

LESSON 1

GROUND RULES OF LIFE

STARRING: YOU

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Section #1 - Who, What, When, Where, & Why are we here?

Knowing your past; improving your future...

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Division, prejudice, and discord grip every faction of the world's peoples. We too often hate to love, and love to hate. The source of this problem stems primarily by focusing on our differences; instead of those things that unite us. There are 70 primary nations of people, who each have a special general part to play in the world; and then each person, in an individual way, has a role of contribution. Indeed history will attest, that various peoples have furthered humanity's abilities in all genres of life. For example; the Greeks are known for promoting philosophy, science, and art. The Romans are credited with laying out the ground rules of government. Ethics are always ascribed to "Judeo-Christian" values; and the list goes on. Each group's addition has enabled all of us to grow. Imagine if all the contributions were given toward a common goal; every facet becoming one more building block toward universal perfection. Sound impossible? That is precisely what our task is down here; to put down our piece in the grand cosmic puzzle. At long last, all our efforts will usher in the Messianic Era; where all will direct their talents toward bettering the world, with a unified service of G-d.

**The purpose of all creation
was because G-d “desired an
abode in the lower world.”
Midrash Tanchuma, Naso 16**

**“The ultimate purpose is for this lower world,
for such was His Blessed Will, that He shall
have satisfaction when evil is subdued and
darkness is turned to light.”
Likkutei Amarim Ch. 36**

WHO IS NEEDED? YOU!

Angels do not give the Creator true pleasure. There is no force challenging their unending desire to do good. Their service is robotic and natural, because as spiritual beings, they have a clear perception of G-dliness. The ultimate pleasure for the Al-mighty is physical reality, where G-dliness is concealed, and the forces of good not always so obvious. When a human being looks beyond the illusion of the tangible realm, to its G-dly core; passes over his passions which try urgently to stray him off the path; and then chooses good, G-d exclaims, "Mission accomplished!" The Supernal Desire and thirst which willed the world into existence is quenched. We were all presented with the torches to light up the dark world, so that even this coarse existence could be a place where G-dly light could be recognized.

G-d expresses man's role as the purpose of creation just before creating Adam...

“If there are no guests, what pleasure has the king with all the good things He has provided?”

Bereishis Rabba 8:5

Why are we challenged in the world?

When G-d tests a person it is to bring out his latent potential, and allow him to express it in actions.

Kuzari 5:20

The goal is to live up to one's fullest potential:

“In the world to come, I will not be asked why I was not Abraham, Jacob, or Moses; I will be asked why was I not Zusya.”

Reb Zusya, 18th Century Poland

HOW DOES IT WORK?

As a creation it is impossible for us to relate to our Creator. We can't relate to bugs or plants, and they are creations as well; so how much infinitely more so, with the very Being that brought us into existence. The only way we can relate, or have any grasp of what He wants, is by Him revealing His will to us; therefore, religion has to claim Divine revelation. Judaism has a unique twist distinguishing it from all other religions that ever were, and will ever be-- national revelation. It's very easy for one man or a small group to claim they witnessed G-d, or what have you. Judaism teaches that at Mount Sinai, the entire nation of 3 million witnessed the fusion of the material and the spiritual; the Creator revealed His will and laws, in a manner never to be duplicated again. From that point on, a human being could make the world express G-dliness, by doing His will in the world. The key to creation was now accessible.

**“G-d gave the mitzvos solely
to refine the creatures.”
Bereishis Rabba 44:1**

**Through Torah and mitzvah performance
we have the unique ability to draw
down Divine effluence, which not only
benefits the performer, but enables
the physical objects used in the performance
to become vessels for G-dliness.
Rabbi Joseph I. Schneersohn,
Yiddish Maamar 1.**

WHAT DO WE DO? WHEN DID IT START?

So what does G-d want exactly? The Jewish people are called a "nation of priests." 613 primary deeds were given to be carried out; 248 on the to do list, 365 thou shalt nots. Paralleling this there are 248 bones in the body and 365 sinews that make up the circulatory system; demonstrating that adherence to this code, refines every part of the Jew who was instructed to perform them; and connects them with the "Supernal Man," at the same time. The Jewish people are meant to be a living example to humanity, of integrating material and the metaphysical into daily life. Just as priests and the congregation work together in distinct roles to serve G-d in the house of worship, the Jewish people were to be priests for mankind, as if the entire world was one house of worship.

"Thus saith the L-rd of hosts:
In those days it shall come to pass
that ten men shall take hold, out of
all the languages of the nations,
...of he that is a Jew, saying:
We will go with you, for we have
heard G-d is with you."
Zachariah 8:23

So what about the other 70 nations? Adam, the first man, was given a moral code to abide by. 10 generations elapsed and the world had long abandoned them. G-d saw that Noah and his family were the only ones still on the right track; therefore, the world would be started anew, and Noah would be the patriarch of all humanity. After bringing a flood to the world, which cleansed it of previous evils, G-d started from square one-- basic morals. Noah was retold the former edicts and got an additional one; therefore, they bore his name--the Seven Laws of Noah. All humanity would be his pedigree and mandated in fulfilling these basic tenets for a healthy world. Seven symbolizes completeness in nature. There are 7 days in a week, and a person's soul was given 7 emotive attributes that contribute to his personality. Each of the 7 laws corresponds to one of those attributes, refining the soul of the gentile who performs them. The rainbow was given 7 colors, for it is the reminder for humanity to their commitment to these 7 laws. Mount Sinai united the upper and lower worlds, changing all of existence forever. The Seven Noahide Laws were reiterated at this momentous occasion, enabling all people to make G-dliness a part of their own life in their G-d given path. The prohibitions are from idolatry, blasphemy, murder, stealing, sexual misconduct, and eating the limb of a live animal. The seventh is a positive command to set up courts of justice that enforce the other six. While seemingly basic, each one includes countless details which need to be toiled in, by all those who seek true piety. The universal laws must not only be practiced out of rote or common sense , but instead infused with the idea that they were all commanded by G-d to humanity at Mount Sinai.

**"He did not create it (to be) a waste land,
He formed it to be inhabited (and civilized)"
(*Yeshayahu* 45:18). This can only be when
all humanity lives justly and righteously.
This of course is the theme of the
Seven Noahide Commandments
with their accompanying laws and ramifications.
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Parshas Tsav, 5747**

WHERE DID IT GO WRONG?

Why does the world look like it does today? The morals discussed above, were taken and had ceremonies and flare added to them until they formed individual religions. The new rites and rituals of the particular faith became the primary focus, and the moral code of living took a far second. Each group professed themselves as the only truth, and subsequently everyone else must follow or be condemned. Judaism never sought converts. If someone wishes to convert they are dismissed initially. The reason is simple; everyone else already has a G-d given role. We can easily amend our mistake, by putting the added baggage on the back burner, and zeroing in on the Seven Noahide Laws, which are the foundations which unite us. By focusing on those things that make us the same, our unique differences will make us stronger, rather than cause us dismay. Ultimately the goal is universal perfection and unity, with all peoples' occupation being solely to know G-d.

"I will turn all the nations to a clear language, that they may call upon the L-rd and serve Him in one voice."

Zephania 3:9

Section #2 – Quotes About Humanity In Jewish Tradition We're in this together

**"Righteous people of all nations
have a share in the world to come"
Sanhedrin 105a**

"Our love of humanity should take no exception to any nation or individual. For man was not created for his own sake exclusively; rather, all men exist for the sake of one another. As a sage once said: "The world and all it contains was created for mankind, and within mankind itself, one person was created for the sake of the next, each to benefit the other." Therefore, not only does [love of one's fellow] apply to the Jewish people but to all mankind. We should love all nations and include all peoples in this universal principle, 'the stranger and native son' alike, all who inhabit the earth."

R' Pinchos Eliyohu Horowitz of Vilna, Sefer HaBris

**a non-Jew who studies Torah
is comparable to the High Priest
Avodah Zara 3a, Bava Kama 38a**

Righteous gentiles are called:

***priests**

Midrash: Yalkut, Kings II, 296

***pious ones**

Tana D'vei Eliyahu Zuta 20:6

***are rewarded for fulfilling G-d's commandments**

Talmud Yerushalmi, Peah 1:1

***G-d recalls their merits**

Yalkut: Tehilim 643

***they will return with the resurrection of the dead**

Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 34

***they have a share in Gan Eden**

Zohar, Pekudei

"I call heaven and earth to bear witness, that any individual, man or woman, Jew or Gentile, freeman or slave, can have the Holy Spirit bestowed upon him. It all depends on his deeds."

Shaare Tzedek 60a, 60b

"G-d will wipe away the tears from all faces" (Isaiah 25:8):

"This means from the faces of Jews and non-Jews alike."

R' Yehoshua ben Levi (Bereishis Rabbah 26:2

Section #3 –Supplements– Moshiach?

What is Moshiach?

www.askmoses.com

A. Moshiach is the phrase “Messiah” comes from—it’s a Hebrew word meaning “the anointed one.” Moshiach is the number-one belief in Judaism, next to Torah and G-d Himself. It is Belief #12 of Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles of Faith.

B. We were there, and now we’re here. Then, we had sovereignty and our own country, and now we are governed by others, in others’ countries. Then, we had a king anointed by a prophet of G-d, and when we get back there, we’ll have an anointed king again. Two thousand years ago, the Roman Empire exiled us from our land, Israel. We’ve been all over since—we’ve even forgotten where we came from and where we’re headed. We’ve been persecuted in a thousand different ways by a thousand different cultures. But we never gave up hope that G-d would send a descendant of King David to lead us out of exile. This is the classic, essential Jewish understanding of Moshiach.

C. However, you don’t have to be Jewish to eat bagels and lox, and neither need you be Jewish for Moshiach to touch your life. For when Moshiach comes, the world will rise to perfection. Moshiach is not the relocation of Jews from many places to one place; Moshiach is not the eternal domination of one people and the eternal damnation of all others: Moshiach is the concept to end all concepts. Moshiach is Utopia. Moshiach is the answer to “Why are we here?” Moshiach will not just redeem the Jewish people from exile—he will redeem mankind from meaninglessness, and teach the purpose of life to the universe. No more school shootings, no more pain, no more war, no more rat race.

The Messiah within

Some things never change: animals, vegetables, minerals. But people do. Change is part of life. People change. Countries change. Societies change. The world changes. Why? Because people reject the status quo. People try to change themselves, things, life. Why? Because people want a better world—don’t you? If we knew there was nothing we could do about this mad world, we couldn’t get up in the morning. But something drives us on. This trait, this will, is the belief in Moshiach—the belief that the world will be better one day. Ultimately, the belief in Moshiach is the belief in ourselves, and in the eternal triumph of good.

What can/should I do to help bring Moshiach?

Good is like water collecting in a cup—drop by drop, deed by deed. When the cup is full, it overflows its sides. When we fill this world with enough good, G-d sends Moshiach. G-d gave mankind tools for good—the Torah for Jews, and the Noahide Code for non-Jews. Whatever your spiritual configuration, G-d is waiting for your move—our move. Let’s work together to bring Moshiach, now. Let’s do good.

Conversation # 1 (about Moshiach)
Believer & Skeptic
by Yanky Tauber
askmoses.com

Skeptic: It's not going to happen.

Believer: Why not?

Skeptic: Universal brotherhood, swords into plowshares, the eradication of evil... give me a break!

Believer: Again, why not?

Skeptic: Humanity is why not. Look at its bloodstained history, look at what's going on today. Let's face it, man is a selfish animal. His only true goal in life is self-fulfillment, and he'll trample and destroy everything in his path to get what he wants.

Believer: And such, in your view, is the basic nature of every human being? Including yourself, for example?

Skeptic: Of course! I'm just as selfish as anyone else. I try to be decent, but I know that I've hurt and wronged others in the course of my life.

Believer: So this is how you see yourself - as this evil monster...

Skeptic: No - as I said, I try to do the right thing. But my selfish instincts often get the better of me.

Believer: But deep down, in your heart of hearts, you know that you can do better...

Skeptic: Okay. Let us say that if I truly put my mind and will to it, I can make my behavior consistent with what I know to be just and correct. How would that change anything? There are another five billion people on our planet!

Believer: Aren't we employing a double standard here? "I'm basically good, but everyone else is evil."

Skeptic: And if most people are essentially good, where has that gotten us in the last few thousand years? Even a single evil act can do a lot of damage. A single madman can undo the positive accomplishments of many well-meaning individuals.

Believer: Why not the other way around? Why not a single positive act having a far-reaching influence? If one Hitler can murder millions and wreak havoc on the lives of hundreds of millions of others, why not a Moshiach who kindles the latent good in every human being? Basically what you're saying is that evil is more powerful than good.

Skeptic: I would like it to be otherwise. It ought to be otherwise. But it seems to be that way.

Believer: But you yourself said that you feel that the good within you is more powerful than your selfish drives, that if you believed it would make a real difference, you could overpower them. If one person can do it, every person can do it.

Skeptic: Theoretically, you are right, but I don't see it happening. It's just not realistic.

Believer: You know, good and evil are often compared to light and darkness. Think of it this way: darkness, no matter how intimidating, is not a thing or force. It is merely the absence of light. So light need not combat and overpower darkness in order to displace it - where light is, darkness is not. In the same way, evil is no match for good. Good is the basic state of human nature--you, me, and everyone else sense this to be true of ourselves - whereas the "evil" in us is merely the obscuring and distortion of this truth. The moment your true self comes to light, the darkness melts away.

Skeptic: That's a beautiful way of putting it, and you are correct in saying that most of us view their own selves this way. But to say that there will come a day when every human being will be inspired to make that move... As I said, it's simply not realistic.

Believer: I think that your problem with the idea of Moshiach is not a rational one, or one of personal prejudice. You seem to agree that my world view makes perfect sense. And you certainly have nothing to lose and everything to gain from a harmonious and perfect world. It's just a certain internal block, a habitual distrust of your fellow man...

Skeptic: Well, I do live in New York City...

Believer: You agree with everything I say, except for the conclusion.

Skeptic: You're right. I just don't buy it.

What is Chabad-Lubavitch?

**What is Chabad?
by Mendy Hecht
www.askmoses.com**

A. Chabad is a Hebrew acronym for Chachmah, Binah and Da'at, which means wisdom, understanding and knowledge, respectively. In plain English, these words translate to three core mental functions in the process of what is commonly known as thought: that first flash of insight (Chachmah), the cogitation and rumination that follows (Binah), and thirdly, the ability to internalize and unite with an idea; thus emotionally processing it so that it is not just an abstract theory but something that becomes part of your heart and soul (Da'at).

B. Chabad is a philosophy founded by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (a city in Belarus) about 200 years ago. He was a student of the successor of the Baal Shem Tov, founder of the Chassidic movement. This philosophy ascribes great importance to understanding the mystical; understanding the nature of G-d, His relationship with Creation, the Torah, the Mitzvahs, and last but not least -- the Jewish soul. Rigorous study and intense meditation is required in order to attain this knowledge and internalize these concepts. Chabad is also known as Lubavitch, the name of the Belarus city that housed the Chabad movement until the early 1900's.

Every new Lubavitch branch opening anywhere has called itself Chabad of... the first Lubavitch presence on the Red Planet will be called Chabad of Mars

C. Chabad is also the name for the international network of Lubavitch outreach centers, the world's largest Jewish outreach and social-services organization. The Lubavitch movement was into outreach from the beginning of its American saga in 1940. In 1971, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, instructed that all existing and future Lubavitch synagogues and Jewish community centers be entitled Chabad Houses.

What does Chabad want from me?

Chabad is an organization of Chassidic Jews, adherents of the Chabad philosophy, who just want to get other Jews to do Mitzvahs and/or study Torah, and nothing more. That's why they've got this website--and more than 3500 full-time rabbis reaching out to people just like you in more than 2200 locations worldwide, from America and Africa to Asia and Australia. And more added, almost daily. Chabad is the world's largest Jewish outreach and social services organization. No other grassroots organization has successfully attracted as many Jews as has Chabad.

Who is the Rebbe?
by Mrs. Dinka Kumar
www.askmoses.com

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, is lovingly known as "The Rebbe," the seventh leader of the Chabad-Lubavitch Chassidic dynasty.

Encapsulating the Rebbe in a few paragraphs of dates and descriptive terms, falls enormously short of what can be known about the Rebbe. The following is but a small glimpse.

A Brief Biography:

April 18, 1902 -- The Rebbe was born in Nikolaev, Ukraine, the eldest of three boys. The Rebbe's father was Rabbi Levi Yitzchak (1878-1944), a renowned Talmud and Kabbalah scholar who was later appointed Chief Rabbi of Yekatrinslav (today called Dnepropetrovsk), the second largest city in Ukraine. The Rebbe's father was a great-great-grandson of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1789-1866), also known as the Tzemach Tzedek, the third Rebbe of Lubavitch. The Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana (1880-1964), also descended from a long line of virtuous and noble Jewish families.

In his youth, the Rebbe was taught by a private tutor and then by his father after having quickly outgrown the standard curriculum taught to children his age. The Rebbe's contemporaries remember him as a serious and studious child whose maturity and compassion surpassed his youth.

1927--The Rebbe left Russia and Soviet persecution together with his future father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson (1880-1950), the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Rebbe first relocated to Riga, Latvia, and then to Warsaw, Poland.

December, 1928 -- The Rebbe married a distant cousin, Chaya Mushka Schneerson (1901-1988). Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka was the second daughter of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak. The Rebbe observed his personal anniversary as the day on which he became heir to the Rebbes of Chabad-Lubavitch.

1941 – At the encouragement of his father-in-law, the Rebbe spent several years studying in the University of Berlin and later at the Sorbonne in Paris. As the Nazis pursued their murderous conquest throughout Europe, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin fled to the United States and settled in Brooklyn, New York. The Rebbe's father-in-law appointed him to lead the physical and spiritual rehabilitation of post-Holocaust Jewry. He was appointed as director of *Merkos L'Inyanei Chinuch* (an organization established to promote and centralize Jewish education). The Rebbe also headed Kehot - the publishing branch of *Merkos L'Inyanei Chinuch*, which reprints Chassidic manuscripts,

original children's books, and hundreds of the Rebbe's own works. In 1943, the Rebbe published his first book, *HaYom Yom*, a daily guide to Jewish life and Chassidic thought.

January 17, 1951 -- A year after the passing of his father-in-law, the Rebbe formally accepted the leadership mantle of Chabad-Lubavitch. As the new leader of Chabad and conscious of the needs of his generation, the Rebbe sought to bring Torah and mitzvahs to every Jew in the world by establishing a network of emissaries called Shluchim. These Shluchim, stand in his stead in hundreds of cities in dozens of countries teaching and leading others to adhere to Jewish tradition and observance. The Rebbe announced that we are the generation that stands at the threshold of the redemption. As such, we are obliged to intensify our efforts in hastening Moshiach's arrival, and ensure that our every action be directed towards transforming this goal into a reality.

1967 – The Rebbe initiated Mitzvah campaigns - beginning with the Mitzvah of Tefillin. Booths were erected in strategic locations to enable Jewish men to don pairs of Tefillin. The Rebbe expanded the Mitzvah campaign enlisting his Chassidim of all ages to actively help other Jews keep some of Judaism's most central Mitzvahs such as Kashrut, Mezuzah, Shabbat candles, Family Purity, and more. The Rebbe also established a force of Mitzvah Tanks - Chabad centers on wheels - to encourage Jewish experiences on street corners, in far-flung places and at public events. The Rebbe also formed a children's club called *Tzivot Hashem* (the Army of G-d), geared at giving Jewish youth added enjoyment in Torah learning and the practice of Mitzvahs. Soon after, the Rebbe encouraged a campaign to teach the Seven Noahide Laws to non-Jews, disseminating an appreciation for a universal G-d and respect for all humanity.

Despite suffering a major heart attack (*October 4, 1977*), and later the loss of his life mate, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka (*February 10, 1988*), the Rebbe did not slow down. In fact, the Rebbe innovated new programs and networks for advancing Jewish involvement in authentic observance; reaching more individuals than in previous campaigns. In his late eighties and nineties, the Rebbe would stand for many hours greeting hundreds of people who lined up to seek his blessing. Each person was given a dollar (to be donated to charity) and a few moments to speak to the Rebbe. It was not uncommon that the Rebbe's dollar line would end well past midnight. These encounters were in addition to the many bags of postal correspondence that arrived daily, each letter receiving the Rebbe's personal attention.

1990-91 – The Rebbe dubbed this year A Year of Miracles. He foretold the Jewish Exodus from Russia (as followed glasnost), and assured those in Israel that their fear was unfounded even while the Gulf War waged. During this year, the Rebbe's talks increased in length and depth, and focused heavily on the era of Moshiach.

March 2, 1992 – The Rebbe suffered a stroke leaving him partially paralyzed and unable to speak. However, this did not deter the Rebbe from communicating, or detract from his spiritual abilities. When an impending hurricane threatened to level parts of Florida, the

Rebbe clearly indicated that there was no need to flee the rising winds - and indeed, the hurricane took a different course than predicted. The Rebbe found ways to respond to those who sought his advice and blessing, and would appear to the Chassidim on occasion, encouraging them with a nod or wave of his hand, thus inspiring them to further expand their efforts in Jewish education and bringing Moshiach.

The Rebbe announced that we are the generation that stands at the threshold of the redemption

June 12, 1994 -- The Rebbe passed on to a new and higher plane. Though leaving the world bereft of his holy demeanor, the Rebbe's presence in the lives of his followers is even greater today than ever before, as demonstrated by the untiring and increasing spheres of Chabad's influence around the globe. To this day, the Rebbe's Chassidim (his spiritual offspring, having left no physical children) continue to make their way across the world, building new Jewish communities and touching more lives than ever before. The Rebbe made it clear that our generation is able to bring about the redemption, and left this achievement ours to fulfill.

And yet, the Rebbe cannot be characterized by a few lifetime milestones. The Rebbe may be better described, if only in part, by the following:

Rebbe:

The word "Rebbe" is an acronym for the Hebrew words, "*Rosh Bnei Yisrael*" - "Head of the Children of Israel." This description aptly describes the work of a Rebbe, as a "head" who leads the rest of the body of Jewish people to their mission. The Rebbe not only exemplified the life of a person totally self-effaced before G-d, but also someone who devoted himself to leading others to serve G-d in the most appropriate and exalted manner.

Teacher:

G-d sends each generation its 'Moses'. The central leader of each new era displays the same central qualities that Moses did in his time. Primary to being a leader like Moses is teaching Torah to the people. With the rebuilding of the Jewish people after the Holocaust and the tide of assimilation running high, the Rebbe was adamant that authentic Torah be taught to every Jew. To this end, the Rebbe published hundreds of Jewish books in a wide range of languages (including Braille) for adults and children. To date, over 250 of the Rebbe's own Torah works have been published, with many more volumes waiting to go to press.

Currently, there are almost 3,000 Chabad institutions worldwide, with more being founded annually. The prime goal of these Chabad emissaries is to promote the Mitzvah Campaigns and to strengthen Jewish living and Torah learning.

Scholarship:

The Rebbe's mastery of Torah knowledge ranged from esoteric to the exoteric, from Kabbalah to Halachah. The greatest Torah minds of our era consulted with the Rebbe and sought his approbation for their books. The Rebbe's knowledge in the secular realm brought scientists, poets, politicians, astrophysicists, engineers, mathematicians and psychiatrists seeking his opinion in their fields, as well.

The Rebbe's wisdom touched the commoner too. Lessons from the Rebbe's discourses, letters and stories have multi-faceted meaning, from practical day-to-day application on how to raise children or seek medical advice, to concentrating during prayer or actually “love one's fellow”.

Prophecy:

The Rebbe demonstrated prophecy numerous times, as mentioned above regarding the Gulf War, exodus of Russian Jewry, and Florida hurricane. These are the Rebbe's most publicized prophecies, but there are many more. We are now impatiently awaiting the fulfillment of the Rebbe's prophecy of Moshiach's imminent revelation.

When meeting or corresponding with individuals, the Rebbe was clearly able to envision their soul. Two people with similar concerns could receive differing but appropriate responses. The Rebbe's vision penetrated the soul, determining what answer will best help serve his or her Divinely intended life purpose, or strike the best chord for awakening a slumbering soul.

Two people with similar concerns could receive differing but appropriate responses

For the People:

Be it through humor, empathy, business acumen, political insight, Talmudic scholarship, or mystical clairvoyance, the stories are numerous of how people's lives have taken new direction and meaning thanks to the Rebbe. Even before taking on the mantle of Chabad leadership, people from all walks of life and around the world sought the Rebbe's blessing and guidance regarding every issue, from choosing a house to buy or following a path in life. Many books have been published, listing the countless personal miracles people merited through blessings from the Rebbe and his advice to them, saving lives, restoring their good health, or finally having a baby.

Of the thousands who encountered the Rebbe, everyone noticed the unwavering concern and undivided attention paid them by the Rebbe, as if he or she were the Rebbe's only child. At the great expense of his time and energy, the Rebbe's devotion to others was unmatched. A small child once sent the Rebbe his colorful scribbles, to which the Rebbe promptly replied with a letter addressed to the boy. A woman met the Rebbe and accused him of being a fraud. Instead of taking umbrage, the Rebbe patiently answered her questions regarding faith, thus jump starting her new life as a loyal Chassid.

The Rebbe would recall names of relatives, past conversations, pertinent new information from the tens of thousands of people with whom he shared correspondence. This is not just a mnemonic feat; it embodies the essence of a Rebbe who leads his followers, each and every one of them.

Pro-Activity:

Never shy of the latest technology or scientific discovery, the Rebbe's approach was one of utilizing all of creation for a good means. Live radio and television transmissions, and satellite hook-ups, were used to broadcast the Rebbe's talks and Jewish children's gatherings.

The Rebbe didn't settle for less than ceaseless progress. Once something had been successfully accomplished, it was on to the next step forward. (The Rebbe never took a vacation!) Someone once asked the Rebbe to change his work since he was feeling too unsuited and weak for it. The Rebbe replied that instead of despairing of success, the man should ask for a blessing for renewed strength and ability to accomplish his mission (the Rebbe then proceeded to add to his task load).

The Rebbe created the Chabad infrastructure which includes both schools and organizations for Chabad Chassidim, but also includes the network for Chabad emissaries and educators to operate on a world-wide scale, making Judaism readily accessible to every Jew. Chabad's proactive attitude opposes passively waiting for seekers to approach. The Rebbe instilled within his followers the absolute paradigm of active growth and involvement.

Redemption:

Always an intrinsic element in the Rebbe's teachings is the longing and active preparation for Moshiach. The Rebbe once asked a man to grant a loan to someone which would be repaid upon Moshiach's arrival. The man paused, deliberating his decision. The Rebbe answered that his goal is to rid people of that hesitation.

The Rebbe didn't settle for less than ceaseless progress

Nobody felt the urgency for the redemption greater than the Rebbe. He equipped us to make Moshiach's arrival *our* life mission. The Rebbe instructed that the laws regarding Moshiach and the Temple be studied in depth, and that Chassidut be taught worldwide as another prerequisite for Moshiach's arrival. With his unique approach, the Rebbe connected a plethora of Torah topics and mitzvahs, as well as current events, to the forthcoming era, insisting that we simply have to "open up our eyes" to perceive the redemption. The Rebbe demanded that we wait with real expectation for Moshiach and work ceaselessly and unrelentingly, until he arrives.

were you paying attention...?

1. Why was the world created?
2. What is special about human beings that no other creature has? Explain..
3. What was accomplished at Mt. Sinai?
4. What are the Seven Noahide Laws?
5. What takes place when a person carries out one the laws (mitzvos)?
6. Why don't Jewish people seek converts?
7. What is Moshiach?
8. Name some things you personally will do to hasten Moshiach.

