
Sichos in English Classics 4

The Benefits of Personal Development



**MACHNE ISRAEL
DEVELOPMENT FUND**



Sichos In English
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Brooklyn, New York 11213
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IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

At the Shloshim of R' Yonah Avtzon A"H, Director of Sichos in English, a resolution was taken to reprint the original weekly Sichos in English publications.

To fulfill this, a weekly booklet including a translation of a *farbrengen* as it was first published will be distributed. Our intention is to reprint the entire set in the near future.

Following the Sichos we will include an addendum with pictures, notes, and insights into the process of its publication.

These weekly publications can be sponsored to honor a loved one, a Yortzeit or a simcha by contacting us at **sichosinenglish@gmail.com**. If you would like to receive this weekly publication to your email, then please use the above email address as well.

To partner with us, so that we can continue to publish original Sichos in English content as well as behind the scenes stories and documents, please make a contribution at: sie.org/partner

BACKGROUND

TO THE SICHA

Machane Yisroel Development Fund, otherwise known as MIDF, was established in 5745 (1985). From just four donors it grew to include hundreds of people who joined this fund which was personally named by the Rebbe.

Twice a year the donors and their Shluchim would come to Crown Heights for a special conference. The highlight was meeting the Rebbe. The Rebbe would say a special Sicha for them, and would then have private meetings in 770 with the donors where they all had an opportunity to approach the Rebbe's desk and have a few private minutes with him to discuss what was on their mind.

Sichos in English was responsible for transcribing and preparing the Rebbe's words for publication. The Rebbe would edit these Sichos and would then mail them, together with a personal letter, to all those who attended the event.

One of the themes in the Rebbe's sichos at the MIDF was how the blessing of wealth comes with an important shlichus from Hashem - Tzedoko. And how through that they are blessed with success beyond limitations.

Another theme was to be a Dugma Chaya and have a positive influence on others, Jews and non-Jews.

Sometimes the Rebbe would bring examples from concepts in the world of business as well.

In the addendum this week we will bring the Rebbe's edits for the following Sicha.

MACHNE ISRAEL

DEVELOPMENT FUND

23rd Day of Adar, 5750 (1990)

From a superficial perspective, one might consider this as a gathering of diverse people, from separate communities in different lands, with divergent ways of life. Yet in essence, the inherent Jewish identity we share establishes a common bond between us. Even those who are here for the first time do not feel like strangers, for each one of us, men, women and children, stem from a single source. The heritage we received from our patriarchs and matriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, forges a union between us.

There is no need to establish a new connection. A bond already exists. Indeed, we see this even in animal and plant life which impart common qualities and character traits to their offspring. All that is necessary is for us to enhance the development and the expression of this essential connection and unity we possess.

The concept of development characterizes the purpose of this meeting as emphasized by the name of this group, the Machne Israel *Development* Fund. Development implies stimulating growth, developing all the potentials of an existing entity. True development is achieved when those devoted to its cause are not satisfied by partial development, but invest their energies in actualizing the maximum potential. The profits of total development are also apparent in that it benefits others as well.

A successful business person appreciates this investment of effort. He or she exert themselves in pursuing the development of the business, not only out of feeling of responsibility, but out of a desire for continual growth. In this manner they will also utilize the capacities that G-d granted them, in the fullest possible manner.

When a person reviews his achievements and sees what he has done, he does not relax and rest on his laurels, instead, he asks himself: “Am I using the talents and skills which G-d granted me in the fullest way possible?”

In His master plan for creation, G-d granted these potentials with the intent that they be utilized so that, through their expression, they will eventually benefit also the world at large. When man does not utilize them fully, he delays not only his own personal development, but the fulfillment of G-d’s intent.

The development and utilization of one’s potential brings benefit not only to the individual, his family, and inner circle of friends, but to his entire environment, Jews and non-Jews. When a person develops himself fully, his scope of influence expands and he has the potential to affect his city, state, and indeed, the entire country.

We who are privileged to live in these United States bear witness that the development of this country enabled it to aid and develop other countries, even those in far-flung corners of the earth.

America’s favorable influence and shared development with others around the globe, served not only to advance the quality of human life but also to enhance and cultivate the development of the animal species, the world of botany and the development of technology etc.

When such succor is properly administered, it stimulates growth and development among the recipients. Initially, they may need help from others. Ultimately, however, they grow to the level that they too not only support the development but become developers themselves.

Since these benefits are carried out in the spirit of “the light of Torah,” their scope expands like light. Light spreads naturally and effortlessly. As soon as a light is brought into a dark room, the entire room is illuminated, regardless of the desires of those in the room or its contents. Similarly, when a person is involved with “the candle of *mitzvah* and the light of Torah,” he illuminates his

entire surroundings and that light spreads naturally, benefiting the world at large.

These activities reduce the threat of war and adversity, and engender the spread of unity and peace throughout the world. Unity, established through shared ideals and goals, results in the ultimate union of all peoples, committed to fulfilling the Creator's will.

Each individual has within him the ability to fulfill the command, "Love your neighbor as yourself." He has inherent potential to be committed to the development of others to the same degree as he is committed to his own personal growth. And from assisting in the development of others the person is enjoined to further develop the natural world we live in so that the whole world is a living example of G-d's glory.

Our Sages declare, "Everything that G-d created in this world, He created for His glory." Every creation and every G-d granted capacity and potential is an expression of His glory. The more a person's or an entity's potential is developed, the greater the expression of G-d's glory.

The establishment of such unity among the Jewish people, in particular, will lead to an end of the exile, when Mashiach will bring about the ultimate expression of growth and development, and all potential will be fully realized.

This chain-reaction development will remove the menace of conflict and discord, ultimately leading to a unity of all mankind. This will be reflected in a world of peace and harmony, when all will witness the "perfecting of the world under the sovereignty of the Almighty,"

Similarly, this approach will generate peace and unity among families. Parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, will join together, unified by a common purpose and common ideals, the Torah and *mitzvos* we all share.

* * *

The above concepts are reflected in a lesson that can be derived from the weekly Torah portion. This week, two portions are combined, *Parshas Vayakhel* and *Parshas Pekudei*.

Vayakhel means “and he gathered,” describing how Moses called together the entire Jewish people. Similarly, in subsequent generations we have the potential and the obligation to gather Jews and unite them as one family.

Pekudei means “an accounting,” reckoning each individual entity and appreciating its *unique* attributes and contribution.

The combination of these two Torah portions teaches that joining together with others does not minimize one’s individuality or diminish one’s importance. Though the Jews join in the study of Torah and the fulfillment of *mitzvos*, combining their efforts in spreading *yiddishkeit* throughout the world, the important contribution made by each individual is not lost.

Indeed, each individual must realize the importance of his/her actions. Maimonides teaches us that with one deed, each individual man and woman, young and old, infant and elder, can tip the balance of the entire world and bring about salvation for all mankind.

Once the balance is tipped to the good, even the negative elements are transformed into good. A successful businessman seizes an opportunity and transforms circumstances that others may consider as negative, into profit making ventures.

A person’s success in business reflects his ability to influence others and should be used to spread good in the world at large. These efforts must include an emphasis on education, teaching Jews Torah and *mitzvos* and educating the non-Jews in the observance of the seven *universal* commandments given to Noach. The purpose of these laws is to establish a just society, one in which people are taught to help others and live in real and true civility.

An additional Torah portion will be read this *Shabbos* — *Parshas HaChodesh*, that deals with the upcoming new month of Nissan and the rebirth of the new moon.

The Jewish people who are likened to the moon, are destined to be renewed. This is also expressed in an additional interpretation of the word *pekudei*, “absence,” like the cycles of the moon which recedes into absence before, and as a preparation for, its rebirth. So too will the Jewish people be renewed at the completion of its exile. This will be accomplished by *vayakhel* — gathering, developing and elevating all sparks of G-dliness in all parts of the world to a level of complete unity with G-d.

This is accomplished by each and every Jew, who are all *shluchim*, emissaries, of G-d, charged with transforming this entire world into a dwelling place for G-dliness.

This is a time when each one of us must resolve to grow and develop in Torah and *mitzvos*, to serve as a living example of Jewish behavior, beginning in one’s own home, making it a center for Torah, prayer, and deeds of kindness, a “sanctuary in microcosm,” where the Divine Presence rests.

This growth must also be reflected in your families and your efforts to educate them in Torah and *mitzvos*. Your efforts, however, cannot be confined to your own family, but must involve the entire Jewish people, spreading Torah and *mitzvos*, in particular the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* and the *mitzvah* of education. Your efforts in this direction will cause G-d to grant you more success in business which, in turn, will afford you a greater potential to affect change until ultimately, each of you fully develop your potential.

This will lead to the era when the potential of the world at large will be developed to its fullest extent with the coming of Mashiach. Then, we will proceed as a unified people to the Holy Land and to Jerusalem, and the *Bais HaMikdash*. May it be imminently in our days.

ADDENDUM

Behind the Scenes of Sichos in English

Edit 1:

When a person reviews his achievements and sees what he has done, he does not relax and rest on his laurels, instead, he asks ^{himself}: “Am I using the talents and skills which G-d granted me in the fullest way possible?”

The first edit of the Rebbe was on the paragraph “When a person reviews his achievements and sees what he has done, he does not relax and rest on his laurels, instead, he asks **himself**: “Am I using the talents and skills which G-d granted me in the fullest way possible?”

The Rebbe added the word “himself” which implies that this question is not necessarily a question only to ask of others for guidance, rather a question to ask oneself.

Edit 2:

The Jewish people who are likened to the moon, are destined to be renewed. This is also expressed in additional interpretation of the word *pekudei*, which also means absence, like the cycles of the moon which recedes into absence before it is reborn. So too will the Jewish people be renewed at the completion of its exile. This will be accomplished by the gathering--*vayakhel*--of all sparks of G-dliness in all parts of the world, developing and elevating them to a level of complete unity with G-d.

“The Jewish people who are likened to the moon, are destined to be renewed. This is also expressed in an additional interpretation of the word *pekudei*, “absence,” like the cycles of the moon which recedes into absence before, **and as a preparation for, its rebirth**. So too will the Jewish people be renewed at the completion of its exile. This will be accomplished by *vayakhel* —

gathering, developing and elevating all sparks of G-dliness in all parts of the world to a level of complete unity with G-d.”

In this edit, we see how the Rebbe focuses on how the absence of the moon is by design - it is a preparation for the rebirth.

לזכות **סניא חינקא**

בת ר' **מנחם מענדל הכהן** ומרת **דבורה לאה**

זסרמן

לרגל הבת מצוה ז' אדר שני ה'תשע"ט

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **יונה**
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מאיר ע"ה

אבצן

מנהל ועד שיחות באנגלית
למעלה מארבעים שנה
שבהמשך פעולותיו בהפצת המעיינות
נזכה לגאולה השלימה תיכף ומיד ממש

נדפס על ידי חתנו ובתו
הר' **יצחק וחנה** ומשפחתם שיחיו **וואלף**



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