sup>36</sup> May we subjugate the Luminaries of Fire before the Luminaries of Light. May the holy name – the Divine Name *YHVH*, and the names of the true tzaddikim – prevail over the name of impurity, the names of the outside forces. And may falsehood be nullified before truth.

Let the names of the true tzaddikim be revealed, magnified and publicized throughout the world, as well as their splendor, their beauty, and their holy and awesome grace. May we be deemed worthy to be subsumed within their names and within the splendor of the beauty of their holiness, until our eyes are truly opened. Then we will be able to gaze into ourselves lucidly, into all four elements of the soul, in order to purify, refine and sanctify them from all evil passions and evil traits that derive from them; to sift the evil from the good, and attain all virtuous traits and deeds.

Through the true tzaddikim, confer upon us holy and pure consciousness, until all four levels of the mind<sup>37</sup> and all four elements become incorporated into the holy and awesome, absolutely simple element which is the “*tzaddik yesod olam* – the tzaddik who is the foundation of the world”<sup>38</sup> and the “river that flows from Eden to water the garden.”<sup>39</sup>

May everything be incorporated into Your great, holy and awesome Unitary Name, and may You hasten our redemption and rebuild the House of our holiness and splendor! May Your Name, our King, be “magnified,

sanctified, blessed, praised, glorified, extolled and lauded<sup>40</sup> in the mouths of all living creatures constantly, forever and ever!

Enable us to fulfill the mitzvah of tefilin perfectly, with great holiness and purity, with awe and love, with joy and a whole heart, until we draw upon ourselves the splendor of the awesome and holy tefilin. This is the higher consciousness derived from the *rosh bayit*, who fills the “houses” (*batim*) of the tefilin with lofty perceptions – “with wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and all manner of workmanship.”<sup>41</sup>

Grant us the privilege of delighting in Shabbat with all our might, celebrating each Shabbat with the greatest joy. Through the holiness of Shabbat, may we also imbue ourselves with the higher consciousness of the *rosh bayit*, the tzaddik who is called “Shabbat of all the days.”<sup>42</sup> In this way, we will return to You in truth and become incorporated into Your great Name, which is combined with our names; and we will repair all the damage we have caused to Your great Name.

In Your abundant mercy, protect us and save us from all sicknesses, ailments and diseases that come from the names of impurity and the outside forces, God forbid. These are called “Luminaries of Fire.” Heavenly Father, Ruler over all, Eternal Guardian of Israel, protect us and save us from them! May Your great Name stand against them and subjugate, destroy and annihilate the Luminaries of Fire that oppose the Luminaries of Light. Eradicate the names of impurity, the names of the outside forces, and reveal Your holy Name in the world!

Spread over us Your tent of peace in the merit of the holy Shabbat. Guard us, as well as our assets and homes,

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from all damage and loss, materially and spiritually, all of which derive from the Luminaries of Fire. Save all the houses of Your people, Israel, from fire. O God, protect them always from fire and from all types of damage, for we are incapable of guarding them. On You alone we rely! Have mercy on us and on the entire Jewish people from now on, and protect our houses and property from fire. Do not allow the Luminaries of Fire any dominion over us, God forbid – neither our bodies, nor our souls, nor our wealth. Rather, may we constantly be subsumed within the Luminaries of Light, which in turn are subsumed within Your great Name.

Grant us the privilege of fulfilling the mitzvah of the Four Species perfectly, in its proper time. May we always obtain a beautiful, kosher etrog that possesses every desirable quality; and may You reveal the splendor of the beauty and holiness of Your people, Israel, to the world – particularly the splendor, beauty and holiness of the true tzaddikim and devout Jews – until all humanity longs and yearns to become incorporated into them, to merge into their names and their beauty. All humanity will turn to walk in their ways, thus to perform Your will in truth all their days, forever!

Master of the Universe! Our King and our God! Mercifully fulfill our requests and enable us to attain all that we have asked of You, so that we may truly be incorporated into Your great and holy Name for all eternity! Magnify and sanctify Your great Name through us constantly, and fulfill in us what is written: “Nations shall revere the Name of God, and all earthly kings, Your glory!”<sup>43</sup> “May the Name of God be blessed, now and forever!”<sup>44</sup> “Help us, God of our deliverance, for the sake

of the glory of Your Name; save us and atone for our sins for the sake of Your Name!"<sup>45</sup> "Blessed is the Lord, God of Israel, Who alone performs wonders. Blessed is the Name of His glory forever, and may His glory fill all the earth. Amen and amen!"<sup>46</sup>

(LT II, 6)

#### Notes

- 1 Jeremiah 31:14, included in Tikkun Chatzot.
- 2 Lamentations 1:16, included in Tikkun Chatzot.
- 3 Jeremiah 4:13.
- 4 Paraphrase of Isaiah 21:3.
- 5 Paraphrase of Song of Songs 6:1.
- 6 Lamentations 5:17.
- 7 I Kings 5:13.
- 8 For example, see *Zohar* III, 70b. This idea appears repeatedly in the works of the ARI and throughout Kabbalistic and Chassidic literature. Reb Noson discusses it in *Likutey Halakhot, Geviyat Chov MeHaYetomim* 3:19-20; *Apotiki* 5:13-14; *Chezkat Metaltelin* 5:16; *Shluchin* 5:11-13; et passim.
- 9 See *Likutey Moharan* II, 7; *ibid.*, II, 48, et passim.
- 10 Jeremiah 31:14.
- 11 Lamentations 1:2. On a simple level, the expression "her lovers" refers to the surrounding nations to which the Kingdom of Judea turned in a desperate attempt to forge a military alliance (Rashi, ad loc.). Jeremiah allegorizes these alliances as promiscuous relationships, doomed to betrayal and heartbreak.
- 12 Paraphrase of Isaiah 30:17.
- 13 Lamentations 5:3.
- 14 Cf. *Likutey Moharan* II, 7, where Rebbe Nachman states that no tzaddik departs from this world without "leaving behind a blessing" through his children or disciples.
- 15 Paraphrase of Isaiah 5:7. In Hebrew, the initial letters of *Berakhah Neta Sha'ashu'av* (a blessing, a planting of his delight) possibly

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- hint to the initials of *Nachman Ben Simchah*, Rebbe Nachman's name and patronymic.
- 16 A play on Isaiah 6:13: "Like an elm and an oak which, when shedding [their leaves], still have vitality in them, so shall the holy seed be the vitality [of the land]."
  - 17 Paraphrase of Lamentations 4:2.
  - 18 Liturgy, Yom Kippur *Musaf*.
  - 19 *Erwin* 13b.
  - 20 A figure of speech customarily used to describe the passing of great rabbis and Torah scholars.
  - 21 The Holy Ark is the repository of the Torah scrolls in the synagogue. Reb Noson's phrasing invokes the words of the Talmud: "Those who stand up for a Torah scroll, but not for a Torah scholar, are fools" (*Makkot* 22b).
  - 22 Lamentations 5:16.
  - 23 Paraphrase of Isaiah 18:2.
  - 24 Isaiah 22:4.
  - 25 Paraphrase of Jeremiah 6:23.
  - 26 Liturgy, *Shemoneh Esrei*.
  - 27 See *Mishnat Chassidim, Masekhet Asiyah Gufanit*, ch. 1. The element of fire gives rise to the evil traits of self-importance, arrogance, anger, and pursuit of power and honor. The element of air gives rise to the traits of idle speech, flattery and speaking falsehood. The element of water gives rise to the traits of sensual desire and covetousness. The element of earth gives rise to the traits of laziness and depression. These four elements correspond to the four letters of the Divine Name *YHVH* and the Four Worlds. Rebbe Nachman discusses these concepts in *Likutey Moharan* I, 4:8 and *ibid.*, II, 67, which serves as the basis for this prayer.
  - 28 Job 42:2.
  - 29 Lamentations 1:16.
  - 30 Ecclesiastes 1:13.
  - 31 *Yerushalmi Ta'anit* 2; Rashi on Joshua 7:9; Rashi on Jeremiah 14:7; et al. Rebbe Nachman weaves this theme into his lesson in *Likutey Moharan* II, 66 and 67. In both cases, he relates the Divine Name to Shabbat.

- 32 *Lamentations Rabbah* 1:37, citing Deuteronomy 28:61. Rebbe Nachman addresses this topic in *Likutey Moharan* I, 57:1.
- 33 Isaiah 57:1.
- 34 Pesach Haggadah.
- 35 Lamentations 4:1-2.
- 36 Paraphrase of Isaiah 61:3, as found in Tikkun Chatzot. The Hebrew letters *alef*, *peh*, *resh*, which spell *EFeR* (ashes) may be recombined to spell *Pe'ER* (splendor).
- 37 According to the Kabbalah, every person possesses four "mentalities" or levels of the mind with which he can serve God and ultimately perceive Divinity. These levels correspond to the sefirot of Chokhmah, Binah, Da'at and Malkhut.
- 38 Proverbs 10:25.
- 39 Genesis 2:10. Rebbe Nachman explains that the tzaddik is called the "foundation of the world" because he is identified with the *Yesod HaPashut*, the Simple Primal Element or "Ground of Being" from which all diversity stems; see *Likutey Moharan* I, 4; *ibid.*, II, 67. The unitary "river that flows from Eden" and subsequently divides into four tributaries symbolizes this paradigm.
- 40 Liturgy, *Kaddish*.
- 41 Exodus 35:31.
- 42 *Zohar* III, 144b.
- 43 Psalms 102:16.
- 44 Psalms 113:2.
- 45 Psalms 79:9.
- 46 Psalms 72:18-19.