

Wonder and gratitude-he tells me the battery is old! This two year old child has a notion of aging! I am so grateful to have come back to see them before heading out to the airport. Chana Malia “flies” on my knees readily Avraham Menashe is “busy fixing his toy with his to drill” he needs to replace the old batteries! He is fixing his toy like “Abba” and I hold the baby Shimon Malaki in its post nursing nirvana and I feel joy.

What a gift from the Treasury of Unearned Gifts! I thank Dale for allowing his driver to get me here knowing he will never know of such joy-he says his jealous. Well might he be this beats anything in my life so far.

Our lives are so dense-we do pack them up with trivia-to avoid the slow incessant aging that is every present in our consciousness like dying batteries we watch our patient’s and tomorrow. I am 59 I dream of walking with Hanna Malia down the isle in 20 or so years please God that I will be close to 80! When will my batteries give out? This life is so fragile, so tragic, and so joyful! I felt sick this morning at work bent over with cramps and near syncope. I realized then it was the Satan’s work-knowing I had to

board this plane to the Ukraine to see the Rebbe. I cannot last a whole year; I cannot survive without this injection spiritually at least once during the year. I know I need to go but my doc says no burning the candle at both ends etc. "Penance can be done in other ways Julian!" Dale mirrors the remark "surely this is penance isn't it? Is it? I think not. Going to the Rebbe is like a whole of mirrors where I feel like I am "being seen" reflected in the Presence. I get clarity in this place. It is a place of unique meditation and outpouring of the soul-a thing I find exceedingly hard to do having packed my routine with the trivia that I do, an outpouring of gratitude to the Lord for my life, my wife and kids, my parents health, my siblings, my beautiful grandchildren, my practice and my patient's who I love, my colleagues, my teachings, my writing however mediocre. My life. It's purpose. It's density.

And a time to pray-for health, parents, my darling twin sister's happiness, for my patients. Those who have made me a messenger for their prayers this trip. My daughters matches. My practice. My life. It's purpose. It's density. It's complexity.

And a time to connect to the Rebbe, healer of souls, as alive today as ever, to confess-yes-Breslovers confess-a spiritual cleansing-to ask for his blessing in my life and thanks for the profound changes I never dreamed of, due to his Torah and advice. This profoundly paradoxical view of life and all encompassing theology that single handedly inter includes the good and evil in all of us and analyses the structure of the deepest questions about what it means to be half human and half divine and seeing God in his very absence (Naftali comments “how Heideggerian the Rebbe’s Torah seems in Likutei Mehoran II:12!).

No post holocaust theology comes close to the profundity of Torah #64 (Likutei Mehoran). The Torah that brought Reb Yitzchok Breiter to Breslov and literally thousands of Polish Hassidim along with him.

And Tikkun. That enigmatic term I have examined elsewhere (see my theological essays) comes alive here. The Lord knows I have sinned in the heart, mind and flesh. I too need Tikkun. I need repair. I live with this Yezer Hara daily and need something outside the daily, infusion from

the “Makif”, the Rebbe, including the discomfort of pilgrimage I guess; but it works for me.

And a Tikkun: for all those in my life who suffer now especially my holy twin sister whose 30 years of silent forbearance in the face of abuse for the sake of her children, puts Mother Rachel to shame. And my children who reflect my madness and crazy ambition in earlier stages of my life “I’m raising racehorses not children” I’d often tell them! Thinking that in excelling they would somehow have what I never got! As if! I must still pay this price-credential addict that I am. Our children do reflect the unresolved issues through our own lives working out of unconscious desire and we watch that later paying the price.

And a Tikkun for the departed. Yes I pray here by the Rebbe for my namesake Julius and my twin sisters namesake his wife Rachel grandparents we never knew and Tante Alice-and Nana and Dada, their siblings, their parents, those buried in our ancestral cemetery in Chocin Southern India and Austria and going back to Turkey, Spain wherever in this genetic line the product of which is

me-this body-this DNA-and this soul-I come to pray for their souls at the site of the one who claimed to heal and fix lost souls, the dead, the departed souls and the martyred souls.

And this is sufficient. Finally! I feel now I can inhabit this person, this body. I feel its density and connectedness to all sentinel beings alive and dead. That going through life is the mysterious Mesirasnefesh-suffering well is expected. Accepting it as God's will and enjoying it without guilt all this the Rebbe gave this fractured soul called myself.

So for this I beg at his tomb

“Lord heal me of these cramps, let me board that plane tonight, remove the obstacles so I can be by the Rebbe, this I promise to take care of the body and the self, to take care about what I need with no lapses”. And the fortitude to place conscious intentionality between the hand and the mouth and the hand and other body parts, to focus on the body as temple, a candelabra of sensory input, the maintenance of the sanctity of sensation, Lord give me

this strength and it calmed down those cramps, syncope and I boarded the plane and here I am in Munich on the way to the Rebbe.

I will not visit Dachau not this time, I must rest here on this journey. I no longer wish to honor the places of death; I choose life, let the Rebbe fix those souls not me. It churns up too much inside. It causes questions about God's goodness that are unanswerable "from the vacated space" (Torah 64) and disconnects me from my Source. (Too many years in fruitless search for answers!)

I will gently let this go, today. In this capital of Nazi Germany I sit, sipping my coffee. Grateful my father escaped and lives to speak about the unspeakable and I, child of a survivor, somehow fought with this knowledge that informs all my Torah-process the living beyond the tremendin, never having experienced the fear-hopefully finding sweetness and solace in the text I chose to leave behind me.

And besides Rosh Hashanah, I chose this Shabbat, Parshas Zachor-the Shabbat we paradoxically annually

choose to “remember to forget” Amalek. For this Amalek lies deep within me and wishes me to forget my connection to the divine each time my body announces it’s new demands and he sows the seeds of doubt (the Gematria of Amalek is doubt!) each time my left hemisphere engages. And his forbearers Esau and Ishmael form the arms of his wings Esau not believing in divine providence but that all is fate and Ishmael believing he has already arrived spiritually so he cannot sin. What adversaries lie within my bosom! Yet only this Rebbe knew what he was up against 100 times a day and only this Rebbe taught me how to fall well and how to continually pick myself up and to not despair of myself.