
Sichos in English Classics 5

The Innate Quality of Every Jew



**THE INDIVISIBILITY
OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL**



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

The year 1990 was a tumultuous one in Israeli politics. During this year there was what would infamously become known as the תרגיל המסריח — the disgusting maneuver. There was an attempted coup on the right wing government of Yitzchak Shamir, and it was a very messy situation.

This led to accusations and badmouthing in the public arena. At one point there was some very hateful speech shared by the rabbi of a certain community. This went public and caused lots of pain and hurt by many Jews to whom he referred to derogatorily.

The Rebbe, אוהבן של ישראל, responded to these harsh words with very strong and loving words about Yidden. This sicha of Vayikra 5750, is a special Sichah about the uniqueness of every Yid. The Rebbe especially requested that this sicha be prepared in English and then sent all over, and then he personally edited it.

In the addendum we bring some of the Rebbe's edits to this sicha.

THE INNATE QUALITY OF EVERY JEW — THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

“I have created this people for Myself; they shall relate My
praise” (Isaiah 43:20).

Each and every Jew, man, woman, or child, in every generation, by virtue of his very existence, expresses the praise of G-d. Not only is every Jew’s soul an “actual part of G-d,” so to speak, but also, each Jew as he exists in this world, body and soul, is a unique Divine creation and a member of “G-d’s nation.”

This applies to every single member of the Jewish people without distinction. We are “one nation,” sharing a fundamental equality regardless of our different spiritual levels. This applies even to those Jews who — at present — do not observe the will of G-d as expressed in the Torah. For, as our Sages teach, “A Jew even though he sins remains Jewish.”

Furthermore, the innate desire of every Jew (even one who is not observant), because he was born of a Jewish mother or converted according to the Halachah, is to serve G-d through Torah and its commandments, the *mitzvos*. Maimonides writes that every Jew, *even one who protests to the contrary*, desires to be part of the Jewish people, to fulfill *mitzvos*, and to separate himself from sin. If he does not do so, it is only because his evil inclination *forces* him to act otherwise.

Throughout the centuries, this essential desire has been revealed by the many Jews — even those who were not observant — who actually sacrificed their lives to sanctify G-d’s name.

Surely, efforts must be made to reach out to all the members of our people and develop this innate potential. Nevertheless, even before those efforts are completed, the very existence of the Jewish people expresses the praise of G-d. Though they have long been “one lamb among seventy wolves,” the Jewish nation has endured throughout the course of history, while nations greater and more powerful have vanished. This is not a result of any socio-political factors, but is rather an open expression of Divine power.

In particular this applies today, only a generation after the awesome Holocaust which threatened to utterly annihilate our people. The fact that our people (regardless of their spiritual level) continue to exist at present reveals G-d’s presence within our world.

The above concepts should affect the manner in which we approach our fellow Jews. Criticizing or speaking unfavorably about them is no less than making such statements against G-d Himself. Zachariah (2:12) the prophet warns that a person who strikes a Jew is like one who strikes G-d in the eye, so to speak. Since “a king cannot exist without a people,” the appreciation of G-d as king of the world is dependent on His people, the Jews, and an attack against them, heaven forbid, is an attack against Him.

When such statements are made, particularly when they are made in public, (and publicized even to the extent that they are relayed in the non-Jewish press,) they have to be corrected. We find that when Isaiah criticized the Jews — even though they were deserving of such criticism — he was punished. The Bible relates this incident in order to “open the way to repentance,” so that anyone who makes such statements should appreciate the need to correct his behavior.

Surely the above applies when a person questions the Jewishness of certain of our brothers and sisters whom the Torah itself defines as Jews. The Jewish people are compared to a Torah scroll. A blemish in a single letter of a Torah scroll disqualifies the entire scroll, including even the Ten Commandments. Similarly, disqualifying a single member of our people affects the people as a whole.

The essential nature of any entity always seeks to express itself. Thus, the appreciation of a Jew's essential nature should motivate efforts to have that nature realized — through the fulfillment of the Torah and its commandments.

This will bring the Jewish people not only spiritual benefits, but will also strengthen their position in the world, particularly in the Land of Israel.

Just as the Jews are G-d's chosen people, the Land of Israel is G-d's chosen land. It is a holy land given as an eternal inheritance to the entire Jewish people, those living in the land at present, and those presently living in the diaspora. Hence, no one is entitled to surrender any portion of *Eretz Yisrael* to gentiles.

Maintaining possession of this land is the only path to peace.

Succumbing to the pressure to surrender any part of it will only invite additional pressure, weakening the security of the Jewish people and exposing them to danger. The government in *Eretz Yisrael* must follow the path of peace, but also must realize that the path to peace depends on maintaining possession of every portion of the land which G-d has granted us.

May the above hasten the coming of Moshiach who will lead our entire people to *Eretz Yisrael*. Our Sages declared, "In the month of Nisan our people were redeemed from Egypt, and in Nisan they will be redeemed by the Messiah."

The name Nisan is also related to the Hebrew word *Nes*, meaning "miracle," which is of particular relevance in the present year, תשנ"ו, a "year of miracles." May we merit the most essential miracle, the coming of Moshiach, and may this take place in the immediate future.

ADDENDUM


Behind the Scenes of Sichos in English

Intro:

Shown below are some of the Rebbe's edits to the above Sicha.

In italics, we suggest some thoughts that may possibly offer insight into the Rebbe's intentions with these edits.

Edit 1:



Each and every Jew, man, woman, or child, in every generation, by virtue of his very existence, expresses the praise of G-d. Not only is every Jew's soul an "actual part of G-d," but also, each Jew as he exists in this world, body and soul, is a unique Divine creation and a member of "G-d's nation."

Each and every Jew, man, woman, or child, in every generation, by virtue of his very existence, expresses the praise of G-d. Not only is every Jew's soul an "actual part of G-d," [the Rebbe added the word **כנינוח** which was translated as] '**so to speak**,' but also, each Jew as he exists in this world, body and soul, is a unique Divine creation and a member of "G-d's nation."

Edit 2:

Furthermore, the innate desire of every Jew (even one who is not fully observant), because he was born of a Jewish mother or ~~legally~~ ^{Halachically} converted according to the Halachah, is to serve G-d through Torah and its commandments, the mitzvos.

Maimonides writes that every Jew, *even one who protests to the contrary*, desires to be part of the Jewish people, to fulfill mitzvos, and to separate himself from sin. If he does not do so, it is only because his evil inclination forces him to act otherwise.

Throughout the centuries, this essential desire has been revealed by the many Jews -- even those who were not observant -- who ~~sacrificed~~ ^{actually} their lives to sanctify G-d's name.

Furthermore, the innate desire of every Jew (even one who is not [the Rebbe **removed** the word 'fully'] observant), because he was born of a Jewish mother or [it originally said, "**legally** converted" and the Rebbe changed the word legally to **Halachically**, then it seems that the Rebbe saw the word Halacha just after and **erased** that word as well] converted according to the Halachah, is to serve G-d through Torah and its commandments, the mitzvos.

Throughout the centuries, this essential desire has been revealed by the many Jews — even those who were not observant — who [the Rebbe **added** the word:] '**actually**' sacrificed their lives to sanctify G-d's name.

A. In removing the word "fully", the Rebbe might be clarifying that not only do the "not fully observant" have an inner desire to serve Hashem, but even those who are not observant at all.

B. Defining giyur — conversion according to Halacha — is a very delicate subject and one that is central to the continuity of the Jewish people. For this reason, the Rebbe waged a fierce campaign called "Who Is A Jew?" to ensure that the definition of giyur be enshrined in Israeli law clearly as "one who converted according to Halacha". Any other definition can be manipulated and used to validate improper conversions and thus create havoc in Jewish identity.

C. We might accept that the “Jewish spark”, the essential desire to connect to G-d, would give even a Jew who is not observant the **soul potential** for self-sacrifice. But it is more: many Jews, despite their lack of observance in day-to-day life, have actually given their lives, their **physical bodies**, for G-d. Chassidus explains that **actual** self-sacrifice in body is much greater than the **capacity** for self-sacrifice contained within the soul. And even this level is relevant to all Jews. (See Maamarim; Vihaya Eikev 5727 Ch. 5, Vikibel Hayehudim 5711 Ch. 10)

Edit 3:

The above concepts should affect the manner in which we approach our fellow Jews. Criticizing or speaking unfavorably about them is no less than making such statements against G-d Himself. Zachariah the prophet warns that a person who strikes a Jew is like one who strikes G-d in the eye, so to speak. Since “a king cannot exist without a people,” the appreciation of G-d as king of the world is dependent on His people, the Jews, and an attack against them, heaven forbid, is an attack against Him.

When it mentions that “Zechariah the prophet warns...” the Rebbe made a **sign and parentheses** which meant that the Rebbe wanted them to **add the source**.

In general, the Rebbe considers the quotation of sources in published material to be very important. Every reference to a Torah concept, whether from the revealed or esoteric parts of Torah, should be annotated with its specific source.

In the memory of my husband

הרה"ח הרה"ת הרב **יונה**

בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מאיר ע"ה

אבנן

whose birthday is on אדר ו

And in the merit of אבנן our grandson

מנחם מענדל שיחי' אסטער

for his birthday on אדר ו

And to all our children and grandchildren שיחי,

may they continue to give us

abundant Chassidishe Nachas

Dedicated by

Rivka Avtzon



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