

L'Chaim

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Living with the REBBE



This week's Torah portion, Teruma, contains the commandment to fashion a menorah for the Sanctuary. "You shall make a menorah of pure gold."

Maimonides, one of the greatest Torah scholars of all time, drew a detailed diagram of the menorah which greatly helps us understand what it looked like. The diagram shows us the shape of the menorah's branches, the location of its "flowers" and "bowls," and many other details.

Maimonides depicted the menorah's bowls (which were actually cups) in the shape of triangles. A cup is similar to a triangle as it is usually wider on the top and narrower on the bottom.

Surprisingly, however, Maimonides drew the bowls of the menorah upside-down. All 22 of the bowls are depicted as inverted triangles, the wider part on the bottom and the narrower part at the top.

Thus, according to Maimonides' drawing, the bowls of the menorah were designed as if to pour their contents out.

What does this teach us? Why were the bowls of the menorah upside-down?

The bowls are symbolic of the function of the menorah and, by extension, the Holy Temple. A regular menorah or candelabrum is designed to illuminate the inside of one's home. The menorah in the Sanctuary, by contrast, was designed to illuminate the outside. Even without the menorah the Temple was well lit. The reason it was kindled was to illuminate the world at large and demonstrate that G-d's Presence rested upon Israel.

The windows of the Holy Temple were fashioned according to the same principle. These unique windows were opaque from within yet transparent from without. Unlike other windows they did not draw light inside, but carried the light of the Holy Temple outward.

Similarly, a regular cup is designed to contain liquid. But the bowls of the menorah were inverted, shaped like cups that pour their liquid out for those who are thirsty!

The true purpose of the Temple (and the menorah) was to shine the light of holiness upon the entire world, not to contain it within its walls. Both its windows and the bowls of the menorah expressed this concept, reflecting their primary function of imbuing the world with a holy illumination. For the Holy Temple is the place which lights up the entire world.

From this we learn an important lesson: The light of Torah and mitzvot (commandments) must not be kept to oneself. Rather, we must always strive to share it with others, thereby illuminating the world at large with holiness. ■

Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot vol. 21

Feeding the Birds

Did you ever notice what happens after you put bread outside for the birds? Within minutes there are a dozen or more birds of various shapes and kinds happily pecking at the pieces.

Where did the birds come from? How did they find out about the food? Just a few seconds ago all you saw was one little sparrow eyeing you warily! As more birds alight on your front garden to enjoy the edibles, you hear the chirping of birds on nearby trees. If you were King Solomon, who knew the language of all of the animals, you would understand what they are saying. But you are not King Solomon, and you can only guess that they are telling their friends about their find. They are sharing the good news of finding food.

The Talmud tells us that if the Torah had not been given, we could have learned important rules of behavior from animals. For instance, we can learn modesty from a cat, honesty from an ant, chastity from a dove, and good manners from a rooster. (Eiruvim 100b)

What can we learn from the common sparrow or pigeon? We can learn to share good things and good news.

If you're in a good mood, share a smile or an energetic hello. (As the Mishna teaches us, "Greet everyone with a pleasant face" and "Be the first to say 'hello.'")

When you find out about a

quality kosher restaurant (or simply that there is a kosher restaurant!) in your area, pass the information around. Post on your facebook wall a fancy gourmet recipe that you just found out can be made with kosher substitutions.

You heard there's a lecture, class or program at your local Chabad-Lubavitch Center, tell a friend and go together.

After you've finished reading a great Jewish book, lend it to someone else who will enjoy it.

Share a Shabbat dinner, a Passover Seder, some cheesecake on Shavuot.

Share your wealth, or even just the small change in your pocket: put a few coins in a tzedaka box daily and mark happy occasions like birthdays and anniversaries with more sizeable donations to your favorite charity.

Though "misery loves company" and "a trouble shared is halved," call people to whom you normally complain and tell them about good news as well - when a problem has been solved or things are going well.

And remember to increase in acts of goodness and kindness to hasten the long-awaited era of peace, prosperity, health and knowledge - the Messianic Era. As the Lubavitcher Rebbe said, "Moshiach is ready to come, now. Our part is to add in acts of goodness and kindness."

And don't be worried that there's not enough to go around. The birds never do! ■

MEZUZA DID YOU KNOW???

When re-affixing mezuzahs after they have been checked, one should only re-recite the blessing if the mezuzahs were off of their respective doors for more than 24 hours. If they were down for less than 24 hours, no blessing is recited. ■

The Rebbe Writes

15th of Iyar, 5724 [1964]

I received your letter of the 7th of Iyar, and thank you very much for the good news about the various activities. May G-d grant that the activities should be continued in a growing measure, and with joy and gladness of heart in particular as we spoke a number of times, when you were here. I trust that not only do you remember this, but that you are constantly endeavoring to materialize this in the daily life.

With regard to fasting, about which I told you once that it is not advisable to take upon oneself extra fasts in addition to those which are already in the calendar, this is based on the words of the Alter Rebbe [Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Chabad Chasidism]. One of the reasons which he mentions in this connection is that the generations have weakened, and are no longer fit to have extra fasts. Obviously, my suggestion to you, therefore, is valid even now. The would-be resolution to undertake a fast should be changed to a resolution to serve G-d with an extra measure of joy, and to endeavor to spread good influence in the environment in this direction.

As requested, I will remember those mentioned in your letter in prayer, and may G-d grant that you should have good news to report.

With blessing,

P.S. With regard to the concluding lines in your letter, in which you write that you feel badly because you do not know anything in Yiddishkeit [Judaism], this attitude and feeling, is of course, quite unwarranted. Moreover, you should remember that it is one of the tactics of the yetzer hora [evil inclination] to plant discouragement in one's mind. In your case, there is no basis for it, inasmuch as G-d had helped you to study a certain period of time in the Lubavitch Yeshiva, and there is no doubt that you succeeded in absorbing a great deal of Yiddishkeit.

17th of Iyar, 5719 [1959]

I received your letter of Friday, the 7th of Iyar, in which you ask my advice how to deal with Mr.-

Generally speaking, it would be advisable to discuss the matter with the doctor, and perhaps it is possible to find a doctor that had occasion to examine him. I also wrote a letter to -, which he may have shown to you. It would be well to find an opportunity, of course without him knowing that I suggested it to you, to emphasize to him again that the normal way for a person to make progress is to advance step by step, rather than expect of himself radical changes all at once. Even if the progress seems slow, this is the way of progress in his circumstance. Besides, there are different times during the year which are appropriate for different purposes: there are times for joy, and times for serious reflection, and remorse, and teshuvah [repentance]. Therefore he should, at this time, postpone any effort at repentance, which does not mean that he has to completely abandon the idea, but only to postpone it until the appropriate time for teshuvah. But in the meantime he should try to make progress in the learning and observance of the Torah, step by step, with complete peace of mind.

Another important point for him to remember is never to entertain any thought of despair that any sin could not be corrected or forgiven. For G-d is the Essence of goodness and of mercy and never rejects teshuvah, which is carried out at the proper time and in the proper way. He should therefore have absolute faith in G-d, and the stronger his faith will be, the sooner he will find peace of mind.

Above all, as already mentioned, all thought and discussions about repentance, etc. should be postponed for the proper time, and it is best to avoid such topics and discussions altogether, and whenever anything like that comes up, it should be discussed in a way that would not excite or upset his nerves. May G-d bless you with success. ■

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

As this year is a leap year in the Jewish calendar, there are two months of Adar, known as Adar I and Adar II (or Adar Rishon and Adar Sheini). This Shabbat is Rosh Chodesh Adar I.

Our Sages have taught that, just as when the month of Av begins (the month in which we commemorate the destruction of the Holy Temples in Jerusalem) we lessen our joy, so, too, when the month of Adar begins, we increase our simcha - joy and happiness.

In Lubavitcher Rebbe emphasized the importance of simcha in turning the darkness of exile into the light of Redemption.

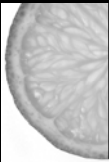
The Rebbe also stressed that in a leap year, when there are two months of Adar, there are 60 days during which we are to increase our simcha. More importantly, in Jewish law, the quantity of 60 has the ability to nullify an undesirable presence.

(Typically, this concerns the kosher status of food, as we see that if a quantity of milk, for instance, has accidentally become mixed with meat, if the meat outnumbers the milk by a ratio of 1:60, the milk is nullified and we may eat the meat.)

Similarly, explains the Rebbe, 60 days of simcha have the ability to nullify the darkness of the present exile, allowing us to actually turn the darkness into light.

Concerning the kind of things that should be done to arouse simcha, the Rebbe suggested that each person should proceed according to his level: a child, for instance, should be made happy by his parents; a wife by her husband, and visa versa. The bottom line, my friends, is that the Rebbe did not let up on encouraging an increase of simcha in all permissible manners during the entire month.

If we hearken to the Rebbe's words and utilize simcha, especially during this month, to turn darkness into light, sadness into joy, and pain and tears, we will soon be rejoicing with Moshiach in the Final Redemption. ■



SLICES OF LIFE

Going Home

by Rabbi Yisroel Greenberg

My youngest sister, sibling number 17 (a number whose Hebrew equivalent spells the word "tov," meaning good), got married in Israel. The wedding was a sight to behold: Children and grandchildren from all over the world, together for a family event. The joy was indescribable.

Chana and I, and five of our children, stayed in Kfar Chabad, the village established by the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneersohn in 1948 as a haven for Holocaust survivors and Chasidim from Russia.

This beautiful hamlet, established by the hard work and idealism of its first settlers who physically constructed their own homes in an empty field, is now home to 3,000 families. Surrounded by hostile Arab villages, their sacrifice and commitment spanned generations: Today, children run freely in Kfar Chabad's peaceful streets. Today, young families have an oasis amidst the hubbub of modern Israeli life in which to live, study and pray in tranquility.

Naturally, we visited the Kotel, Jerusalem's legendary Western Wall - the last standing remnant of the second Holy Temple. The emotional impact of this seeming relic cannot be understated. For 2,000 years Jews have been praying for an end to exile at the foot of the Wall. For the Wall to be under Jewish control, under a Jewish government, with Jews safe in their land, is a profoundly powerful thing.

Despite the fact that it was the middle of the week, the Kotel plaza was jam-packed

with Israelis, visitors from foreign countries like Russia, Brazil and Argentina, and, of course, plenty of tourists, including those from good ol' Texas, U.S.

Understandably, one feels a multitude of emotions upon any visit to the Kotel, but this time, the feeling was that we are not a newborn nation - we have been tied to this place for the past 3,000 years. From the day King David bought this Jerusalem mountaintop from Aravna the Jebusite to build a house for G-d - the Holy Temple that was later built by his son Solomon - the Temple Mount has belonged to us and only us. Touching the stones, writing a petition to insert into the cracks, requesting a blessing for the family and the entire Jewish community in El Paso, Texas, makes you feel good. It gives you the sense that Someone is listening, that Someone cares. It is a place to pray, to ask and to complain, because our Father in Heaven is listening - and when you come to His home, He's there. Just knock on the door.

Touring around Jerusalem, our family learned more about the Old City. We saw the mountains surrounding the ancient city, and the encroaching villages of neighboring Arabs that want to swallow it up. And the thought pops into your mind: Such a small city and everyone wants a piece of it!

A highlight of our trip was visiting the Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yonah Metzger. As the Jewish State, Israel respects historical Judaism by including two Chief Rabbis in every government - one for Jews of Ashkenazic, or European heritage and the other for Jews of Sephardic, or Middle Eastern tradition. Together with a few of my brothers, I was privileged to visit Rabbi Metzger, who welcomed us very warmly. The Chief Rabbi was delighted to learn that 13 brothers and sisters from the same family are emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe around the world in places he had visited. The Chief Rabbi showed much interest in the small Jewish communities in the United States, and, while he expressed concern about continuity, also expressed amazement at the Rebbe's vision of securing the Jewish future.

While in Israel, we visited Jerusalem, Haifa, Meron, Bnei Brak, Lod, Beitar Elit and Safed. Wherever we went, we felt one thing: Belonging. We felt at home. The people are our brothers and sisters. There was a great sense of unity.

The highways and streets in the cities are like those in the U.S. The small towns are very crowded but people don't complain. People are happy to be together. We ate in glatt kosher restaurants. You would think that only the religious people would come there, but there are secular people who specifically opt for kosher food. Everyone at the restaurant feels like family and joins in the conversation.

When it comes time to leave Israel, you don't want to leave home. But you have to, and you hope you are going to be back soon.

For our children, it was their first trip to Israel, but hopefully, only the first of many. Now back in El Paso, when we pray three times a day, "May our eyes see the return of G-d to Zion" our children now know where Zion is.

May we all merit seeing the return of the entire Jewish nation to the Land of Israel, together with Moshiach, Amen. ■

Rabbi and Mrs. Greenberg founded and direct Chabad of El Paso, Texas

Moshiach Matters

No part of the Sanctuary in the desert (mishkan) was thrown away. Five hundred years after the Sanctuary was built in the desert, King Solomon built the Holy Temple. Vessels and parts of the Sanctuary that could be used in the Holy Temple were used. The beams, poles, and silver sockets were set aside, to be used in the days of Moshiach, when G-d's presence will once again rest upon them. ■ (Kil Yakar)

What's In A Name?

FREIDA is Yiddish, meaning, "joy." Freida, daughter of Reb Shneur Zalman (founder of Chabad Chasidut), was known as a very scholarly woman. The pet form of Freida is Freidel or Freidy. There are various other spellings in English.


FISHEL is Yiddish, meaning, "fish." It is a derivative of the Hebrew Efraim, which means "fruitful" or "prolific," like a fish.

News

I Keep Kosher
What are the rules of keeping kosher? Starting in their toy kitchen at home, a sister is eager to show her little brother all he needs to know. This newest release from HaChai Publishers is written by Tami Raubvogel and Rebecca Schwartz and illustrated by Tova Katzmuth. With special laminated pages.

Along A Winding Path

With all of life's struggles weighing us down, we often veer off the path, if only slightly. Through introspection and teshuva (return) we can get back on track. Along a Winding Path is the newest title of the "Chabad Treasure Chest" series, a project of Sichos In English. Based on a Chasidic Discourse delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe in 1952, the book is incredibly applicable to modern-day struggles. Translated by Rabbis Eliyahu Touger and Sholom B. Weinberg. ■

Important Times		February 4 – 11	Brought to you by: Chabad-Lubavitch in Cyberspace www.chabad.org	Re-printed by: Chabad of Scottsdale (480) 998-1410 chabadofscottsdale.org
<i>Shacharis</i>	7:00am Sunday 8:00am Monday/Thursday 6:45am		Copyright © 2010 Lubavitch Youth Organization www.lchaimweekly.org	 The Jewish Learning Center of Scottsdale 480.443.5362
<i>Minchah/Maariv</i>	5:45pm Shabbos 5:25pm			
<i>Shabbat</i>	<u>Chassidus Club</u> 8:15am <u>Kabbalah of Cholent</u> 9:05am <u>Shacharis</u> 9:30am			
Light Candles 5:43pm		Shabbat Ends 6:41pm		

It Once Happened During the period of Roman hegemony in the land of Israel, the great sage Rabbi Abahu was the leader of his generation. He was greatly honored, not only by his fellow Jews, but by the Roman rulers, including the emperor himself.

Rabbi Abahu was a valued advisor and often the invited guest of the Roman emperor. Whenever he would enter the royal palace, singers would be stationed at the entrance to sing his praises. Rabbi Abahu was fluent in Latin, Greek and many other languages spoken in the huge Roman Empire.

Rabbi Abahu had every reason to hold himself in high regard, but, in fact, he is remembered for his extreme humility. A very handsome and wealthy man, he was so self-effacing that it is written that it was hard to find his like, even in that generation of tremendous Torah giants and righteous individuals. A number of instances are noted in the Talmud which illustrate his remarkable traits.

At that time, it was customary for the sages to address the masses with the aid of an interpreter. Rabbi Abahu would speak in a terse, abbreviated Hebrew, and his interpreter would expound on the ideas in great detail, simplifying them so that the thoughts were accessible to all.

One day Rabbi Abahu's wife and the wife of the interpreter had an argument. In the heat of the angry exchange the interpreter's wife blurted out, "What does my husband need your husband for?! He's just as great a scholar any day, and he is perfectly capable of teaching Torah without your husband's paltry contribution!"

Rabbi Abahu's wife was shocked and deeply insulted, for her husband was known as one of the outstanding sages of the age. Not wanting to argue further, she walked away without replying, but she was seething inside.

That night Abahu noticed that his wife was not her usual self.

"What is wrong?" he asked her. She told him the whole story of her encounter with the interpreter's wife, sure he would be upset at the woman's rude and coarse remarks. Perhaps he might even want to hire a different interpreter.

"Is that a reason to be so upset?" he asked her. "And even if she was speaking the truth, her husband and I both have the same goal. We are both teaching, not for our own honor, but for the honor of Heaven." Rabbi Abahu was so great that his own personal honor had no meaning to him.

Once, it was necessary to choose a new Rosh Yeshiva (spiritual leader and chief instructor of the Torah academy) for the great yeshiva in Caesarea. On account of his great scholarship and remarkable personal qualities, the Sages wanted to appoint Rabbi Abahu but he refused the honor, suggesting instead Rabbi Aba, a poverty-stricken sage who lived in the city of Acre.

Rabbi Abahu hoped that with the appointment to the honored position of Rosh Yeshiva, the poor rabbi's financial hardships would be lifted. In making his recommendation Rabbi Abahu said, "Rabbi Aba is the most humble man I know. Why, when I see how he conducts himself, I cannot even compare to such a man!"

It happened once that Rabbi Abahu and another great scholar, Rabbi Chiya bar Aba, were visiting the same town. Every evening they would meet to learn and discuss Torah thoughts, and afterward Rabbi Chiya would walk Rabbi Abahu home, as an indication of respect. That Shabbat they decided to deliver their discourses at different study halls.

Rabbi Abahu spoke about Aggada, the stories of the Torah, while his colleague spoke about Jewish law. Many people attended both lectures, but when they heard that Rabbi Abahu was speaking about Aggada, they left Rabbi Chiya and swarmed to hear Rabbi Abahu. When Rabbi Chiya realized what had happened, he was crestfallen.

Word of Rabbi Chiya's reaction reached Rabbi Abahu and he at once set out to the lodging of his colleague. "The people came to my lecture only for one reason, and I will illustrate it with a story," began Rabbi Abahu.

"Once, two peddlers came to the same town. One was selling precious stones, while the other was selling all sorts of household miscellany. The second man had so many customers he couldn't keep up with the demand, while the man selling the precious stones sold nothing. Was it because his wares were unworthy? No, the deficiency was entirely on the part of the customers. Not only did they lack the money to purchase jewels, they didn't even have an understanding of the value of gems. Common household items were all they knew about.

"You and I have come to a town where there are very few learned people. The majority find it easier to listen to the stories of the Aggada (without even realizing that they understand very little of them). So, you see, it isn't that they prefer my discourse to that of my learned colleague, they just find the topic more compatible with their unsophisticated level of understanding."

After Rabbi Abahu spoke to him in this consoling manner, Rabbi Chiya felt somewhat better, but Rabbi Abahu sensed that he remained unconvinced. As a further indication of his esteem, Rabbi Abahu changed the usual order and accompanied Rabbi Chiya to his residence, to show the great honor in which he held him. ■

And they shall take for Me an offering (Ex. 25:2) The word "offering" has two meanings: something set aside for a special purpose and that which is picked up and raised. An offering made to G-d achieves both of these objectives. Setting aside one's money to do a mitzva (commandment) elevates the actual physical object that is bought with that money, transforming the material into holiness, as it says in Tanya: "G-d gives man materiality in order to transform it into spirituality." **Thoughts that Count** (Likutei Sichot)

They shall make Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst (Ex. 25:8) According to Maimonides, this positive commandment refers not only to the erection of the Sanctuary, but the building of the First, Second and Third Holy Temples as well. When Moshiach comes and the Third Holy Temple is established, the original Sanctuary built by Moses will also be revealed, for a special connection exists between the two. Just as the Sanctuary was built in the desert, by an individual who himself never set foot in the Holy Land, so will the Third Holy Temple reflect the good deeds we have performed and our service of G-d throughout the present exile. (Peninei Hageula)

It is taught in the name of Rabbi Tarfon: How great is the significance of human labor [and practical action]! [From the above verse we see] G-d did not cause his Divine Presence to rest in the Sanctuary until Israel had performed the tasks connected to its erection. (Avot D'Rabbi Natan)