



Reb Yehoshua Milner owned a mill in Jerusalem over a hundred years ago. A devout and scholarly man, he made a good living from the mill, although he almost never went there. The old-fashioned mill was situated near a river and the huge millstone was turned by the steady and patient treading of a horse which spent its days pacing round and round in an endless circle. The working of the mill was supervised by the manager, Reb Shmuel. And so, Reb Yehoshua was free to devote all his time to Torah study.

When Reb Shmuel passed away another man was hired to be the manager of the mill. This new manager decided to improve the mill by replacing the slow, old horse with a new massive one, stronger by far than the other horses that had worked there before. The new horse accomplished work so much more quickly than the previous ones, that it became known as "the wonder horse."

Soon word of this magnificent horse spread through the countryside, and bidders came from near and far to try to buy the fabulous animal. Much more money was waiting to be made through the horse if it would be used for other more demanding tasks, such as pulling huge loads, or transporting the wealthy from place to place.

Reb Yehoshua was unwilling to sell the horse, and he refused all bids that were presented to him. However, no matter how many times he said "no," and how many people he rebuffed, offers continued to come his way from people who wished to purchase the horse. Finally, when Reb Yehoshua tired of the continual interruptions to his Torah study, he set a price for "the wonder horse" of 25 Napoleons, a sum that would support a family for two years. Surely, no one would be so foolhardy as to make an offer like that! Reb Yehoshua, however, underestimated the tenacity of his would-be buyers. One merchant actually came up with the sum and a deal was struck.

The night before the sale was to be finalized, Reb Yehoshua couldn't sleep. He tossed and turned in his bed until, finally, in the middle of the night, he gave up. He dressed and left the house, telling his family he would soon return.

His employees were shocked to see the owner, Reb Yehoshua, arrive at the mill. As he never visited the mill during the day, what was he doing there in the middle of the night? Reb Yehoshua walked straight up to the horse as all of the employees looked on. He stopped at the horse's side and whispered in the mighty animal's ear, "Shmuel, I forgive you completely." When the horse heard those words, it literally dropped dead. Reb Yehoshua said nothing and returned to his home.

The next day news quickly spread that "the wonder horse" had died the previous night, for no apparent reason. "A healthy horse!" everyone exclaimed, and a horse worth 25 Napoleons! Who had ever heard of such a thing!

Reb Yehoshua called his family and friends and related the amazing story of the previous evening. "Last night I couldn't sleep. I tossed and turned and when I fell asleep at last, I had a very strange dream. In the dream my former employee, Shmuel, appeared to me and said, 'I must confess to you. I wasn't the wonderful manager you thought me to be. I stole from you throughout all the years I worked at the mill. When I died and appeared before the Heavenly Court, I was informed that the only way I could expiate my terrible sin against man and G-d was to return to earth in the form of your mill horse so that I could repay my debt to you. I was given an especially strong body so that I could work extra hard. For months I toiled tirelessly, making up for what I stole from you throughout the years. But it seems I did my job too well, for I became renowned for my strength and stamina.

"In the dream, Shmuel continued, 'When I heard that you were planning to sell me, I was horrified. I would not be able to expiate my sins unless I was working for you in your mill. If you would sell me, I would have to return to earth once more, perhaps in

an even lesser form, to atone for my misdeeds. I cannot bear the idea of returning again, so I beg you, please forgive me for what I did to you.'

"When I heard his plea, I jumped up out of bed and ran immediately to the mill. I went up to the horse and told him that I forgave him with all my heart. And when he heard my words, he expired, for he had fulfilled his purpose here on earth. Now, poor Shmuel will find his peace in the next world."

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

**You have been shown to know that G-d is G-d (Deut. 4:35)**  
When G-d revealed Himself on Mount Sinai to the soul of every Jew of every generation, He thereby made it possible for any Jew who sincerely desires to serve Him to perceive the true essence of the world, despite the darkness and concealment of what presents itself as reality. (*Sefat Emet*)

**In the heavens above, and on the earth below (Deut. 4:39)**  
"In the heavens above" – in matters of the spirit – a person should always look to those who are on a higher, more advanced level, and strive to emulate them. As for material concerns ("on the earth below"), one should always look to those who have less, and be grateful and happy with what he already possesses. (*The Rebbe*)

**I stand between G-d and between you (Deut. 5:5)**  
While this verse in Torah is a direct quote from Moses, the early Chasidim used to interpret it allegorically as follows: It is the "I" – man's ego and sense of self - that erects the barrier that separates him from G-d...

**You shall teach them diligently to your children, you shall speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up (Deut. 6:7)**  
Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch explained: As Rashi notes, "veshinantam" – "and you shall teach them diligently," is an expression of sharpness ("chidud"), indicating that a person's Torah study should be intense, strong and penetrating. "Levanecha," "to your children," is related to the word "libun," "elucidation," meaning that one's words and explanations should be unambiguous. "And you shall speak of them": In the same way that speech reveals that which is hidden inside, so too should the revelations of Torah be applied to the daily life. "Sitting in your house" refers to the time when the soul is contained in the physical body; "when you lie down, and when you rise up" refers to the period after the resurrection of the dead. (*Sefar HaToldot*)



### 7:57 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area  
10 Av/July 28  
Torah Portion Va'etchanan  
Ethics Ch 3  
Shabbat Nachamu  
Shabbat ends 9:01 PM

# L'Chaim

1783  
10 Av, 5783  
July 28, 2023  
The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person  
נוסד תוד ימי השלושים  
Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson  
"May there be peace in your wall, tranquility in your palaces" (Psalm 122:6) Year of Unity - Hakhel

## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion



In this week's Torah portion, *Vaetchanan*, we have the famous, fundamental words of the "Shema" followed by the command to love G-d: "And you shall love the L-rd, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your might."

When it comes to loving someone, you either do or you don't. You cannot be commanded to love another. How then do we fulfill this commandment?

G-d "wants" to be understood, to be known. The more we understand G-d, the more we love Him. Being that G-d is infinite there is always more to know.

To be loved, is to be understood. Most women know this naturally, as they yearn to be understood. When they are understood they feel loved.

To understand, you must listen. To listen is to remove ones personal perception and feelings on the subject and hear it from the other's perspective totally. To listen is not just about hearing, it's about picking up on nuances such as facial expressions, body language and hints. To experience the other.

Again, most women naturally know how to listen, most men do not, hence the complaint "he doesn't listen." Good listening takes effort.

G-d is saying, try to understand Me, from My perspective. Hints are found all over the Torah. Pick up on the hints, listen.

G-d is asking us to understand: Why did He create this world? How do we fit in the scheme of things? He wants us to understand Him, to know Him.

A hint to this is found in the first verse of the Shema: "Listen Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is one."

In the Torah, this verse has two oversized letters "ayin" (ע) and "dalet" (ד). Together they make up the word דע – *dah*, to know or understand.

If you will listen – Shema, You will understand – Dah (know), that *HaShem* is our G-d, *HaShem* is One. In other words, if you will listen you will begin to understand what G-d is all about – and then you will love G-d.

Knowing G-d's purpose for us and His reasoning, will motivate you and animate you, as you will find deep meaning in fulfilling G-d's will. You will fulfill G-d's will not from a feeling of obligation but rather from love.

Listen, understand, love.  
Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, yitzihurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

## Bless You!

Starting from the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Av (this coming Wednesday), it's a Jewish custom to wish each other in correspondence and in conversations: "*K'iva vachatima tova* - may you be written and sealed for good."

You may well be wondering, "Isn't Monday a little early to start thinking about Rosh Hashana, let alone sending out holiday greetings? After all, it's over six weeks until the High Holidays!"

What's more, gift shops and supermarkets haven't even yet set aside a place in their card racks for "Jewish New Year" cards!

Perhaps if we understand the value of each one of us blessing our friends and family we'll come to realize that it's not early at all!

Wishing friends and relatives a sweet, New Year, along with any other blessings you wish to include, is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition.

"I will bless those who bless you," G-d informed our illustrious ancestor Abraham. By blessing someone else, we precipitate receiving our own Divine blessing. The weeks before Rosh Hashana are an especially good time to "reach out and touch someone," whether in person, via phone, social media or mail. When you offer the hope that they be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet year, you are actualizing a blessing for yourself.

"But wait a minute. Who am I anyway to be blessing someone else?" you wonder. In the *Talmud*, Rabbi Elazar teaches, "Never let the blessing of even a common person be considered insignificant in your

eyes." For, as the Talmud continues, two great men, King David and the prophet Daniel, were blessed by simple people and those blessings were fulfilled.

Just how far does this concept of the value of a simple person's blessing go?

The quote above is preceded in the Talmud by these words: Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha, a High Priest



said, "Once, when I entered the Holy of Holies, I beheld the Holy One and He said to me, 'Ishmael, My son, bless Me!' I said, 'Sovereign of the Universe, may it be Your will that Your mercy overcome Your anger, and that Your compassion overrule Your attributes; let Your conduct toward Your children be with loving kindness... and may You overlook strict Judgment.' The Holy One bowed His head to me [in confirmation]." According to the Talmud these words of Ishmael ben Elisha are the same prayers G-d, Himself, offers.

In this coming year, may we bless our friends and relatives – and thereby ourselves – with a year of mercy and compassion, loving kindness and the forgiving of transgressions, by one another and by G-d.

Dedicated in Honor of My Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren  
Lynn Green Bennett & Jeff Bennett  
Ronna & Marc Zaken and Family  
Yehudis & Rabbi Eli Cohen and Family  
by Leona Green

