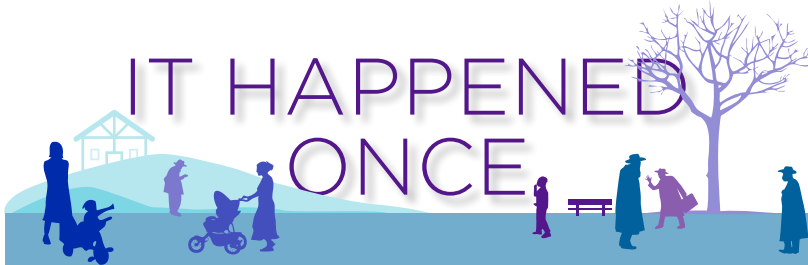


L'Chaim



The man, a follower of the great *tzadik*, the Spoler Zeide, came to him weeping bitterly. "Rebbe," he cried, "what am I to do? Stolen property was found in my courtyard, and I am being accused of being a thief. My lawyer tells me that I will not escape with less than three months in prison."

The Zeide listened and replied, "I will be a better lawyer for you, and you will receive only one month in prison."

"But, Rebbe," the man continued, plaintively, "I am an innocent man. Why must I be punished for a month?"

"I will tell you a tale of a similar incident which occurred to me, and you will understand. Once I was staying at the home of a very hospitable Jewish customs officer. I became friendly with another guest there, and when the Shabbat ended, we made plans to continue our journey together. Unbeknownst to me, the other man had stolen some valuable pieces of silver from the house.

"As we proceeded down the road, we heard the sounds of a carriage approaching very fast. The man asked me to watch his pack for a moment and he disappeared in the mass of trees. The carriage stopped in front of me and I recognized the customs officer and a gentile officer.

"Seize him," the Jew cried. "He is the thief!"

"And before I knew what was happening they threw me into the back of the carriage and we drove away. When I recovered from the initial shock, I tried to explain that it was not I, but the other man who had stolen the silver, but they scorned my words. It was obviously nothing would avail, and I accepted it as the will of Heaven.

"I was thrown into a cell full of frightening criminals who found my appearance an occasion for great mirth. They pulled at my sidelocks and beard, and I could only entreat the One Above to rescue me from their evil clutches. They tried to extort money from me, but when they saw I had none, they set out to beat me.

"The first one laid into me as two others held me down. As soon as his hand touched me, he cried out in pain. His hand swelled and gushed with blood. The thieves and murderers who surrounded me took conference with one another. One said I was a sorcerer, another claimed I was a saint; regardless of their opinion, they all agreed to leave me alone.

"When the immediate danger had passed, I looked around at the other prisoners. One, called "Gypsy" turned out to be, instead, a Polish Jew who had been imprisoned for horse-stealing. I realized that I had been incarcerated precisely in order to help this pathetic man repent. Little by little we spoke and I gained his trust. He related a sad tale of being orphaned and then falling in with a band of Gypsies, whose ways he adopted.

"One morning the man came to me in a state of terror. He had dreamed of his dead parents who told him to do whatever I would instruct him. They said if he refused, he would die in his sleep. From that moment on he was the most willing penitent.

"Slowly, I instructed him in the Jewish religion. He stopped eating forbidden food, began to recite prayers, and begged the Al-mighty to forgive his errant ways. After several weeks passed, he even began sleeping near me and became completely attached to me in word and deed.

"A few days later I dreamed that Eliyahu told me to flee from that place and go to the town of Zlotopoli where I would be offered the position of beadle of the town. But then I remembered the "Gypsy," and my promise not to abandon him. But, I reasoned, if a miracle could come about for me, it could come about for him, too.

"I told the repentant man to follow me. When we came to the first door, we saw it was open. He held my belt and we passed through the door together, and continued into the black night, with no thought as to where we were going. Many hours later, we stopped at the house of a Jew who told us that we had found the path to Zlotopoli.

"Three days later, we arrived in the town, and I was appointed to the position of beadle. So you see, don't complain about the judgements of G-d, for they are very deep and beyond the understanding of men. Just be strong in your faith, for I can assure you that everything that happens, no matter how it appears, is only for the good. And, as I promised, you will sit in prison no more than one month."

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

When you go forth to war against your enemies...and you shall take him captive (Deut. 21:10)

In the war against the Evil Inclination, it is insufficient to merely conquer and subdue it; one must also "take him captive" and utilize one's negative impulses to serve G-d. In truth, there is much to learn from the Evil Inclination, whose G-d-given role is to constantly attempt to cause man to sin. We would be well advised to emulate its dedication in fulfilling G-d's will. (The Baal Shem Tov)

You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep driven away and hide yourself from them; surely you shall bring them back to your brother (Deut. 22:1)

G-d has implanted within us a wonderful character trait: a willingness and urge to be kind to another Jew that is even stronger than the desire to be kind to ourselves. We can always find reasons why we deserve our own suffering, G-d forbid, but when it comes to another's distress, it is absolutely impossible. (Hayom Yom)

You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fallen down by the way and hide yourself from them; you shall surely lift them up again (Deut. 22:4)

It is forbidden to make believe one cannot recognize his fellow Jew's material needs, symbolized by the "donkey" and the "ox." For when you help another, you too will surely be "lifted up" and elevated spiritually. (Tiferet Shlomo)

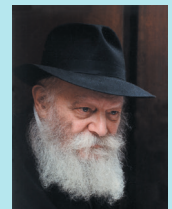
You shall not wear a garment of different sorts (shaatnez), wool and linen together (22:11)

According to Chasidut, wool and linen are symbolic of chesed and gevura, the attributes of loving-kindness and severity. When a Jew observes a positive mitzva, a "do," he brings closer the object with which he performs the mitzva. When he observes one of the Torah's prohibitions, a "don't," he avoids something that is forbidden and pushes it away. The mitzva of shaatnez reminds us that these two opposing thrusts mustn't be combined: that which is forbidden should be shunned, and that which is holy and positive should be encouraged. (The Rebbe, Elul 5744)



7:21 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
8 Elul/Aug 25
Torah Portion Ki Teitzei
Ethics Chs 1 & 2
Shabbat ends 8:20 pm



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

This week we read the Torah portion of *Ki Teitzei*. The Haftora is a prophecy *Yshayahu* (Isaiah).

The Haftora has a double theme. First, when Moshiach comes, things will be so good that we will forget the hardships of the exile. Second, the redemption will be absolute, never to be followed by another exile.

The Haftora begins, "Sing, barren one, who has not given birth." Who is this barren one?

A simple explanation is that G-d is talking to the city of Jerusalem, which feels like a barren woman, who has never given birth, because she is desolate during this long exile. G-d tells her to sing, as now that Moshiach is here, her streets are once again filled with her children and she doesn't feel barren any more.

On a deeper level, G-d is talking to the Jews who claims that the Jewish people are barren and have not given birth to him. Meaning, he has totally disassociated himself from the Jewish nation. G-d is saying that even the person who is unaffiliated or disaffected will sing the song we will sing when Moshiach comes.

The revelation will be so great that we will break out in song, just as we did at the splitting of the sea. Every Jew will be included, even the "barren" one, who is in the darkest place. The revelation and transformation will be so great, that s/he too will break out in song.

The exile will then seem as a fleeting dream as the Haftora says, "For a brief moment I forsook you." This will be because, as the verse continues, "with great compassion I will gather you." The next verse continues, "With a little wrath, I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness, I will have compassion on you."

What is clear from these verses, is that when Moshiach comes, it will be so good, that the exile will feel like we endured it only for a brief moment.

Now the Haftora says, "Like the waters of Noah, this is to Me, just as I swore to never again cover the earth with the waters of Noah, so have I sworn not to be wrathful with you and not to rebuke you (ever again)." G-d calls the flood "the waters of Noah" because the name "Noah" is like the word "nachat,"—pleasure—indicating that the floor was positive and changed the world for good. The same is true about this exile. When Moshiach comes, we will see how everything we went through in this exile directly made the world ready for Moshiach. We will see the positive in it all.

Like beacons of light, this Haftora is read two times in the year - once with the portion of Noah at the beginning of the year and now at the end of the year—to remind us that though our work is difficult and the exile is dark, what we are accomplishing is tremendous and our reward is even greater.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzchak Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, yitzchurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

Doing Daily

by Rabbi Didy Waks

I went to drop off some items of clothing at a Brooklyn dry cleaner.

"You haven't been here in a while," the owner said to me, as I walked in.

I was taken aback. How does he remember me? I live five hours away in Clinton, New York. I likely hadn't been there since last summer.

"You have a good memory," I replied.

"We still have your shirts," he continued.

Now I was sure he had mistaken me for someone else. "I haven't been here in at least one full year! You must be thinking of someone else."

"No, no," he insisted. He climbed up to a high shelf and reached for a bag. I waited patiently.

He was spot on! "Didy Waks. Pickup on 7/8/2022," the stapled tag read.

"You have a *really* good memory!" He corrected me, "this is my job!"

I came out with a great lesson. And five shirts I had thought were lost!

There is a debate among the Sages as to what the most all-encompassing verse in the Torah is.

One says, "*Shema Yisrael*." It carries in it the fundamental belief in one G-d.

Another says, "Love thy neighbor as yourself."

A third says, "The first lamb you shall sacrifice in the morning and the second lamb you shall sacrifice in the afternoon." This refers to the daily offerings in the Temple.

How on earth is this verse even in the running for most all-encompassing verse in the Torah, let alone the winner?

Indeed, the Midrash citing these opinions states that the third opinion is the correct one!

Many people live for the big moments. I remember as a kid, a friend shared that he lived his life, "always thinking of the next big and exciting thing coming up."

It's not a bad idea. There's always something. A vacation, a holiday, an event.

But it is missing the point. G-d is not just in the holidays. Fun is not just in vacation. Meaning is not found just at epiphanous moments.

The real test is in the every single day. Did you bring the morning and evening sacrifice?

It's repetitive, it almost feels mundane. But it's really a sacrifice to G-d.

We can be like the dry clean owner, whose real name is Tzadik, not for naught. If we are focused on the beauty of the mundane, then remembering every detail isn't impressive; it makes absolute sense!

We all remember where we were when some major world event took place. Mr. Tzadik remembers every face that comes through his (very busy) dry cleaner, because they're all the most important thing to him.

It's natural to look forward to the exciting and extraordinary. And the change in pace. That's why G-d gave us the gift of Shabbat. And all the holidays.

We just need to remember to treat every person as we would Moses. And every opportunity to do a mitzva as the greatest one we have ever faced. With this understanding, it makes sense that this verse about daily sacrifices encompasses both its contenders.

It's a tall order. My trip to the Clean Spot Organic Dry Cleaner reminded me that it's possible!

Rabbi Didy and Devorah Waks direct Chabad of Clinton, NY, serving the Jewish community of Hamilton College

to dedicate an issue call (212) 778-6000

SLICE OF LIFE

Young and Old
by Rabbi Chaim Danzinger



Rabbi Chaim and Kaila Danzinger and children—the Rebbe’s emissaries in Rostov, Russia—are creating Jewish experiences for Jews of all ages. They recently opened Semirya, a state-of-the-art center for children with special needs. There’s also a day school, overnight camp, teen clubs and seminars, young professionals classes and events... The following are from Rabbi Danzinger’s posts on Facebook.

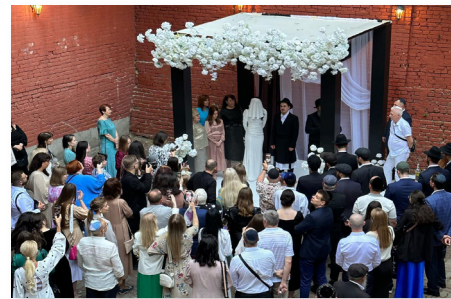
I was so terribly saddened when my dear friend Hershel passed away. Several years ago he related: “My wife died in September. We were married for 59 years. I survived three heart attacks, but losing Alla was unbearable. I laid my feet down, never intending to use them again. I had given up.

“Then there was a knock on the door and the sound of noisy teenagers behind it. I thought it must be a prank. But it turned out to be a group of lively teen volunteers from the Jewish community. ‘We haven’t seen you in a while,’ they said, with bright smiles on their faces. ‘You’re needed for the *Minyan*.’ I couldn’t turn them down. They needed me.

From that day on Hershel attended minyan every day of the year, including the most frigid of mornings and through difficult days of treatment when he would go straight to the hospital after prayers.

It’s safe to say the daily minyan kept Hershel alive and Hershel kept our minyan alive.

May the soul of Hersh ben Shlomo rest in peace.



They got engaged in the village of Lubavitch, where the third and fourth Chabad Rebbes lived.

Their Chupa was held in the historic home of the fifth Chabad Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab, in Rostov.

And their wedding reception was in our 150 year old Cantonist synagogue.

They stand on strong ground!

Mazel tov to our very dear Levi and Ida—we love you and we are so proud of your Jewish journey!



WWII hero Chaim Isakovich passed away recently at the age of 103. He grew up in a *shtetl* in Belarus and his first language was Yiddish.

“While I was fighting the Nazis, my mother’s entire family was rounded up in the city of Velizh and burned alive.” Chaim recounted. “I have terrible memories from the war. I lost so many family members and friends.”

“But thankfully we defeated the Nazis. And today I am blessed with a beautiful family, and I even have great-great grandchildren.” He told me.

I met Chaim for the first time on his 100th birthday and have been inspired by his strength, humility and perseverance ever since.

“These were my ancestors,” Chaya said. “They were shot and thrown in a freshly-dug pit, brutally

murdered by the Nazis. They filled this mass-grave with 27,000 of Rostov’s Jews in just two days.

“The only reason my grandmother, Musia, survived the massacre was because she was a medic, serving at the front. Those who remained in Rostov were not as lucky. Her mother, Cecilia, tried crossing a bridge to escape, but was told to turn around.



“Too weak to continue, she returned home, accompanied by her youngest daughter, who refused to leave her alone. They hid in their basement, hoping to stay alive, but the Nazis found them.

“They were dragged out of their home, tossed onto a truck, and driven here to Zmiyovskaya Balka where they were murdered in the largest massacre of the Holocaust on Russian soil.

“Eighty-one years have passed since the Nazis attempted to erase every trace of Judaism from our city,” she said, “but we’re still here.”

“Today, I work in the Jewish preschool. The synagogue is my second home. I live a Jewish life with pride, and I know that I’m honoring my great grandmother’s memory, continuing her legacy.”



“Rabbi we want to have another weekly Torah class, are you open to doing it at your place?” Zalman asked me.

And that’s how our Wednesday night class began last year. They come straight from a hard day at work, to an inspiring evening of Torah study.

I didn’t invite them — they invited themselves!

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

25th of Iyar, 5712 [1952]

Recently you brought to my attention a letter addressed to you by -----, a student at Colgate University, Hamilton, New York. In this letter the writer professes to be a true scientific thinker and an unbeliever in the supernatural; he also asserts that all facts seem to be in contradiction to the existence of G-d, professes to be a “liberal Jew,” etc., etc.

Not knowing the background of this student, nor the field of science in which he specializes, I cannot deal with the subject in detail, especially in the course of a letter.

There are, however, several general observations that I can make, which the said student has apparently overlooked, and which he would do well to consider carefully:

Science does not come with foregone conclusions and beliefs with the idea of reconciling and adjusting facts to these beliefs. Rather the opposite, it deals with facts, then formulates opinions and conclusions. To approach a subject with one’s mind made up beforehand is not true scientific thinking but a contradiction to it.

Science requires that no conclusion can be valid before a thorough study and research was made on the subject. The question therefore presents itself: How much time and effort had the above-mentioned writer devoted to the study of religion to justify his conclusions on the subject?

A fact is considered any event or phenomenon testified to by witnesses, especially where the evidence is identical and comes from witnesses of varied interests, education, social background, age, etc. Where there is such evidence, it is accepted as a fact which is undeniable even if it does not agree with a scientific theory. This is the accepted practice in science even where there are several reliable witnesses

and certainly scores of them, hundreds and thousands.

The Divine Revelation at Mount Sinai was a fact witnessed by millions of people, all of whom reported it to its minutest detail, accurately, for the whole people of Israel stood at Mount Sinai and witnessed it.

We know that this is a fact because millions of Jews in our day accept it as such, because they received it as such from their own parents, and these millions in turn received the evidence from the previous generation, and so on, in an uninterrupted chain of transmitted evidence from millions to millions of witnesses, generation after generation, back to the original millions of witnesses who saw the event with their own eyes.

Among these original witnesses there were many who were initiated in the sciences of those days (viz. Egypt), many achievements of which are still baffling nowadays; among them were philosophers and thinkers, as well as ignorant and uneducated persons, women and children of all ages. Yet all of them reported the event and phenomena connected with it without contradiction to one another.

Such a fact is certainly indisputable. I do not believe that there is another fact which can match it for evidence and accuracy.

To deny such a fact is anything but scientific; it is the very opposite of science.

Parenthetically, it is unfortunate that this basic difference between the Jewish religion and those of others is so little known, for the Jewish religion is the only one that is not based on a single founder or a few, but is based on the Divine Revelation witnessed by all the people, numbering several millions.

This answers also -----’s statement that “the acceptance of the Torah as being the only truth is dangerous” since “its authors were only men... and as men they could not have been infallible.”

Jews accept the Torah precisely because it was given by G-d, not by man, and it was given in the presence of millions of people who had seen it and heard it with their own eyes and ears. That is why the Torah is the absolute truth, for G-d is absolute.

I an enclosing an extra copy, should you wish to forward it to your correspondent.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

We read in this week’s portion, “And the firstborn son is hers who was hated” (*Deut. 21:15*) The “firstborn son” is an allusion to

King Moshiach and his ultimate sovereignty in the Messianic era, as it states in Psalms, “I have found David My servant...also I will make him my firstborn,” while “hers who was hated” refers to Leah, the mother of Judah, from whom Moshiach is descended: “And when L-rd saw that Leah was hated, He opened her womb.” (*Ohr HaTorah*)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sometimes—simply because Elul and the High Holidays occur with yearly dependability - we don’t pay enough attention to a very radical concept in Judaism.

During the month of Elul a Jew is supposed to stop what he’s doing, honestly and objectively assess his spiritual condition, and take whatever steps are necessary to improve it. But how much can an older, set-in-his-ways person really change? Realistically speaking, each of us has his own strengths and weaknesses, things we are willing to do and things that are just not for us. Aside from minor adjustments, aren’t we destined to remain basically the same till 120?

To this, Judaism responds with a resounding “NO!” You too can change and do teshuva, the Torah tells us, regardless of your experience or maturity. Whatever happened before is past history. No door is closed, no bad habits so ingrained that they cannot be overcome. A Jew always has the potential to draw nearer to G-d, and during the month of Elul, is granted special powers from Above to assist him.

This principle, that a Jew is a perpetual “work in progress” and that it’s never too late to improve, is the result of the unique nature of the Jewish soul. The Jewish soul is eternal, unlimited by any boundaries. Nothing can stand in the way of a Jew’s sincere desire to be close to G-d—neither logic, emotion, environment or inclination. The moment he resolves to change course ever slightly (in the right direction) he becomes invincible.

Each day of his life, a Jew has the capacity to revolutionize his existence and imbue it with ever-increasing holiness. It’s just easier during Elul, when our hearts are naturally aroused to doing teshuva and spurred on by G-d’s greater proximity among us.

Shmuel Beilman

L’ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקה

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

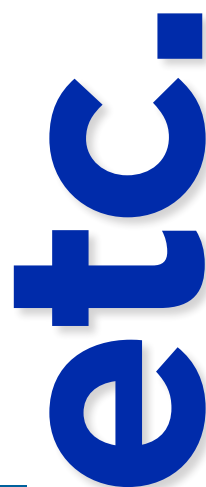


Published by
Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St., Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000

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New Emissaries

Rabbi Shneur and Esther Wolfman are moving to **Phoenix, Arizona, Chabad of Moon Valley & Grand Canyon University.** The greater Moon Valley area is home to 2,800 Jews. With the rapid growth of Grand Canyon University and its large Jewish student population, the Wolfmans will be providing a supportive community for the GCU students.

Rabbi Mendel and Mimi Pinson are moving to **Knoxville, Tennessee** to serve as Youth Directors at **Chabad of Knoxville.** Knoxville is home to the University of Tennessee and the nearby Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Rabbi Mendel and Fraydy Barber are establishing **Chabad of Beverly and Salem, Massachusetts.** The new Chabad House will be the fifth one in the North Shore region. Approximately 2500 Jews live in the area.

Hakhel – Unite!

In the Hakhel year, the King read from the Torah to the entire Jewish nation. He stood on an elevated platform to signify that while naturally humble, we must stand tall and be strong when faced with adversity. The platform was in the courtyard, a holy place. Only to defend holiness can we step out of a place of humility into the limelight. The platform was made of wood, a temporary material in comparison to the Temple’s stones and metals. Our foray into fame is temporary, we are there for only as long as necessary until we return to our essential place of humility. (*Likutei Sichot 19, p. 328*)