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day structures which Judaism imposes on our lives. That is the supreme function of halakhah. It represents a quasi-realized eschatology which enables us to structure our lives in the here and now, deal with the chaos that is inevitable in our age of history, and await the ultimate *eschaton* to come. It is precisely the power of this quasi-realized eschatological structure which impelled Judaism's resistance to the more aggressive eschatological movements that arose in the course of its history.

The single most regrettable offshoot of this entire episode is that for many Jews, the eschatological impetus itself has become suspect. That reaction is nothing short of tragic. No community can survive for long without an eschatological myth, for it is precisely our eschatologies that give meaning to our lives. Our task, then, is to reclaim the indispensability of classical Jewish eschatology, precisely as myth. □

## A rebbe for all mankind

Zalman I. Posner

He was *sui generis*, unique in how he related to every type of person, how he addressed our cares, how he showed us all we are capable of becoming and being. Months have passed. The covenant between God and man that pain eases with time has not been fulfilled--and never really will. Consolation for those who knew him, or knew of him? Gratitude that we had that blessing.

The successor to Moshe at the banks of the Jordan was the "man in whom there is spirit", Joshua. The classic interpretation is that he could "meet the spirit of every person". Joshua became the Moshe of his generation, addressing every individual in that person's terms. This set the pattern for Joshua's successors in turn.

We are familiar with scholars, for example, appreciated by their peers but who cannot easily relate to the unschooled. There are eloquent orators who galvanize thousands but leave the educated cold. They are leaders but not Joshuas, not successors to Moshe.

### Spanning Continents and Movements

As the second half of the 20th century opened, in early 1951, a new figure appeared in the Jewish world, the

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young Lubavitcher Rebbe who accepted the mantle of his late father-in-law as Rebbe of the Chabad community. But his influence and interest were not to be limited to any community, any stratum of Jewry, any aspect of Jewish life and thought.

He rejected every limiting adjective on Jews, words like Reform and Conservative and Orthodox, *dati* for the "religious" in Israel and *chiloni* for the "secular. The word "Jew" said it all for him. Every Jew was "one of us" for him, his *ben yachid*, his "only child" and if that person's need was healing for illness or his indifference to his heritage or persecution or political leadership jeopardizing the safety of a Jewish community of millions--his problem was the Rebbe's.

### "Dollar" Days

*K'mayim hapanim*--as a face is reflected in the other's face, people reflected the feelings of the Rebbe toward them. Thousands lined up on Sundays for "dollars", when he would give a dollar bill to all comers to give to charity, with, if the person wished, another dollar of his own. "Dollars" on Sundays became standard and storied, people scheduling trips from abroad to enable them to be at "dollars". The Rebbe seemed to be impervious to exhaustion. A lady once asked him how he can stand there for so many hours. The Rebbe's response was, "I love to count diamonds."

That's how thousands literally met him--face to face, one on one. At the moment I stood before the Rebbe, and his eyes (as I write these words I recall the Yom Kippur *Musaph*: Fortunate are the eyes that saw all this) looked into mine, and into my soul, the universe ceased to exist for him. I, and I alone, was the universe for the Rebbe for that moment.

"Dollars" meant a moment with the Rebbe for those throngs. By their testimony and their presence, they reflected his concern and love. "Love your fellow" was not a platitude for him--or for them.

### The Ways of Leadership

He transcended the fragmentation of the Jewish world, the Us and Them. We were all Us to him. He penetrated to the core of the Jew, his soul, incorruptible, pure, and that was what he saw and helped the other see within himself. He could and did bring out the capacity for good in each of us, and what more could we ask for?

Leadership is more than inspiring others to follow or having organizing skills. Leadership begins with having clear objectives, direction and purpose, inspiring goals worthy of dedication.

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The leader welcomes those who share his dreams, but is not deterred if he is alone. The validation of the goal is not its popularity but its intrinsic quality.

Consensus is not the cause of leadership but its product. Religious leadership, if not in other fields, does not involve poll-taking, adjusting to shifts in the wind.

Of course, such leadership is not common, until suddenly such a man appears.

The Rebbe had his vision of what a Jew can be, what a Jewish community or State must be, and when these are deflected from their course, or don't seem to have a course, the Rebbe sees his responsibility to call attention to the peril involved. Decades might pass before he was vindicated, and at the risk of being controversial, here are a few instances.

After the Six-Day War, a pernicious War of Attrition began, picking off a life here, another there, slowly mounting lists of casualties. A cease-fire was demanded by Israelis and foreign governments, to halt these killings. The Rebbe pleaded not to accept a cease-fire, a lone protestor defying universal logic and love of peace. On Yom Kippur 1973, Israel paid the price.

### On the Edge of Controversy

Another instance. When the gates of the Soviet Union were opened, the Rebbe urged a careful screening to prevent non-Jews from claiming they are Jews. The attacks on him were virulent, unrestrained but literally, as I write, the media describe growing fears among Israelis untainted by religious scruples, that the borders of Israel are too porous, to use the American term, allowing too many absolute non-Jews to enter. The Rebbe insisted on a standard, a *halakhah*, warning about the consequences of this permissive situation. Many opposed the Rebbe, insisting that not a jot or a tittle in the Law of Return as it exists be changed. Are they embracing his stand? They are far closer to his stand than to their original one, and more stringent standards are called for.

Another example is the *baal teshuvah* movement, the alienated returning to Judaism, a development that no one foresaw. Here the attacks on the Rebbe came from the religious as well. He sent his *shluchim* to the vast Jewish wastelands of the planet, and turned the irreversible current around. No one disagrees with working to attract Jews back to Judaism today, but having been there at the creation, I testify that there was hardly a murmur of support to counter the bitter criticism. The Rebbe was, if you please, controversial.

"Controversial" has a negative tone, but what idea was ever meaningful or demanding and not controversial? The Rebbe provoked controversy constantly, because in

calling for a change in direction individuals and institutions are challenged, and whoever graciously accepts challenge or admits error?

He was the Rebbe for every Jew, for every human being for that matter, because he reasserted and taught the obligation to teach all humanity the Seven Mitzvot of mankind, as the first Jew did forty centuries ago.

He addressed the mind of the Jews and his emotions. He never said it but he taught how to honor your mother by the way he treated his mother. My mother--and everybody else's--was well aware of this. The childless, the mortally ill, the desperate searcher, the prominent and the forgotten, scientist and artist and businessman--they turned to him and often found he had already turned to them first, responding before the question was asked.

One last and inadequate word. Women. Every *shliach* goes to his assigned post but never alone. His wife is with him. In fact it's not really a *shliach* and his wife but two *shluchim*. Lubavitcher women know their value because they know how the Rebbe regards them.

The Rebbe. He needed no further identification. Who can picture another like him? □

## Controversy: the measure of leadership-- a reflection on the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rela M. Geffen

Two years ago, I was introduced to a new British Jewish glossy magazine called *New Moon*. To promote the publication, the magazine was selling sets of 6 "Rabbi" mugs at a reduced rate to those who subscribed. To my surprise, in this British set, one mug had on it a picture of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. At second thought, I wasn't surprised at all.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe was a world Jewish statesman, though he hardly traveled outside the *daled amot* (four ells) of the Crown Heights neighborhood in Brooklyn. A master of Rabbinics, he was also a genius at public relations, and taught the whole Jewish world how to reach out effectively to modern Jews and motivate them

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