

# L'Chaim

The Weekly Publication  
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך 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)



## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe  
on the Torah portion

This week's Haftora is read twice during the year. Once with parshas Noach and again as the fifth Haftora of consolation, with parshas Ki Seitzei.

The Haftora has a double theme. First, how when Moshiach comes, things will be so good and second, that the redemption will be final, never to be followed by another exile.

The Haftora begins, "Sing, barren one, who hasn't given birth." Who is the barren one?

The simple explanation is that Hashem is talking to the city of Jerusalem Because she is desolate during this long exile. Hashem tells her to sing, as now that Moshiach is here, her streets are once again filled with her children, the Jewish people.

On a deeper level, Hashem is talking to the Jewish person who claims that the Jewish people are barren and have not given birth to him. Meaning, he has totally dissociated himself from the Jewish nation. Hashem is saying that even he will even sing the "Shir Chadash," the New Song, when Moshiach comes.

The exile will then seem as a fleeting dream as the Haftora says, "For a brief moment I forsook you." And as it says in Tehillim, when Hashem returns the exiles of Zion, "Hayinu K'cholmim, we will have been as dreamers." like a dream it feels real, but when you wake up it fades away. This will be because, as the verse continues, "with great compassion I will gather you."

The Haftora continues. Hashem says that when Moshiach comes, "I will make your windows from kodkod (a kind of gemstone)."

What kind of gemstone is a kodkod? The Talmud tells us (Bava Basra 75a), "Rabbi Shmuel son of Nachmeini said, "it is a dispute between two angels in heaven, Michael and

Gavriel... one says it is a shoham and the other says it is a yashfei. Hashem says to them, "let it be kidayn u'kidayn, like this one and like that one (together)."

We need to know, what is a shoham and what is a yashfei?

There are precious stones that produce their own light from within. Then there are others that if you cut and polish them well, they will reflect light in the most beautiful way. The shoham gives its own light, while the yashfei reflects light.

The debate between the angels is about the reward we will receive when Moshiach will come. One says yashfei, it will be based on our work, effort and accomplishments. Just like a yashfei reflects light, based on how well it is polished. The other says shoham, which gives its own light. Meaning, that the reward will not be based on our accomplishments, rather, it will be Hashem's infinite revelation as a gift from above. Hashem says that we will get both, the reward for our efforts, and He will also bestow upon us his infinite revelation as a gift.

Perhaps it is your effort, your mitzvah, that will finally tip the scale and bring Moshiach.

May he come soon.

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.

## Forever Relevant

In every generation there are those who ask whether the Torah is still relevant. This question is especially relevant in our times when modern technology is growing at such a rapid pace, faster than most people can keep up with.

The youngsters no longer wonder if the older generation is out of touch, it's just a matter of varied degrees. The Torah seems to be outdated with old fashioned laws many of which are no longer practiced and or applicable. It's almost like the ancient word of G-d has "TikToked" away making room for the 2023 TikTok that has captured the world by storm.

In truth, this question was asked by many Jews over the course of our history, from the Jews under Greek rule in the story of Channuka, to factions of the Jews of Spain. Likewise by the Jews of the Yevsektsiya of communist Russia at the turn of the century, to the enlightened Jews of Germany. The difference between then and now, often [although not always] expressed itself in the living conditions of the times, i.e., being under the threat of physical persecution, while today we live under the threat of spiritual assimilation, but the question is the same nonetheless.

While it's fashionable to go along with the latest fads and trends, it's just not who we are.

Our struggle and in a sense our destiny was so clearly spelled out by the non-Jewish prophet Bilam who said (Numbers 23:9) "Hen Am Levadad Yishkon" [it is a nation [the Jews] that will dwell alone].

Having said that, as Jews we have a paradoxical existence. On the one hand we were put on this earth to engage with society, yet on the other hand we are expected to influence it not be influenced by it. In short; G-d gave each and every one of us the task of being an influencer way before it became a thing! The only power we have to accomplish this task is being connected to the Torah.

The Torah is a book like no other. It tells us stories, but isn't a story book, it details a thorough account of our history, yet isn't a history book. In truth the Torah cannot be read like any other book for it is G-d's wisdom, thereby consisting of infinite levels of depth. There isn't a word in the Torah outdated; as G-d is above time, and so is His wisdom. It is just that different levels become more relevant at different times. While some laws of the Torah are no longer applied literally, their mystical and deeper meanings are still as relevant today as ever.

Learn it, internalize it, practice it, live it and this will no doubt lead to loving it!

# SLICE OF LIFE

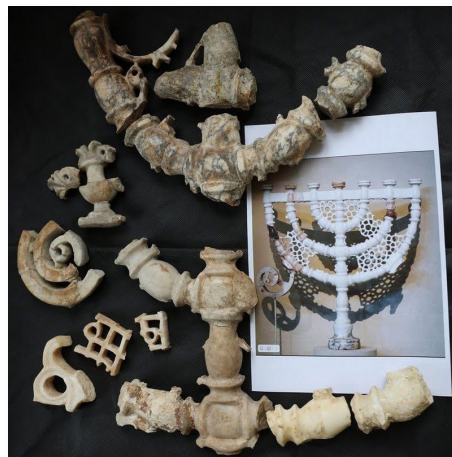
## Shofar Heard Once Again at Newly Discovered Second Temple Era Synagogue



During excavations conducted by archaeologists in the city of Pangoria on the Taman Peninsula in the territory of the city of Krasnodar, located in Russia in the area of the Azov connected to the Black Sea, archaeologists have discovered an ancient Synagogue. The analysis of the fragments of the preserved decoration allows us to conclude that the synagogue was erected at the turn of the millennium and existed for at least 500 years.

With the support of Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska's Volnoe Delo Foundation, archaeologists from the Russian Academy of Science who are exploring remains from the city, have found parts of the synagogue's foundations and walls.

Inside the rectangular structure 21 meters deep and 6 meters wide were several menorahs, altars, and fragments of marble steles, including one bearing the word synagogue in the original Ancient Greek.



The team also came upon tablets with dates from the first century.

The place contains a complex of two rooms, each with an area of more than 60 square meters, it is characterized by rich decorations on its painted walls, and its roof was covered with tiles. The Jewish marble that was found is unique and different from those in Israel.

According to the researchers, the synagogue was built in the era of the Second Temple. The researchers noted that few synagogues functioned during the Second Temple, and were built by representatives of the diaspora who lived far from Jerusalem. According to what is known, the first synagogues date back to the 3rd century, and their construction flourished only in the 3rd century, therefore this synagogue that was discovered now, it is one of the oldest in the world.

The structure has features characteristic of the Second Temple period of Jewish history and likely remained standing until the middle of the sixth century, when Phanagoria was sacked and burned by barbarian tribes.

In the large Jewish community that exists today in the nearby city of Krasnodar, the news was received with great excitement, knowing that they are continuing a tradition that is thousands of years old, and despite the difficult times that Russia has gone through, the community is flourishing with thousands of Jewish families.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Lazar, Chief Rabbi of Krasnodar was invited to visit the site where archeological excavations are being conducted. By government orders, the place is completely closed for the coming year, while Russia's greatest archaeologists are working to map the entire area and further their research of the rare remains found there.

During the visit, the researchers said that as the excavations progressed it became clear that the entire area was a Jewish one. It was surprising to discover that the synagogue's benches were made of wood. Behind the synagogue was a large oven for baking bread, and there are clear signs of a nearby Mikvah.

At the end of the tour, after answering various questions posed by the researchers, the Rabbi and his delegation said a prayer and the sound of the shofar was once again heard in this historical place after thousands of years.

*Photography: Volnoe Delo Foundation of Phanagoria*



## Prank at UC Berkeley Spurs Kosher Awareness Event

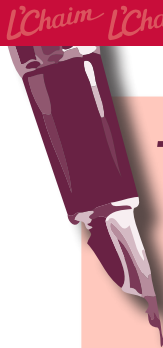


The dumping of crawfish shells at a Jewish fraternity house at the University of California, Berkeley caused Jewish students to feel targeted, but it ultimately also created an opportunity to educate the community about keeping kosher. Last week, the Rohr Chabad Jewish Student Center held its first Kosher Education and Awareness Day, featuring build-your-own artisan pizzas, raffles and educational carnival games.

Rabbi Gil Yosef Leeds, co-director of the Chabad Jewish Student Center with his wife, Bracha Sara, said "we basically took this as an opportunity to turn this incident into a great educational, fun time and to spread awareness to the greater community that we wanted students to be proud of their culture and observances and not feel intimidated by it."

## Teachings...

As we have seen, "entering the ark" is a metaphor for the need to immerse ourselves in Torah study and prayer. However, the true purpose of entering the ark is to leave it. G-d commands us – as He commanded Noah – not to remain in the protective spiritual environment of Torah study and prayer, but to emerge from it, enter the world, and transform the world into G-d's home.



# The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

## EGYPTIANS' SUDDEN STOP

By the Grace of G-d

16 Cheshvan, 5734 [November 11, 1973]

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and blessing:

I trust that my previous correspondence to you has been duly received, as well as the telephone message in connection with the Neshei Convention.

Here I wish to refer to one point in your latest letter, where you wrote about the difference between the Six Day War and the so-called Yom Kippur War, in that G-d's miracles were more obvious in the Six Day War, etc.

As a matter of fact, there were ample miracles, and quite obvious ones, in the last war. The overall miracle, which has now been revealed, although not overly publicized, is the survival after the first few days of the war, when

even Washington was seriously concerned whether the Israeli army could halt the tremendous onslaught of the first attack. Slowly and gradually some details are now being revealed also in the Israeli press as to how serious was the danger in those early days of the war.

The greatest miracle was that the Egyptians stopped their invasion for no good reason only a few miles east of the Canal. The obvious military strategy would have been to leave a few fortified positions in the rear, and with the huge army of 100,000 men armed to the teeth, to march forward in Sinai, where at that point in time there was no organized defense of any military consequence. This is something that cannot be explained in the natural order of things, except as it is written, "The dread of the Jews fell upon them,"<sup>1</sup> in the face of their intelligence reports about the complete unpreparedness of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael at that time.

There are also scores of reported miracles in various sectors of both fronts.

The essential point of this whole tragic war is that it could have been prevented and, as in the case of medicine, prevention is more desirable than cure.

With blessing,

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

"And they went to Noah into the ark...of all flesh where there is the breath of life" (Gen. 7:15) The G-dly revelation that was manifested in the ark had a profound effect on all the

animals, causing them to live together amicably and harmoniously for an entire year. Thus the conditions in the ark were the prototype and forerunner of the Messianic era, when according to many commentators, the Biblical prophecy of "and the wolf shall live with the lamb" will be fulfilled in the literal sense. (Hitva'aduyot 5743)

## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

*This coming Sunday is the seventh day of the Hebrew month of Cheshvan. In the times of the Holy Temple, the Jewish people traveled to Jerusalem for the festivals of Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot, the seventh of Cheshvan marked the end of the pilgrimage season surrounding the festival of Sukkot, according to our Sages. During Sukkot, the entire Jewish people were in Jerusalem. For the Jews living on the Euphrates River, the furthest reaches of the Holy Land, their journey home took fifteen days and thus, was concluded on the seventh of Cheshvan. It was beginning on the seventh of Cheshvan that the prayer for rain commenced, once all of the pilgrims were comfortably home again.*

*This fact, of the delay of the prayers for rain until the last pilgrims reached their homes, is relevant to the concept of Jewish unity. During the pilgrimage festivals, the essential unity of the Jewish people is expressed. However, that unity applies to the essential oneness that binds our people together, while transcending our individuality. The unity expressed by the seventh of Cheshvan relates to Jews as individuals. Jewish unity remains even after each Jew returns to his own home and his individual lifestyle.*

*The seventh of Cheshvan is the final stage of Jewish unity that was begun during the month of Elul (the days of preparation for Rosh Hashana) and enhanced throughout all of the days of month of Tishrei. May we continue to work on and enhance Jewish unity in every way possible until the ultimate revelation of total Jewish unity and the unity of G-d and the entire world with the coming of Moshiach, NOW!*

*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.

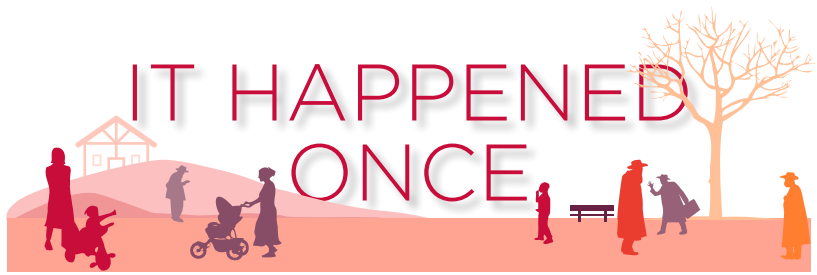


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# IT HAPPENED ONCE

In a small village not far from Berditchev lived Mendel, an upright but simple innkeeper, who made a modest living from the small inn he managed at the side of a country road.

With time, Mendel became pensive and pondered his life's trajectory.

"For most of my life I've lived in this tiny village managing the inn," he reflected. "I've fed many hungry and exhausted passersby. I've poured drinks for the rough peasants and wild noblemen. Because I was burdened by managing the inn, I could neither study nor pray properly. Now that my hair is grey, the time has come to separate myself from the world's futility and begin to prepare for my ultimate journey."

He summoned his son Shia who was young, jovial, and energetic, and handed over the keys to the inn, saying: "I've managed the inn for decades. The time has come for you to take over."

Mendel left the village and moved to Berditchev. He divided his time between his modest town home and the synagogue. He did not become a noted scholar and was not well versed in the small letters of the commentators, but he could pray and learn the basic texts, Chumash and Mishnah.

The inn, meanwhile, had undergone a drastic reformation. With his son in charge, it was no longer a quiet and sleepy roadside tavern. The local nobility began to frequent the inn and held their meetings, parties, and events there. From a business perspective, the transformation was a success.

But the simple passersby, who longed for the warm reception Mendel had always extended, stopped coming. They yearned for the modest warm meal he'd offer, the homey ambiance, and the listening ear they'd grown to rely on. Now the place felt foreign and empty. They no longer belonged.

When Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev caught wind of this, he was saddened. He was sad for Shia, whose thirst for money had driven him to such lows. He was sad for the place which had morphed from a wholesome inn into a party house. And he was sad for the weary travelers who could no longer find a comfortable place to rest and enjoy a kosher meal.

Reb Levi Yitzchak summoned Mendel and asked, "Why did you abandon your inn and hand it over to your son?"

"I am not getting any younger," explained Mendel. "My hair is grey; who knows how many more years I will be granted? With what will I meet my Maker? Shall I remain without any Torah or prayer to accompany me?"

"Now that my son is taking care of the inn, I feel better. I rise in the morning, wrap myself in my tallit and tefillin, and pray slowly with concentration. Then I study. I feel I am accumulating at least a small amount of prayer and study that I can take to the Heavenly Court when my time comes."

Reb Levi Yitzchak sank into thought and after a short while, offered: "Our sages say: 'A wise man is someone who knows his place.' A person ought to know the place that Divine providence has destined for them. When one knows one's place, he or she ought to stay there and not try to take the place destined for someone else.

"Another thing our sages have taught: 'Royalty on earth is like royalty in the heavens.' Royalty in heaven and on earth operate similarly. Woe is to a kingdom that has a plethora of generals but lacks simple foot soldiers. In fact, a soldier who escapes battle to become a general is considered a deserter and a rebel."

Reb Levi Yitzchak waited a moment, looked softly at Mendel, and put his hand on his shoulder. "Know, my dear son Mendel, G-d has enough generals—those who are learned and pedigreed. On the other hand, G-d needs simple and loyal foot soldiers who, precisely in their simplicity, prove their infinite loyalty.

"G-d places each person at their post. He has placed one person in the study hall

and another in a small and remote village. You, Mendel, were selected by G-d to be posted at an inn at a crossroads, so that you could serve up some warm kosher soup to weary travelers on a cold winter night and a cold cup of water on a sweltering summer day.

"No, Mendel, you will not stand before the Heavenly Court like a poor man. With no shame will you greet the angels. With you will be all the kosher meals you served to the travelers and all the warm beds you prepared. All the smiles and good words you exchanged will advocate for you. Return to the inn and fulfill the position that G-d assigned specifically to you."

Mendel followed the rebbe's instruction and returned to the village. Shortly afterward, the inn returned to serving travelers and the revelers found other places for their parties.

Mendel returned to his old work, this time filled with the satisfaction of knowing he was a loyal soldier standing guard where he was most needed

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

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**A window shall you make for the ark (Gen. 6:16)**  
 The Hebrew word for "ark" is "tayva," which also has the meaning of "word." A Jew's job is to make a "window," as it were, for the words he utters in prayer or in the study of Torah, and to let them illuminate, as the sun shines at midday. (Baal Shem Tov)

**I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh (6:17)**  
 Why did G-d choose a flood with which to punish mankind? Could he not have chosen another method to destroy the wicked?  
 Another purpose of the flood, however, was to purify the world which had become unclean and defiled by its inhabitants. This is alluded to in the duration of the flood, forty days, and the requirement that a purifying mikva contain at least forty sa'a [a measure] of water. (Rabbi Shneur Zalman)

**And only Noah was left (7:23)**  
 Despite the fact that Noah was a righteous person, he was still required to tend to all the animals in the ark and take care of their needs. This was a physically demanding and sometimes dangerous job. Similarly, no matter how high a spiritual level one reaches, he is still obligated to take care of those around him who may need his guidance. (Likutei Sichot)



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 Torah Portion *Noach*  
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