



In the year 1648 the Jewish people were overtaken by terrible and overwhelming tragedy. In that black year the Ukrainian Cossack Bogdan Chmielnicki and his vicious hordes rampaged through the countryside murdering and pillaging the unfortunate Jewish villages in their wake.

A young girl was living in a small Polish village together with her widowed mother and small brothers and sisters at the time of great upheaval. When word spread of the approach of the murderers, the Jews fled wherever they could; this girl was separated from her family. She wandered the countryside with a group of destitute Jews, begging for food.

After some weeks of wandering, the group of refugees came to Vilna where they found a community shelter. The wife of the shelter manager took a special liking to the girl and offered to help her establish herself in Vilna, reasoning that in a large city, she would more easily find her family.

The girl, for her part, was grateful for the woman's friendship, and when she was offered a job in a Jewish house, she accepted happily. "My son-in-law," explained the lady of the house, "is a great Torah scholar and studies every night until midnight, at which time he is served his dinner. Up until now my daughter and I have had the honor of serving him, but it is difficult for us to keep such late hours and also manage the house during the day. You will have the duty and privilege of serving my son-in-law." The girl accepted the job happily.

The first night as she sat outside the door of the scholar, listening to the haunting sing-song melodies of the Talmud, the girl was transported back many years. It was as if she was listening to her father's voice rehearsing the ancient texts in just the same melodious voice. With these memories filling her mind, tears suddenly began to flow down her cheeks, as she sobbed quietly.

A moment later the door opened and in an annoyed tone of voice the young man said to her, "Please stop that noise. You are disturbing my concentration." Frightened to lose her job, the girl was quieted at once.

The following night as she sat by the closed door listening to the ancient melodies, the girl was again moved to tears, and she couldn't control her weeping. When the young scholar opened the door, he saw at once that something serious was grieving the girl. His patient questions yielded from the girl an account of her sad tale. She told him about her beloved father, Meir who had passed away many years ago and about her mother and siblings lost in the terrible upheaval. She also told him about her older brother who had been sent away to study after his bar-mitzvah and whom she had never seen again.

The young man, Rabbi Shabetai Cohen, (later known as the ShACh), quickly realized that he knew the girl's family and the whereabouts of one of her relatives, for he, in fact, was her long-lost brother. He did not disclose this information to her, though, for he had his reasons for withholding that wonderful news. Meanwhile, things continued as before, except that Rabbi Shabetai requested that the girl be relieved of her duties, remaining in the house with the status of a family-member.

About half a year later, the lady of the house took ill and the girl took upon herself the care of the invalid as well as assuming most of the household responsibilities. The illness was a prolonged one, and finally the lady passed away, deeply mourned by the whole family.

Not too long passed before matchmakers approached the wealthy widower with suggestions of matches. Uncertain about what to do, the widower consulted his learned son-in-law. Rabbi Shabetai replied that he should postpone any action in the matter, and should wait another year.

After a year passed the marriage brokers returned, and the widower consulted his

son-in-law again. This time he offered this advice: "Disregard all the suggestions of the matchmakers, for the best and most suitable match is right here, the young woman you have 'adopted' into your family. Set the earliest possible date for the marriage. After the chupa I will tell you the true identity of the girl."

The young woman was happy and honored to accept the proposal, and the marriage was celebrated joyously. Rabbi Shabetai now revealed to his father-in-law that his bride was none other than his own long-lost sister. He added: "As a wedding gift, I promise that you will be blessed with a son. You will name him Meir, after my saintly father, and he will enlighten the Jewish world with his Torah knowledge and wisdom." This indeed came to pass.

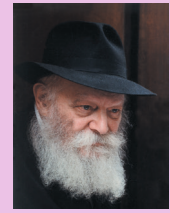
Adapted from *The Storyteller*.

L'Chaim

The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תורני השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"May there be peace in your wall, tranquility in your palaces" (Psalm 122:6)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Lech Lecha, when Abraham was told by G-d that Isaac would be born, he already had Ishmael. Abraham said to G-d, "O, that Ishmael would live before You!"; Abraham would have been satisfied with just one son, if that son followed the ways of G-d.

G-d, however, explained that the Jewish people would be perpetuated through Isaac. G-d promised that eventually Abraham would have nachas (satisfaction), from Ishmael, but his true nachas would come from Isaac.

Ishmael's birth was a natural phenomenon, but Isaac's birth was a miracle. It was impossible for Abraham and Sara to have a child at such an advanced age. No one believed that such a miracle would occur. Yet, Isaac was born.

Another difference between Ishmael and Isaac was in their brit mila, the covenant that binds the Jew to G-d.

Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised. At the age of 13 a person's intellect is already well established. He is able to make rational decisions based on his understanding, which is why he becomes obligated in mitzvot. At 13, Ishmael agreed to connect himself to G-d.

The circumcision of Isaac, by contrast, was performed when he was only 8 days old. One cannot obtain an infant's permission and it is precisely then that this eternal bond with G-d that can never be erased was effected.

Ishmael's upbringing was likewise natural. Ishmael grew up under the watchful eyes of his parents, who helped him acquire the proper understanding to enable him to connect to G-d. Their efforts were rewarded when he made the rational decision to undergo brit mila at the age of 13.

Judaism, however, cannot be based solely on the foundations of human understanding. Judaism as predicated on the intellectual capacities of a 13-year-old boy is unstable. If, as a more mature individual, that person were to encounter a new set of circumstances or find himself in an unfamiliar situation, there is no predicting how he will react. The basis of his Judaism -- his own understanding -- is deficient.

For this reason G-d told Abraham that his true nachas would come from Isaac. Judaism is not based on the foundations of nature. The connection between the Jew and G-d transcends nature entirely; it is an eternal bond that endures forever. And the Judaism of a child whose connection with G-d is forged as an 8-day-old infant will be stable.

From this we derive an important lesson. Jewish education cannot be postponed until a child reaches the age of reason. From the moment of birth one must inculcate the infant with Judaism that transcends the bounds of nature. A child thus educated will bring his parents true nachas.

Adapted from *Maayan Chai* from *Likutei Sichot*, Vol. 1

What We Can Do For Israel

In light of the shocking events that have taken place in the Holy Land, we are reprinting portions from the Rebbe's encouraging and empowering words at the Lag B'Omer Parade of the year 5727 (1967), weeks before the outbreak of the Six Day War. It is our prayer that G-d's blessing in the Torah, which the Rebbe quoted in this talk-- will be realized openly and quickly.

"There is yet another special point and instruction, relating to the present situation of your and our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, the Land of Israel.

They are at this moment in a situation where they are requiring G-d's protection, blessings and help in a greater measure, in order that they should emerge, and indeed will emerge, from this situation with success. It is, therefore, your (and our) special obligation and zechus to come to their aid.

Your way of helping them -- is through additional efforts and dedication in the study of the Torah and the observance of the mitzvos, letting no opportunity pass by; also -- and in observance of the mitzva of v'ahavta l'reiacha kamoicha -- through influencing your relatives and friends and family that they, too, should try their utmost to spread Torah and preform mitzvos.

For, as the Rashbi taught, this is what saves any Jew, wherever he

may be and whatever difficulty he may face, bringing him G-d's blessings in an increased measure) with redemption and success.

In this way we will also see the fulfillment of the promises which we read in the Torah portion of yesterday: V'shavtem lo'vetach b'artzechem -- the Jews in the Land of Israel should dwell there securely. V'nosati shalom ba'aretz -- the Almighty will bring to it that that shalom (peace) shall prevail in the Holy Land. V'hoyisi lachem lo'Elokim -- the Almighty shall be our G-d, the G-d of all Jews wherever they are.

V'atem tihyu li l'am -- each of you and all of you and all of us together with all our brethren the children of Israel shall be G-d's people. He shall redeem them with his full, open, holy and abundant hand from all difficulties and will bring them peace and security in all their needs.

And soon indeed will be fulfilled also what is written at the end of this portion of this Torah portion: I shall lead you upright -- G-d's promise to lead every Jew and all Jews, upright and with raised heads, in the true and complete redemption, through our righteous Moshiach, who will free those of us who are in the lands of dispersion, as well as those who are in Eretz Yisrael, from exile, and will establish G-d's reign in the whole world. May the true and complete redemption come very soon, Amen."

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

Go out of your land... and I will make your name great (Gen. 12:1,2)

Why did G-d find it necessary to promise Abraham that his name would be great? Did Abraham really care about personal fame? Our Sages taught that the mention of Abraham's name caused G-d's name to be sanctified. Abraham's whole life was spent spreading the knowledge of the one G-d. Wherever he went he caused people to think about their Creator. Thus, whenever Abraham's name was mentioned, G-d's name was sanctified, too. (*Likutei Sichot*)

Abram took Sarai his wife... and the souls they had made in Charan (Gen. 12:5)

If all the scientists in the world attempted to create even a mosquito, they could not succeed in imbuing it with life. What then, is meant by "the souls they had made"? Rashi explains that this refers to those whom they "brought under the wings of the Divine Presence." Abram spread the belief in one G-d among the men, and Sarai among the women; they are therefore credited with having "created" the new believers. (*Midrash*)

And Abram called there in the name of G-d (Gen. 13:4)

Our Sages taught: Do not read vayikra--"and he called," but rather vayakri--"and he caused others to call." Abraham erected a way-station for travelers in the middle of the desert, and taught each person who partook of his hospitality about the oneness of G-d. Avraham was not content to be the only one to call on G-d's name--he caused others to come to appreciate and thank G-d for His goodness.



5:41 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
12 Cheshvan/Oct 27
Torah Portion Lech Lecha
Shabbat ends 6:39 pm

Dedicated to the safety and security of the people of Israel
ארץ אשר תמיד שיני ה' אלוך בה מרשית השנה ועד אחרית שנה
By the Greenbaum Family

SLICE OF LIFE

Chabad Emergency Response for Israel; Global Unity; Prayer Gatherings; and Mitzvah Campaigns Inspire Millions Around the World.

Jewish unity gatherings of solidarity and prayer, for our brothers and sisters in Israel, have been taking place around the world. The strong show of Jewish unity and the outpouring of support and assistance for Israel from around the world has been absolutely incredible.

Following the Rebbe's directives and teachings about special mitzvot that bring blessing and security to Israel, Chabad Chasidim around the world have launched special Mitzvah campaigns.

Widespread Tefillin campaigns encouraging men and boys over 13 to put on Tefillin, Shabbat candle lighting campaigns, encouraging Jewish women and girls to add light to the world by lighting the Shabbat candles, and widespread programs to offer increased Torah study opportunities are being promoted by Chabad Houses and Centers in hundreds of cities in the United States, in Israel and in dozens of countries across the globe.

Countless people, many of whom do not regularly practice, have responded to these campaigns expelling much darkness and bringing blessing to the people of Israel. Chabad in Israel has launched a huge humanitarian effort offering physical and emotional assistance, spearheaded by the over 1000 Chabad Centers in communities throughout Israel. Shown below is a selection of the many pictures of the Jewish unity gatherings and Mitzvah campaigns that have reached us from far and wide.



Hundreds participated in a prayer gathering and completed mitzvah cards in Sydney, Australia.



Thousands marched in Los Angeles, California on Sunday in solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people.



Hundreds put on Tefillin at the New York rally for Israel.



Chabad students arm IDF soldiers with Tefillin.



Chabad at Binghamton, Campus Rally for Israel



Over 5,000 Women Unite virtually and in person, in Prayer and Song for Israel.



Montreal community gathers for children's rally in merit of Israel.



Over 10,000 unite in prayer for Israel in Brooklyn, NY.



Hundreds gather in Moscow Shuls to pray for Israel.



Chabad Rabbi, Rabbi Anshel Perl, shares the Rebbe's message of Mitzvos and encouragement with over 6000 at a Long Island rally.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Excerpt from a letter of the Rebbe concerning the ability of every Jew to help the land of Israel.

Excerpt from a letter of the Rebbe dated 19 Tammuz, 5740 July 3rd 1980.

"...Giving support to the Land of Israel can take various forms, especially as it does require help in various areas. And sometimes, it is possible to offer greater help from the Diaspora than by living there. The examples of this form of help are too numerous and obvious to be listed here.

Let me mention just one example with reference to the subject matter of your letter. One of the most vital needs is to strengthen the security of Eretz Yisrael and in this matter the Torah gives clear directives. In fact, a whole portion of the Torah is devoted to it, namely the Parsha of Bechukosai, where the Torah declares, "If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them... I will give peace in the land... and none shall make you afraid... and you shall chase your enemies and

they shall fall..." And since the G-d-given Torah is a Toras Emes and Toras Chaim, it is the true Divine guide for every Jew and all the Jewish people.

Now, in view of the fact that the Jewish people constitutes one entity, one organism and every Jew is a member of it, no Jew can claim that his actions and way of life is something private and nobody's business, for they do affect the whole body of the Jewish people and have a direct bearing on the security of Eretz Yisrael and our Jewish people living there.

To cite a well known analogy: a person who is making a voyage in a ship surely cannot claim that since he has his private cabin, he can do there what he likes and is prepared to take the consequences, for the safety of the whole ship and all abroad depends on the safe and proper conduct of each individual passenger.

It follows from the above that if sometimes the proper Jewish conduct of a Jew in accordance with the Torah as mentioned above entails certain difficulties and even if the difficulties are not imaginary or exaggerated but real, it is necessary to reflect that the situation and destiny of all our Jewish people is so intimately linked with the personal life of every Jew; no effort would be too great to overcome any difficulty..."

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are now in the month of Marcheshvan, the name of which has many interesting interpretations. One meaning of the word "mar" is "bitter," because this month, which has no holidays or festivals, lacks the sweetness that is derived from the holidays. Another translation of the word "mar" is "a drop [of water]," because Marcheshvan marks the beginning of the rainy season in Israel. According to linguists, "Cheshvan" is etymologically related to "chashrat mayim," meaning an abundance of water.

In Hebrew, however, "mar" also means "sir" or "master." The Midrash relates that King Solomon finished building the First Holy Temple during the month of Marcheshvan, but it was not inaugurated for 11 months, until the following Tishrei. G-d rewarded the month of Marcheshvan by promising that the Third and Eternal Holy Temple, which will be revealed with the coming of Moshiach, will descend from heaven and be dedicated during Marcheshvan. We therefore refer to this period with the respectful title of "master" or "sir" to honor an event that will signify our greatest joy.

Chasidut explains that the Hebrew language - the "holy tongue" - is unlike all other languages, in which the words that are used to describe things are arbitrary. In Hebrew, the word for an object is that object, the holy letters being the channel for its life-force and very existence. Aramaic, a related Semitic language that was the lingua franca of Jews in ancient times (and in which most of the Talmud is written), is described as the intermediary or bridge between the holy tongue and all other languages. In Tractate Sanhedrin of the Talmud, it is explained that Marcheshvan means "the movement of the lips." During the month of Tishrei, when a Jew is consumed with praying and intense study of the Torah, his mouth becomes a conduit for G-dliness. The impact of these holy vibrations of the lips are still felt in the month of Marcheshvan, and G-d willing, throughout the year to come.

Shmuel Beilman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA
לזכרון חיה'י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.

Published by Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St., Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000

Chairman: Rabbi David Raskin
Director: Rabbi Shmuel Butman
Program Director: Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Secretary: Rabbi Moshe P. Goldman
Administrator: Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
Layout: Rivky Lauffer
Associate Editor: David Y. B. Kaufmann
Chairman Editorial Comm.: Rabbi Nissen Mangel
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Customs

Why do we say blessings on everything we eat?

When we recite a blessing we are expressing our gratitude to G-d for our sustenance. Saying a blessing transforms a commonplace activity into a holy act. Chasidic teachings explain that all food contains a G-dly spark of holiness. When we make a blessing before eating, we elevate the physical substance of the food into holiness and reunite the holy spark with its source.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

There are some who are afraid of the times of Moshiach.

They wonder: What will happen to my career? My whole lifestyle will have to change! What about all the acquaintances and connections I've spent a lifetime

building? What about all my worldly possessions, my retirement plan, my investments? Will they take my car away?

Even these people have nothing to fear. Because the era that is coming is not something separate from our times. It is pieced together from all the good we do now, and all good things shall remain.

Only the ugliness will vanish, and the divine within each thing will be obvious to the eye.