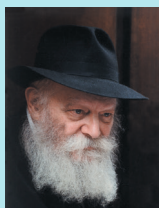


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

This week's Torah portion of Re'ei is always read at a time associated with the month of Elul, either on the Shabbat on which the month of Elul is blessed or on Rosh Chodesh Elul.

Re'ei begins with the verse, "Behold, I am giving before you today the blessing..." This verse refers to the fact that the blessing, and the revelation of G-dliness that accompanies it, is coming from Above. Indeed, each of the words of this verse emphasizes that approach:

Behold: Seeing implies the establishment of a deep and powerful connection. Thus our Sages state, "hearing does not resemble seeing," and they forbid an eyewitness from acting as a judge. Once someone has seen a misdeed committed, he will never be able to conceive of a redeeming virtue for a defendant. In contrast, when a person is told about an event, he is allowed to serve as a judge and indeed, all trials depend on listening to such testimony.

What is the reason for such a difference? When hearing, one approaches a concept step by step, gathering all the particulars. This resembles an ascent upward. In contrast, when seeing, one is brought into direct contact with an event as a totality all at once. Only afterwards, does one focus attention on the particulars. This reflects the approach of revelation from Above.

I--"Anochi": This refers to G-d's essence in a most uplifted and magnified manner. In our verse, the Hebrew word "anochi" is used rather than the more common "ani." "Anochi" communicates a greater sense of pride and magnitude than "ani."

Am giving: The fact that G-d is giving clearly implies a gift from Above.

Before you: "lifneichem" in Hebrew relates to the word "p'nimiyut"-inner dimension. This emphasizes the approach of revelation from Above. For we begin by focusing on our own personal inner dimension, our inner being, and then proceed to the external dimensions. In contrast, proceeding from the externals to the internal is more a process of elevating what is here below to Above.

Today: This reflects the concepts of light and revelation, for the day is the time of light. It also is associated with a dimension of eternity, as our Sages state, "Whenever the word 'today' is used, [the influence] is eternal and forever." And this is possible because it involves a revelation from Above which does not take into consideration the nature of the recipient.

Blessing: Blessing obviously refers to an influence from Above.

The occupation of the month of Elul, however, is a totally different type of work. For in Elul, our spiritual workout focuses on elevating ourselves through our own initiative and not through a "gift from Above."

Where, then, is the connection between our Torah portion and the fact that we read it on Rosh Chodesh Elul?

The truth is that since in Elul we take stock of the entire year that has passed, we must correct any deficiencies in either of these two areas. We must put tremendous effort into elevating ourselves and our surroundings through our own initiative as well as making ourselves a worthy receptacle for G-d's inspiration and blessings from Above.

Adapted from a talk of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Brake Caliper Lessons

By Rabbi Mendel Rubin

Today I learned (the hard way, and expensive way) about brake calipers.

Why? The calipers had frozen or seized up, remaining enough in place to keep the car from accelerating normally, making acceleration extra laborious, but also not closing in tight enough for the brake pads to fully stop the rotors. They were frozen/seized in an in-between place, neither here nor there, neither fully engaged nor disengaged. They were stuck halfway there.

Nu, what's the life lesson?

1. One lesson is relevant in any relationship. The ability to smoothly transition (& not get stuck & fixated) between closeness & distance, between being supportive & stepping back, between allowing for open freedom & setting up healthy guideposts, boundaries and constraints.
2. Another thing. You know usually we think of compromises as meeting halfway or somewhere in the middle.

But that's terrible when it comes to brake calipers. The desired state for calipers is to be able to both go all the way in & all the way out, to pivot easily to both extremes. That's another form of flexibility. Sometimes that's the type of flexibility that's needed.

3. There's a Talmud expression: Just as one receives reward for expounding an interpretation, so too, one can merit reward by

withdrawing that interpretation. Sometimes the wisdom is to know when to engage and when to disengage, when to invest in ourselves vs. when to remove ourselves from a situation. There is value in speaking up and there can also be value in silence. Just as the caliper has to push in and have the brake pads hug the turning rotor to make it stop or slow, so too, a properly working brake caliper knows when to get out of the way, let things be, give it room.

4. In our case, the car could still accelerate, but far more laboriously, it was a real struggle. We didn't realize it but we were simply fighting the half-engaged brake pads. It made everything harder.

And that's our lesson #4 from our expensive fix of the brake calipers, pads AND rotors: Some people are working twice or triple as hard to get the same results, because something is holding them back or crimping their style. Some people are carrying a much heavier load, or being held back or dealing with extra pressures that we know nothing about.

Like the biblical verse about adjusting the donkey's load, whenever possible, if we can help other people lighten or modify their personal load, we can help them get ahead faster, better, easier than if all that is holding them back and weighing them down. We can't always help with these types of load adjustments from the outside, but sometimes we can.

SLICE OF LIFE

A Prayer Book's Journey from Battle to the Western Wall



"The Western Wall was our heart's desire."

As the sun rose on June 7, 1967, Yaakov Sagiv (then Zigelboim) tucked his tefillin and prayer book into his pocket. The 22-year-old paratrooper had no idea that his simple act of faith would soon become part of a historic moment that would change the face of Jerusalem forever.

Born in Tel Aviv and educated in religious institutions, Yaakov was part of the 55th Paratroopers Brigade during the Six-Day War. Their original mission to parachute near El-Arish had changed dramatically when Jordan's King Hussein decided to join the war.

"We were tasked with repelling the Jordanian attack and then continuing to Mount Scopus," Yaakov recalls. "We fought a hard battle along the northern urban line, from the Damascus Gate to Ammunition Hill. It was a tough fight, but by Tuesday, we had stabilized the line."

On Wednesday morning, June 7th (28th of Iyar), Yaakov and his unit set out at dawn for the important mission of connecting

to Mount Scopus. "I took my tefillin and prayer book in my pocket," he says. "It seemed like the war was about to end. No one was talking about liberating the Old City."

But suddenly, everything changed. "A rumor spread that the government had decided to liberate the city within the walls as well," Yaakov remembers. "The first forces of our brigade broke into the city through the Lions' Gate. We continued to move through the Augusta Victoria ridge. In a firefight, our company commander, Giora Ashkenazi, who was leading, fell."

By early afternoon, Yaakov's unit had entered the city and ascended to the Temple Mount plaza. "The Western Wall was our heart's desire, and we were looking for the small gate leading to it," he says. "We reached the Western Wall plaza, which was nothing but a narrow street in the Mughrabi neighborhood."

What happened next would etch itself into Yaakov's memory forever. "Rabbi Goren was already there with his father-in-law the Nazir and Rabbi Zvi Yehuda. We were very excited. Rabbi Goren felt the magnitude of the hour and gathered the few soldiers for the Mincha prayer. He had a shofar and a Torah scroll with him, but no prayer book."

In that moment, Yaakov's personal prayer book became part of history. "At his request, I handed him my prayer book," he says. "Meanwhile, many paratroopers arrived, and there was great excitement."

After the prayer, Rabbi Goren wrote a note in the prayer book, indicating that this was the siddur which was used for the first prayer at the Kotel. The prayer book now resides in the Ammunition Hill Museum, a silent witness to that momentous day.

For Yaakov, the connection to the Western Wall remains deep and personal. "I feel a deep connection to the Kotel," he says. "I

come to it on the three pilgrimage festivals, on Jerusalem Day, on Tisha B'Av, and on Hoshana Rabba."

As he reflects on those historic days, Yaakov's thoughts turn to the brave soldiers of today. "We're now recalling memories of the capture of the Western Wall, but I think the focus should be on the wonderful heroes of the Simchat Torah War," he says, referring to the recent conflict that began on October 7, 2023.

"We were surprised by the spiritual strength of the soldiers, from all circles, who went out to fight with a boldness reminiscent of the fighters of the people of Israel throughout the generations," Yaakov marvels. "We fought for a few days, and now what determination! I have two grandchildren in the paratroopers, and I hear inconceivable things from them."

Yaakov's story is a testament to the enduring spirit of faith and courage that has defined Israel's history. From the streets of Jerusalem in 1967 to the battlefields of today, the prayer book he once carried serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made and the miracles witnessed in the pursuit of peace and unity.

As he approaches his 80th birthday, Yaakov Sagiv's memories of that fateful day at the Western Wall remain vivid. His prayer book, now a cherished artifact, continues to tell the story of a nation's longing, a soldier's faith, and a moment that changed history. It stands as a bridge between generations of brave men and women who have fought for Israel's survival and the right to pray freely in Jerusalem.

In sharing his story, Yaakov hopes to inspire the younger generation with the same spirit of devotion and courage that guided him and his comrades more than half a century ago. "For everyone," he says, "there is their own Jerusalem."

Translated from Sichat Shavua

New Hampshire's First Kosher Restaurant Is Open for Business



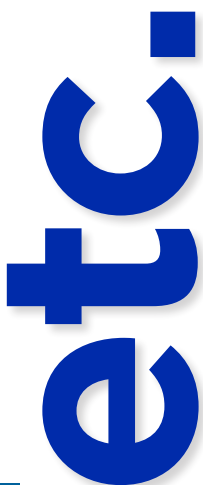
Kosher dining has arrived in the Granite State. The Brooklyn Cafe opened its doors on July 7, in Newington, N.H., and is already serving the local community a taste of authentic New York kosher cuisine in a warm and friendly environment. The beautifully renovated cafe is located on the first floor of the Seacoast Chabad-Lubavitch Jewish Community Center in the center of Newington.

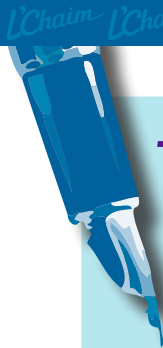
The cafe is the vision of Rabbi Berel Slavaticki, who in 2017, moved with his wife, Rochel, and family to establish Chabad serving both the New Hampshire coast, as well as the upwards of 500 Jewish students at the nearby University of New Hampshire.

Chabad of New Hampshire was founded in 1989 when the Lubavitcher Rebbe, sent Rabbi Levi and Shternie Krinsky to serve the state, which historically did not have a strong Jewish infrastructure. Jewish life has flourished in the years since, and with the Krinsky's help, in 2003 Rabbi Moshe and Chanie Gray opened Chabad serving Dartmouth University in Hanover.

Ethics of the Fathers: Chapter Six

Everything that G d created in His world, He did not create but for His glory. As is stated (Isaiah 43:7): "All that is called by My name and for My glory, I created it, formed it, also I made it." And it says (Exodus 15:1): "G d shall reign forever and ever."





The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

YOU WILL FIND THE ANSWERS

By the Grace of G-d

10 Menachem Av, 5741

Brooklyn, N.Y.

L.G.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I am in receipt of your letter in which you write many complaints against Hashem.

Considering that your letter was written in the midst of the Nine Days, just three days before Tisha B'Av, it is surprising that there is no mention of the biggest complaint, that it is almost 2,000 years since the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed and our Jewish people was exiled and, yet we have not been redeemed, and are still in golus, etc.

At the conclusion of your letter, you stated that you need an answer to your questions. But surely you know that such questions as "Why must an innocent person suffer?" and the like, have been asked and also answered a long time ago and indeed, there is a whole book, the Book of Iyov (Job) that deals with all such questions and in greater depth. If you will study that book, especially with the commentary, you will find the answers, and in a much better way than can be given in a letter.

Inasmuch as everything is by Divine Providence and you have written to me in a matter you could more easily discuss with any knowledgeable Jew, and certainly with a Rabbi in your vicinity, I want to make use of this opportunity to call your attention to a matter which should also be self-evident, but because

of its importance and timeliness, deserves to be mentioned here. Now that we are coming from the period of the Three Weeks and the Nine Days, connected with the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and the golus [Exile], every Jew is expected to make a special effort in matters of Torah and mitzvot.

REMOVING THE CAUSE

In order to rectify the cause of the present golus which is, as we say in our prayers, "Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land." And when everyone will do his and her share in the direction of removing the cause, as mentioned above, the Divine Promise of the geula [Redemption] will be immediately fulfilled and the present days of sadness will be transformed into days of gladness and rejoicing.

If anyone should ask himself or herself what can I personally do to contribute toward this end, and how can an action of mine be of any significance, etc., one need only remember the teaching of our Sages, which the Rambam, the Guide to the Perplexed in his time and in all subsequent generations, incorporated in his Code as a point of halachah [Jewish law] to the effect: A person should consider himself and the whole world, as equibalanced.

Therefore, by doing one more mitzvah or good deed, one tips the scale in favor of the positive, both for himself as well as for the world at large. (Hil. Teshuvah 3:4). Thus, it is clear that when a person has the opportunity to say a good word, think a good thought and do a good deed, it should not be treated lightly, for it might change the whole complex of the individual, the community and our whole Jewish people.

I trust you will be able to convey the above thought to the young people whom you and your organization are working with, to bring them closer to Torah Yiddishkeit in the everyday life and experience.

With blessing,

meeting his own needs. Since every Jew is like a "Hebrew slave" to G-d, it is understood that it isn't enough that G-d is required to fulfill all his material and spiritual needs, but even more than this: G-d is required to fulfill the prayers and requests of the Jewish people, that they can no longer stand the situation of exile!

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

A WORD

FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'chaim Publication.

From the Archives

This Shabbos is 'Shabbos Mevarchim' as we bless the new month of Elul. In addition to being the name of a Jewish month, the word Elul is an acronym for five verses from the Bible which are connected to the five different types of service, each identified with our new month. The Rebbe enumerated these five verses at a gathering last year on this Shabbat:

Prayer--"I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine." For it is through prayer, the "duty of the heart" that our relationship with G-d is enhanced and intensified.

Torah study--"It chanced to happen and I set aside for you a place." This verse describes the Cities of Refuge to which a person who killed unintentionally can flee. But it also refers to Torah study for "the words of Torah provide refuge."

Deeds of Kindness--"A person [gives presents] to his friend and gifts to the poor." In this verse the concept of deeds of kindness is clearly expressed.

Teshuva--"And G-d your L-rd will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants." For the service of teshuva--returning to G-d wholeheartedly, is primarily the service of changing one's inner self, the feelings of one's heart.

Redemption--"And they said, 'We will sing to G-d' " This phrase is taken from the Song of Redemption sung at the Red Sea.

The first three services are identified with the three pillars of man's service. These services must be permeated by the service of teshuva and by the service of redemption and thus, they will be endowed with a boundless quality that surpasses the limits of a person and the world at large.

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

The Talmud states, "One who buys a Hebrew slave is like one who buys a master over himself," for the purchaser is required to satisfy the slave's needs and even provide some luxuries before

IT HAPPENED ONCE



Reb Mordechai Liepler's son fell seriously ill and the doctors were not encouraging. "A virus appears to have infected his bone marrow and his bones are withering away," they diagnosed. "We know of no cure."

Reb Mordechai immediately dispatched a letter to the Mittler Rebbe explaining the desperate situation. He calculated that it would take five days for the letter to get to Lubavitch, and five days for the Rebbe's answer to return. Thus, he expected to receive an answer in ten days.

Ten days were up and Reb Mordechai stood outside waiting impatiently for the postman.

"Sorry, nothing for you today," called the postman as he passed by, shaking his head. Reb Mordechai met with the same disappointment on the following day as well.

However, on the third day, the postman had some news. "Yes, I have a letter for you, but I am in a terrible rush today and don't have time to look for it," he called hurrying on.

Reb Mordechai ran after him, pulled at his bag and searched frantically for the long-awaited letter.

"What's your rush today?" he asked as he fumbled through the envelopes.

"One of the Czar's relatives living in our district fell ill and a royal physician was summoned all the way from Austria. Today, he is scheduled to return to Vienna and it is my duty to arrange a carriage for his journey," explained the postman.

Just then, Reb Mordechai found the letter and opened it quickly as the postman busied himself straightening out his bag.

"I received your letter," the note from the Mittler Rebbe stated. "I see that help will come to you from far and near." Added on the bottom of the letter was a note of advice. "Do not stint on money."

The information I just received from the postman may be that very assistance the Rebbe foresaw, thought Reb Mordechai. "Where is that doctor now?" he asked the postman.

Upon receiving the address, Reb Mordechai set out immediately towards the house. Evidently, he was not the only one who had heard of the doctor's arrival. Many people were standing on line in the courtyard hoping to be allowed a consultation.

Being a prominent and well-respected figure, Reb Mordechai was pushed through the crowd and managed to gain access to the doctor. Describing his son's severe condition, Reb Mordechai begged the doctor to treat him.

"I'm sorry, my time is very limited and I must be on my way back to Vienna," came the curt reply.

Reb Mordechai recalled the Rebbe's advice. "I will pay you one thousand rubles for your trouble," he offered. This sum of money persuaded the doctor to delay his departure, and he accompanied Reb Mordechai to his home.

"Your son has an infection which has spread to his bone marrow. Though this disease is considered incurable here in Russia, a new medicine has recently been developed in Austria. I may by chance have a sample in the case of medication I brought along with me. If I do, summon a local doctor and I will instruct him regarding its application."

Sure enough, the medicine was found and in due time, Reb Mordechai's son recovered. Thus, the Rebbe's words proved exact. Help came "from near and from afar." The doctor arrived "from afar." The appropriate medication was found in his case, "from near," and were it not for the advice not to spare money, the doctor would not have come.



The phrase "Ba'alei Cheshbon" refers to people who take stock of their behavior, confronting themselves and trying to improve. Literally, the term means, "owners

of accounts." Reb Shmuel Gronem used the following parable to illustrate the relevance of the term's literal meaning.

At the close of a fiscal year, a merchant was having a business meeting with his accountant. Pouring over the books, the accountant described how the yearly balance was very poor. Indeed, the business was bordering on bankruptcy.

Caught by surprise, the unfortunate businessman collapsed in shock and was revived with great difficulty.

Why did he faint and not the accountant? The accountant knew the sorry state of the businessman's affairs much better than he did. Nevertheless, his knowledge was abstract, for the account belonged to someone else. In contrast, the businessman was "the owner of the account." It was his financial future that hung in the balance.

"Such an approach," Reb Shmuel Gronem explained, "also applies in regard to improving our behavior. We shouldn't look at our faults abstractly, but rather see them as problems which affect us."

Reprinted with permission from "My Father's Shabbos Table" by Rabbi Y. Chitrick.



You are children of G-d, your G-d" (Deut. 14:1)

The Baal Shem Tov deeply loved simple folk. He would frequently remark that love of the Children of Israel is love of G-d; when one loves the father one loves the children.

From when the sickle begins to cut the upright corn (Deut. 16:9)

Once a group of Chasidim complained to their Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch, that their spiritual advisor was being unduly harsh. The Rebbe told the spiritual advisor privately later, "It is sure that one must eradicate ego and pride without mercy, as it says, 'From the time the sickle is first put to the standing corn'--one must put the 'sickle' to the 'standing corn' of egotism. However, this is only in regard to oneself. Concerning others, the Torah clearly states, 'do not swing the sickle on your neighbor's grain.'

For the sake of this thing [charity] He will bless you. (Deut. 15:10)

"I am aware of the hardships of these times, that the means for livelihood have declined... nonetheless, it is not right to close the hand which openly gave with benevolence toward all, essential necessities for the needs of the innocent destitute whose eyes are lifted to us. When the poor need bread for the mouths of babes, and wood and clothes against the cold, and the like, then all these take precedence over any fine clothes and family-feasts, meat and fish, and all the delicacies of man and any members of his household. The rule 'your life takes precedence' does not apply in such a case, because all these are not really essential to life, as are the needs of the poor."

(Rabbi Shneur Zalman in Tanya: Iggeret HaKodesh)



7:12 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
26 Av / August 30
Torah Portion Re'eh
Blessing of the new month of Elul
Ethics Ch 6
Shabbat ends 8:10 pm