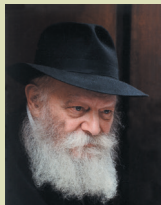


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion *Eikev*, the word *eikev* is used atypically to mean "because." Foremost Torah commentator Rashi explains that the choice of this word is to emphasize the seemingly less important *mitzvot* (commandments) that would get trampled under the *eikev* – heel.

Thus, "because" we will listen and do those *mitzvot* that might be considered unimportant, we will experience multi-fold blessings, including miraculous victories over those whom we fear.

Regarding *mitzvot*, we typically focus our energy on the ones we deem important. Our *yetzer hara* (inclination to do evil), convinces us that it makes sense to focus on the "important" ones, while pushing off the others, thereby trampling them under our "heel."

Eikev encourages us to take a different approach to *mitzvot*. To defy our *yetzer hara* and simply do the *mitzva* because it is G-d's will. Then all *mitzvot* are seen as equal. We do the *mitzvot* in a manner that is beyond our mind's understanding.

When we take this approach toward G-d and His commandments, going beyond our understanding and doing His will, He in turn goes beyond the natural order and shows us miracles.

Our portion also contains the verse, "And now Israel, what is G-d your G-d asking of you? Only to revere Him, to walk in His ways, to love Him..."

What is G-d asking of us? How does one revere and love Him? When G-d created this world, He hid His presence. Had His presence not been hidden, it would have been so imposing, that we would only be able to do His will; we would not have a choice. So G-d's "hiddenness" enables freedom of choice.

Being that G-d can't be seen, it is possible to forget for moments, that He is here. But G-d wants us to make Him a real part of our lives. He wants us to develop such a close relationship with Him that His presence feels as if we could see Him.

Like in any close, meaningful relationship, it requires a strong commitment to get to know G-d. We do that through the study of His Torah and prayer. When we freely refer to G-d in our casual conversation: "thank G-d" "with G-d's help" "G-d willing," we develop our relationship with Him. If, when making an important decision, we ask, "What does G-d want?" we strengthen that relationship.

When we feel G-d in our homes and in our lives, we can't help but follow in His ways. Make G-d's presence important in our homes is true reverence. The more we develop our relationship with G-d, the more our lives become an expression of our love for Him.

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.

Saying Goodbye

We've all seen or been part of a scenario repeated dozens of times. At a family gathering, a synagogue event, a Jewish lecture, a simcha, someone says, "I'm leaving," and moves to get his coat. Twenty minutes later he's still there. Either in to an all-new conversation, still hugging the Bubbies and Zeidies, or noticing an old friend/relative he didn't have a chance to chat with yet. This phenomenon transcends gender, age, and country of origin. But it does seem to be particularly prevalent among Jews.

It's called a Jewish good-bye and it seems to go on forever. Because Jews never really say "good-bye." We say "*shalom* - peace to you." Or we say in Hebrew "Go in peace." One whose background is more Yiddish might say, "*fort gezunterheit* – travel in health." But we never say "good-bye."

In fact, even were you to scour the modern Hebrew language, you wouldn't find a word for "good-bye." All you'd come up with is "*l'hitraot*," which means "see ya later." (Some Israelis do say, "bye- bye." But pronounced with that decidedly Hebrew accent you know that it's been borrowed from English.)

At a Jewish gathering, private or public, we take a long time to go because, after all, who wants to leave the warm embrace of family – and all Jews truly are one family. All Jews share in each others' simchas and each others' sorrows.

Is there any basis, though, in Jewish tradition, for this seeming inability to just say "good-bye"?

The Talmud enjoins us, "Whatever your host tells you, do, except leave." One of the commentaries explains that a guest must immediately comply with everything the host tells him to do except when the host tells him it is time to leave. The guest should show the host his reluctance to take leave of his company!

In addition, Jewish teachings encourage us that when we part from a friend, we should share a *d'var halacha*, meaning a "word of Jewish law." But *d'var halacha* can also be interpreted as a "word for the way."

So, it's not hard to understand why Jews don't say good-bye. Firstly, we don't really want to leave. Secondly, even when we do realize that we absolutely must leave, we should show our reluctance to leave. And lastly, when we already have our coat on, we should share a thought for the journey (however short) with our friend.

Ultimately, though, one might speculate that not saying "good-bye" has a more eternal and confident message. For, deep within every Jew is the fundamental belief in better times, the best times, the times of *Moshiach*. In that era – the Era of the Redemption – we will see the fulfillment of one of the principles of Jewish belief, the revival of the dead. And at that time, we will all be reunited with our loved ones. And when we rejoice in being together again with them, we will fully understand why we never really said, "good-bye."

SLICE OF LIFE

Alone in Almaty

by Rabbi Eliyahu Schusterman



It's a 12 hour flight from JFK airport and a 10 hour time zone difference. The flight leaves JFK Tuesday evening and returns less than 48 hours later on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

It's a trip that I was privileged to be on to Almaty Kazakhstan. The occasion; the anniversary of the passing of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, the father of the Rebbe.

The people speak Russian but look Asian, the influence and control of the communists. The remnants of their influence still remains but only in the architecture of holdout communist designed buildings amidst the beautiful modern high rises and shopping malls being built.

The distance emphasizes the threat the communists felt from Rabbi Levi Yitzchok so that when he was arrested and exiled for his efforts in spreading Judaism they sent him to the other end of the soviet territory. Together with his wife Rebbetzin Chana, they spent over five years in a required exile in a

backwater town in Kazakhstan called Chile. A few months prior to his passing – on account of his illness – he was given permission to spend his last days in the capital Alma Ata (the communist name of the city now known as Almaty).

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's burial spot is further testimony of the isolation, distance and threat to the Soviets he represented. A handful, literally, maybe 20 graves of fellow Jews surround his resting place. This little Jewish section is in the center of a massive sprawling non-Jewish cemetery.

The tombstone of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok doesn't say his last name as the Schneerson name represented the eternity of Judaism, Torah and the Jewish People. Only the post-communist stone spells out his name, his pedigree in the lineage of the Schneerson family, and perhaps the greatest testament to his memory, his role as father to the Rebbe.

I traveled here with 230 fellow Chabad Chasidim from the United States. We were joined by hundreds of emissaries of the Rebbe from throughout the Former Soviet Union who arrived for an annual summer conference on Thursday just prior to our departure back to the United States.

As I sit on this chartered El Al plane (the first time El Al has flown to Almaty) on my return flight, a few thoughts and inspirations are returning with me:

G-d, Torah and the Jewish People are eternal! The entire power of the absolutely frightening, intimidating, destructive Soviet regime could not diminish it. It may seem dark at times, but the fire of eternity is strong. The Rebbe's father ensured this to be the case. Even in the darkest of places and times he influenced others in their Jewish connection and wrote teachings of Torah.

We can't rely on others; we need to carry the torch ourselves. Whether it is partaking in a trip across the world to give strength to eternity of Torah or the local emissary, or

ensuring that the seed gets planted or the flame gets fueled in my own neighborhood, the job is mine. The Rebbe's father emulated this in his self-sacrifice for every Jew of the city of his leadership, Dnepropetrovsk (now Dnipro, formerly Yekaterinaslov before communist era). He cared for the over 100,000 Jews regardless of their level of observance and standing up, unintimidated from the powerful communist regime.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok sacrificed in his life – the last time he saw his son was in 1927 when the Rebbe left Russia. He sacrificed in death – being buried far away. For years, his yartzeit was marked thousands of miles away in Crown Heights, Brooklyn and in Chabad Houses around the world – yet not at his grave. Sacrifice is not easy.

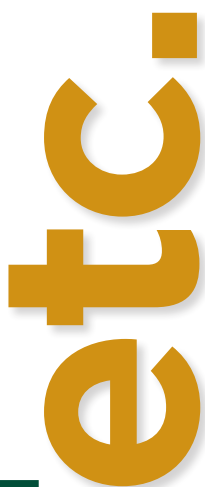
Can we say that it was Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's sacrifice that set the stage for the Rebbe's leadership and utter dedication to G-d, Torah and the Jewish People?

Can we say that it was his sacrifice that can be credited for the fact that today Judaism is alive, that Torah is studied throughout the world, that the eternity of the Jewish People is strong and visible?

I know that I am inspired; I'm inspired by the fellows who have been inspired for years to make this trip and share it with others. I'm inspired by the Rebbe's emissaries who live so far away dedicated to growing a revolution of Judaism. I'm inspired by the Rebbe's father, known endearingly as Reb Levik, who's sacrifice (in my humble opinion) has paid off in the absolute revolution of Chabad around the world.

I'm inspired to do more, to dedicate more, to sacrifice more, to assist in ensuring his past and current sacrifice is maximized until the day of the coming of Moshiach.

Rabbi Eliyahu Schusterman, together with his wife Dena, founded Chabad Intown Atlanta (Georgia) in 1997. Rabbi Schusterman founded Jeff's Place, dedicated to those struggling with substance use abuse, those in recovery and their loved ones.



The Path to Happiness

The Path to Happiness: A Jewish Chassidic Perspective by Rabbi Pesach Scheiner offers a unique perspective on attaining true happiness in life. Through exploring Jewish and Chassidic teachings, the author delves into the misconceptions about what it means to live a happy life and how to find joy in everyday moments. The book shares personal anecdotes and stories to illustrate the effectiveness of the Jewish path to happiness and provides a guide for readers to discover true contentment and fulfillment in their own lives. This is a must-read for anyone seeking to find happiness in the midst of today's fast-paced and challenging world. Published by Mosaic Press.



Hakhel—Unite

Although Hakhel in its original form can only be fulfilled in the Holy Temple, nevertheless, the spiritual role of Hakhel applies now also even more strongly. The women assume the major mission, to effect the spiritual theme of Hakhel in their own private Holy Temple. For in her house each woman is the foundation of the home and she makes that home a holy Sanctuary. Then, her husband and children will listen and observe all the words of the Torah. (The Rebbe, 22 Elul, 1987) *To learn more visit hakhelnation.com*



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Continued from issue 1778

Fortunately, one has been able to clearly discern a new trend among our young Jewish men and women, especially academic youth, who come closer to the world of ideas and thought. Being children of The People of the Book, of essentially spiritual and holy people, they are by nature and heredity inclined, subconsciously at least, towards the spiritual. Their disillusionment and dissatisfaction have prompted them to search for a new way of life which would give them a slice of terra firma under their feet, make their life meaningful and put their mind at peace with themselves.

Some of them have been fortunate in making fateful encounters, by design or "accident" (everything is, of course, by Divine Providence) which have put them on the right track. Others, unfortunately, are still groping in the dark. It is the momentous duty and challenge of our day to help these young Jewish men and women to find their way back to the "fountains of living waters" to quench their thirst for life. We of Lubavitch have made it our "business" to do all we can to help them. But this, of course, is the duty and privilege of every Jew, since the commandment "Love thy fellow as thyself" applies to every one of us.

Needless to say, the transition from one mode of living to another, is fraught with trials and tribulations. Therefore, the sooner this critical period is over, the better. It requires determination and fortitude, and where these are not lacking (they are certainly not lacking potentially, and need only be brought to the surface), the difficulties will turn out to be much less insurmountable than they had loomed at first. It may sometimes require an initial leap to break away from the past, but then slowly but surely the going becomes increasingly easier. One must try to shorten the birth pangs of the transition and all the sooner emerge into the new-found world of Torah and *Mitzvos* [commandments], which holds the key to inner harmony and peace, true fulfillment and happiness.

From what has been said above, you will readily understand what my views are on the subject matter of your letter. You write about the clash between your original decision to

follow what you know as the right way and your parents' reactions. But even from the parents' viewpoint, surely their first and ultimate desire is to see their children happy. Whatever their ideas of happiness may be, they surely realize that without inner harmony and peace of mind, life is a very dismal thing. Looking at the situation from their viewpoint, if you act under pressure and accept a life of compromise, it is possible that for a time friction will be avoided. But one must think in terms of a lifetime, not of immediate expedience; and, as outlined above, and as clearly indicated in your letter, this is the kind of life with which you will not be able to make peace. Sooner or later your parents will notice, or instinctively feel, that they had defeated their own objective.

The limitations of a letter must curtail the discussion. However, I trust it will suffice in presenting salient points which you could elaborate yourself.

Before concluding, I want to make reference to the person who figured in your encounter, whose life may well serve as an illustration. As you probably know, he was born and brought up, together with the rest of his family under the Communist regime. There seemed no possibility, nor any hope, in the natural order of things, to escape from there. One might have concluded that the only thing to do under the circumstances was to adjust oneself to the prevailing conditions; all the more so, since the religious minority to which he and his family belonged was not only a minority, but one which had been singled out for ruthless persecution by a dictatorial regime, which could not be toppled by democratic processes. Nevertheless, he and his brothers and family remained steadfast and would make no compromise and concession. Now he and his brothers have established their own homes in this free country on the same foundations of the Torah and *Mitzvos* of their parental home under the Communists, and they need not be ashamed of their past.

They realize that the freedom and opportunity which they enjoy here impose upon them additional obligations towards their fellow-Jews. They also realize that after such a large proportion of our people has been brutally annihilated in the Second World War, the obligation of every surviving Jew is so much the greater.

What has been said in this letter is by way of general analysis and throwing some light on the situation and its solution. As for the method how to bring it about, this must be decided upon in the light of the personalities involved, as well as the circumstances and factors. A friendly and pleasant approach, coupled with adequate firmness, is the method and way of the Torah. It is also the most effective method.

With all good wishes, and with blessing,

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Monday, the 20th of Av, is the yartzeit of the Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson. Hounded and harassed by the Communists, imprisoned and exiled to Asia, Reb Levi Yitzchak's self-sacrifice and iron-will never broke. But his physical body eventually did, and after years of torture and illness he passed away in 1944 in Alma Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan.

Reb Levi Yitzchak's concern for his fellow Jew was legendary. In Russia there was a Chasid by the name of Reb Ozer Vinikorsky, who five times (!) had received a draft notice from the Red Army, with an invitation to appear before the medical board. After five close calls he still hadn't been drafted, but the constant threat was taking a psychological toll.

The Chasid went to Reb Levi Yitzchak for his blessing and advice. Touched by the man's suffering, Reb Levi Yitzchak not only blessed him, but outlined a detailed plan that would rid him of this worry forever. Reb Levi Yitzchak told him the particular day he was to appear before the board, the exact time to show up, which streets he was to take, which chapters of Psalms to recite - he even told him how many coins he should give to charity that morning! The most important thing, however, was to concentrate on G-d's holy Name Havaya before opening the door to the Ministry. If he followed these instructions, nothing bad would happen.

As Reb Ozer later related, "I followed Reb Levi Yitzchak's directives to the letter. Inside the Ministry were many tables; at each table sat a different type of medical specialist, and the potential recruits had to be examined by all of them. Afterwards, I took my files and handed them to the official who would give me my final answer: 'Poor fellow,' he said as he looked at my pityingly. 'It isn't often that every single doctor finds a different defect!' " Reb Ozer received a complete deferment.

May the memory of Reb Levi Yitzchak Schneerson inspire us all and stand the entire Jewish people in good stead

Shmuel Butman

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.



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MOSHIACH MATTERS

And it shall come to pass – *eikev* – because you will listen to these ordinances, and keep,

and do them (*Deut. 7:12*) *Eikev*, literally means "heel." The time immediately preceding the Final Redemption is often referred to as "the heel of Moshiah." That is to say, at the end of time, "you will listen" – in the end we will have no choice but to obey G-d. (*Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk*)



IT HAPPENED ONCE

History books are replete with accounts, real or imaginary, of famous kings, politicians and soldiers, but it is rare that we are afforded a glimpse into the life of ordinary people who lived long ago. The journal of a Jewish woman named Glueckel who lived in 17th century Hamburg is a rare and wonderful treasure, from which we can gain insight into what life was really like in the distant past for a Jewish wife and mother.

The years directly preceding her birth and her early childhood were marked by chaos. The Thirty Years' War continued on, decimated Europe and created colossal upheaval throughout society. When Glueckel was only three years old, the Jews were expelled from Hamburg. They fled, and relocated to the nearby city of Altona. No sooner had they mended their torn lives, when, only seven years later, they were driven back to Hamburg by the army of Sweden.

Jewish life, however, continued in its time-honored traditions. Young Glueckel was enrolled in a cheder (Jewish school) and there she enjoyed studying the Bible and many other parts of Torah. What emerges from her later diaries is the picture of a bright, educated woman, conversant with the topics of her day and knowledgeable of that literature written in the German dialect which would later emerge as Yiddish that she could have encountered.

As was the custom then, Glueckel was married at the age of 14 to Chaim, a young scholar and businessman from the small town of Hamelm. The couple spent the first year of marriage there, and Glueckel was already active, teaching the local women what she had learned in her studies.

The following year, Glueckel and Chaim moved to the port city of Hamburg, which was then one of the great centers of world trade. The young couple had a rocky start, filled with difficulties, but within several years, their business became very successful. The energetic and enterprising young couple became quite well-to-do, and they lived a satisfied, comfortable life. Glueckel was not only a very competent household manager, but with her keen mind, she took an active interest in her husband's business. As they became more and more successful, Glueckel and Chaim rose in social status; they even developed close contacts with the various German aristocratic courts, which existed in the centuries when there was no unified central government in the region. In those unstable days, it was vitally important to sustain good relations with the rulers, for danger always threatened from the dark halls of power. Jews under attack looked to their co-religionists for helpful intercession in those perilous situations.

Because of their wealth and social status, Glueckel and her husband were able to make successful matches for six of their children with the most illustrious families in German Jewish society. At the wedding of their eldest daughter, a number of members of the aristocratic Court of Brandenburg (from which later descended the German Imperial family) were in attendance.

Glueckel's account of her marriage and child-rearing days is full of adventure and describes the enormous challenges which faced Jews in those dangerous times, when exile and persecution could overtake them at a moment's notice. In 1689, when Glueckel and Chaim had been happily married for 29 years, Chaim died, leaving his wife with twelve children, eight of them unmarried. Glueckel responded with the faith and courage that characterized her life. She assumed management of her husband's business, with all the perils that entailed, and set about raising her children alone. In her diary, she records her plans, writing that after the marriage of her last child, it was her desire to sell her business and move to the Holy Land. There, she envisioned spending the remainder of her life helping the less fortunate.

Unfortunately, her desires were not realized. Her business suffered a decline, and she was forced to reconsider her projected plans. Glueckel married a second time. Her new husband was a wealthy businessman from Metz, a well-established Jewish

community, where she set about starting a new life. Sadly, just when life might have become easier for her, her new husband's business failed. Just two years after their marriage, he lost everything, including whatever Glueckel had brought with her.

Glueckel was suddenly thrust into a life totally bereft of the comforts she had always known. In the face of such obstacles, her innate buoyancy and optimism surfaced, and Glueckel remained the same faithful Jewish woman she had always been. Her last years were devoted to recording her memoirs, which she left to us as an enduring and fascinating record of life in 17th century Germany, as well as snatches of Torah wisdom and teachings she left to her children. The diary was discovered by one of her sons, Moshe, who was a rabbi. He copied his mother's records onto parchment, thus providing us with a priceless record through which we meet a remarkable woman whose wisdom and courage enabled her to survive the calamities of life and emerge spiritually and emotionally unscathed, to serve as an inspiration to future generations.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

And it will come to pass because (eikev) you will hearken to these ordinances (Deut. 7:12)

Hebrew word "eikev" means literally "heel," and refers to the End of Days – the period right before the coming of Moshiach and the Final Redemption. Our Sages counseled us to "Anticipate the footsteps of Moshiach"; at present, we can hear their faint echo and begin to appreciate Moshiach's light. (*The Rebbe*)

And now, Israel, what does the L-rd your G-d require of you but to fear the L-rd your G-d, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the L-rd your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul (Deut. 10:12)

From the way this verse is worded, one would think that this command is easy. Yet the Talmud asks, "Is fearing G-d really such an easy thing to do?" For Moses, the answer goes, it was easy. But how does this help the average Jew? Every Jewish soul, without exception, contains an aspect of Moses; with the help of this element, fear of G-d is attainable by all Jews. (*Tanya*)

And you turn aside, and serve other gods (Deut. 11:16)

The Baal Shem Tov taught: As soon as a Jew "turns aside," i.e., moves away from his attachment to G-d, he is automatically considered to be "serving other gods," engaged in idol worship. For the Jew, there is no middle ground. Either he is connected to G-d, or connected to the pleasures of this world. (*Tzeva'at HaRibash*)

L'ilui Nishmat
Yisrael Chaim Aziz ben Reuben
 On the occasion of his Yahrtzeit
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 Dedicated by Rivka and Raphael Mahpour



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