

L'Chaim

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November 19, 2010 – 12 Kislev, 5771

1146: VAYISHLACH

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Living with the **REBBE**



This week's Torah portion, Vayishlach, narrates Jacob's victorious struggle with the angel and the subsequent changing of his name to Israel. "Not Jacob shall your name any more be called, but Israel, for you have striven with G-d and with men, and prevailed."

The names "Jacob" and "Israel" are used to refer to the entire Jewish people; each of the two terms emphasizes a particular characteristic of the Jewish nation. According to Chasidic philosophy, "Jacob" and "Israel" symbolize two levels in the Jew's relationship with G-d.

Jews are referred to as both servants of G-d and as G-d's sons. As "servants," they are called "Jacob" - "Hearken unto Me, Jacob my servant." As "sons," they are called "Israel" - "My son, My firstborn, Israel."

The difference between a servant and a son is obvious. When a son fulfills his father's wishes, he does so happily and out of love. A servant, however, is not necessarily overjoyed at the opportunity to carry out his master's command, quite frequently doing so only because he has no choice in the matter.

Both situations apply to our own lives, in our own personal service of G-d. A Jew can pray, learn Torah, observe the mitzvot and serve his Father like a son, or he can perform the very same actions without joy, like a servant serves his Master. When a Jew stands on the level of "Israel," he willingly fulfills his Father's commands, experiencing no inner conflict with the Evil Inclination. When, however, a Jew is on the level of "Jacob," it means he is forced to grapple with the Evil Inclination in order to properly fulfill his Master's command, quite frequently doing so only out of a sense of obligation and submission.

Obviously, the level of "Israel" is the one toward which we all strive, yet one cannot reach this level without first passing through the level of "Jacob." If a Jew is not always enthusiastic in his service, sometimes finding it difficult to serve G-d properly, he should know that this is only natural when one embarks upon a new course. The Evil Inclination is not vanquished all at once, and it takes time to transform the will of G-d into one's own personal will. At first (and this stage may last for years!), the Evil Inclination howls in protest, attempting to divert the Jew. But when a Jew consistently stands up for what is right and refuses to despair, the Evil Inclination is eventually conquered.

This is also one reason why, even after Jacob received the name Israel, he is sometimes referred to in the Torah by his old name. For although the level of "Israel" is superior, the level of "Jacob" is nonetheless a necessary component in the spiritual life of the Jew. ■

Adapted from from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Breaking the Barriers

Chasidim are known for their joyful approach to life, whether the mundane and material or the spiritual and inspirational. The Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chasidism, established joy as one of the two "platforms" of Chasidic teachings: 1. Love your fellow as yourself; 2. Serve G-d with joy.

At first this almost obsessive insistence on joy aroused the criticism of the opponents. Life is serious. Prayer is serious. Torah study requires gravity of mind. Etc.

There were other charges: By being so joyful, it was claimed, Chasidim minimized the sinfulness of mankind and trivialized tragedy.

Of course, the charges were false. A cursory glance through the writings of the Chasidic masters reveals they were fully aware of the trials and tribulations of life. Dealing with transgression and repentance also has a place in their teachings.

While Chasidic prayer remains joyous, its importance and intensity cannot be doubted. Even as Chasidim reintroduced singing and vitality, they also emphasized why and to Whom we pray.

Still, the emphasis on joy can sometimes seem to be an over-emphasis, if not just wishful thinking. Arguing that the sadness, or depression, that follows a sin is in many ways worse than the sin itself, seems exaggerated. And claiming that "joy breaks through all barriers" sounds like a pep talk.

Except modern science confirms what Chasidism has been saying for over two centuries. It seems that physical pain and depression aren't just connected, they actually travel together. And apparently,

depression leads the way.

Scientists studying depression and pain discovered that it can cause "floating" pain - random and otherwise unexplainable pains in various parts of the body. Someone who's depressed can experience back pain, headaches, or just heightened sensitivity to pain - all of which may seem to come out of nowhere.

The reason is "that pain and emotion travel down some of the same neural pathways in your brain." So sometimes the neurotransmitters "carrying news of gloom and doom ... jump the tracks" resulting in very real physical pain. As the depression fades, so does the pain.

Of course, sometimes the depression is so serious and deep that the individual must take antidepressants or go into therapy - and for many, many people, such treatment is a life-saving necessity.

But for many of us, and most of the time, a little extra joy can go a long way. We really can "smile away" those aches and pains.

Joy does more than negate the negative, though. It also increases the positive. Joy energizes us. When the Baal Shem Tov said, "serve G-d with joy," he was telling us, among other things, that joy intensifies and gives significance to our actions. It's not just the difference between doing what we have to and what we want to. Without joy not only can we not truly appreciate the experience, we can't internalize it.

Joy breaks barriers: in a sense it travels the neural pathways opposed to depression, with the opposite result. If depression "jumps the track" into pain, joy helps us "jump the track" to pleasure - not just physical pleasure, but to material and intellectual achievement, as well. ■

MEZUZAH**DID YOU****KNOW???**

Q: I'm moving to a new home. Can I remove the mezuzahs from the doorposts when I leave?

A: As a rule, a mezuzah should not be removed from a doorpost, leaving the room or house without a mezuzah, unless it will be put back or replaced with another mezuzah.

Thus, when moving to another house or apartment and the next tenant is Jewish, the mezuzahs should not be removed, unless there is concern that if the mezuzahs are left behind they would be discarded or defaced.

If the new occupant has his own mezuzahs and wishes to use them rather than the ones you leave on the doorpost, it is preferred that the new occupant should himself remove your mezuzahs when installing his own, or that, at least, it should be he who instructs you to remove the mezuzahs. This law is a very serious matter and should not be treated lightly. A competent rabbi should be consulted if in doubt as to how to proceed. ■

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman

This coming Sunday, November 21, is the wedding anniversary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka.

The Rebbe spoke many times about the sanctity of a Jewish marriage and the importance of shalom bayit, which refers to a harmonious relationship between husband and wife. There are hundreds of letters from the Rebbe in response to questions about general or very particular problems in the area of shalom bayit.

(The Rebbe's advice is beneficial not only in marriage but in other interpersonal relationships as well.)

(An excerpt from one such letter (freely translated) reads:

"It is certain that every person can approach and influence another person in this matter, when proper thought is put into it and when one searches for the appropriate method that suits this particular person... If the occupation of the above-mentioned couple permits, it is sensible to say that a trip for several weeks of vacation, spent together in a manner of a second 'honeymoon' would rectify the entire situation."

In another response, the Rebbe advises:

"It is understood according to the ruling of our Rabbis of blessed memory, how great is peace between a man and his wife; you must put as much effort into this as possible... it is emphasized in the teachings of Chasidut and specifically in the well-known talk of my father-in-law, that a person is created with a right eye and a left eye. The right eye teaches that one must always look at another Jew with a good eye, to see what is best and most pleasant in him, etc. Being that we have been so commanded in our Torah, a Torah of life, certainly we have been given the capacity and the possibility to fulfill the command, and there is nothing that stands in the way of the will."

May we imminently begin that era when there will only be peace, peace in the world at large, peace in our communities, peace within our families, with the revelation of Moshiach, NOW! ■

The Rebbe Writes

16th of Tammuz, 5720 [1960]

After the very long interval, I was pleased to receive your letter of June 17th, in which you write about your wedding in a happy and auspicious hour. I was also especially interested to read about your having settled down to a family life based on the foundations of our Torah, which is called the Law of Life. Judging from the description of your experiences with a sense of humor, I trust that both you and your wife are sincerely determined to live up to the Jewish way of life, which will ensure a happy and harmonious life, both materially and spiritually. The important thing is to start with a firm determination, and then, as our Sages said, "One mitzvah [commandment] brings another in its train," and these are the channels and vessels to receive and enjoy G-d's blessings.

You write about meeting a Jew in the course of your travels who comes to the synagogue to help make up a minyan [prayer quorum], yet at the same time reads the newspaper. Everyone, of course, reacts to an experience in a way that is closest to him.

Thus, for my part, I make the following two extreme observations: First, I see in it the extreme Jewish attachment which one finds in every Jew. For here is a person who has wandered off to a remote part of the world, and has become so far removed, not only geographically, but also mentally and intellectually, as to have no concept of what prayer is or what a house of G-d is, etc; yet one finds in him that Jewish spark, or as the Alter Rebbe [Rabbi Shneur Zalman], the founder of Chabad, expressed it in his Tanya - "The Divine soul which is truly a part of G-d." This divine soul, which is the inheritance of every Jew, seeks expression as best it can, and in the case of this particular Jew, it seeks expression in at least enabling other Jews to pray congregationally, and he therefore goes out of his way to help them and at the same time to be counted with them.

My other observation, following from the above, is as follows: If, where the odds are so great against Jewish observance, yet a Jew can remain active and conscious of his Jewishness, it can easily be seen what great things could have been accomplished with this particular Jew if, at the proper time he should have received the right education in his early life, or at least the proper spiritual guidance in his adult life. This consideration surely emphasizes the mutual responsibility which rests upon all Jews, and particularly on those who can help others.

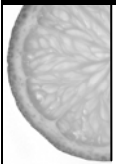
I will not deny that the above is said not in a spirit of philosophizing, but with a view to stimulate your thinking as to your own possibilities in your particular environment, and what the proper attitude should be.

We must never despair of any Jew, and at the same time we must do all we can to take the fullest advantage of our capacities and abilities to strengthen the Jewish consciousness among all Jews with whom we come in contact. For one can never tell how far-reaching such influence can be.

To conclude this letter on the happy note of the beginning of your letter relating to your marriage, may I again reiterate my prayerful wishes that you establish and conduct your home on everlasting foundations of the Torah and mitzvos, and thus enjoy a truly happy and productive life, both materially and spiritually which go hand in hand together.

I trust both you and your wife will find the enclosed copies of my recent message interesting and useful.

Hoping to hear good news from you always, ■



SLICE OF LIFE

The Boy I Met on the B Train

by CK

I got on the B train like I do every morning. Some mornings I get a seat, other times I don't. Today was one of those days (that I didn't.)

I found an empty spot, took hold of the pole and waited for the train to start moving. With a little jolt it took off, ricketing and racketing its way down the tracks. My head hurt, my knee hurt, I could barely keep my eyes open. There were funky smells drifting my way. I was nauseated and hungry all at the same time.

I stood there, for the first four minutes of my train ride doing nothing but complaining in my head. Next stop came and I got a seat, I sat down and began to do my usual people watching. There was Ms. punk rock gothic "I feel so cool cuz my tights have got more holes than a chunk of swiss cheese." Next came Mr. I love donuts, pizza, Kentucky fried chicken, and anything else with a minimum of 4,000 calories per serving.

I made my way around my area of the train when I met someone's eyes. He must've been 7 or 8 years old. He had big brown curious eyes and the most genuine, contagious smile. Most of his hair was missing but there were some random spots of matted hair that had begun to grow back. Next to him was who I assumed was his mother. He gleefully waved his raggedy excuse of a doll in her face letting out a burst of giggles. She smiled back at him, the creases by her mouth barely meeting her eyes. So much pain was behind that smile.

Of all the concepts of life I don't understand, I think motherhood definitely takes the cake. I love many people. I love my family. There are friends I love deeply, but nothing even close to what I imagine loving a child must feel like. Imagine creating something. Then imagine carrying this creation around for nine months; feeding it and keeping it warm. When this

creation is born – how can you not be unconditionally, madly in love with it? YOU made it! I get chills when I think about the concept of having a baby. It is the most incredible miracle of life. The love, the pride, and satisfaction your child brings you when he or she does something good are colossal. Unfortunately though the same goes for when bad things happen.

What can possibly be more painful than watching your angel suffer?

I remember clearly this incident after one of my surgeries. I was in a lot of pain and just didn't seem to be making any progress. Day and night my mother sat there by my side holding my hand and praying for the pain to stop. The moment that sticks out was when the doctors came in after me being there for almost two weeks and looked at me and my mother and said, "We're really sorry, we're trying our best but we just can't seem to figure out what is wrong."

I could barely move, barely even open my eyes from the blinding headaches I was suffering from. But my mother... my mother on the other hand got up, burst into tears, and walked out of the room. It was one of the few times I ever saw my mother cry. Only later on did she explain to me those tears. She said, "There is nothing in the world that is more painful than watching your child suffer and being unable to do anything about it."

When a mother watches her child suffer it isn't just watching another person in pain. You're watching and feeling a little piece of you in pain.

Looking at this mom next to her sick son you could see the love and pain all twisted in one. I looked back at the giggling boy. I was so enamored by the positive aura surrounding and enveloping him. Suddenly I realized I was one stop away from work. I needed more time. I needed to try and find out this boy's secret. How? How on earth could he be so happy? I wanted to shake him and say "Are you crazy?? Do you think it's normal that you look the way you do? That your face is all funny looking, that you have no hair? Because it's not ok! No one should have to go through what you go through!"

Maybe it was my imagination, maybe it was coincidence, or maybe he was the messenger through whom G-d was sending me a message. As I stepped off the train and took one look back, I could've sworn he winked at me. With that wink came a whole message. A message of hope, and a message of faith.

Yes, I'm suffering; we all suffer in some form or another. Physical pain, emotional pain, no one goes through life without experiencing pain. But why focus on the pain? Why focus on being angry at the pain you're being caused? Guess what?! Not only does being angry and frustrated not help your situation but it has in fact made it ten times worse! Be happy. Embrace the pain for you know it's all part of a bigger picture, one that with our limited understanding we unfortunately cannot grasp. Embrace the challenges for you know it's making you into the strong beautiful person you are.

I walked to work, my heart all warm and fuzzy. I can't believe how much precious time of my precious life I waste complaining; time wasted being upset with G-d, being frustrated with life.

Who knew that taking one simple train ride, the same train I take every single morning, would hold the person that touched my life.

I don't know who you are, little boy with cancer. Chances are I'll never see you again. But I want to thank you from the depth of my heart for reminding me what an amazing gift of life I've been given and how it's about time to start making the best of it. I pray that G-d be with you and make you feel pain no more. ■

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What's In A Name?

Asnat is from the Aramaic meaning "thornbush." She was the wife of Joseph (Gen. 41:45) and mother of Menashe and Efrayim. According to the Midrash, she was the daughter of Joseph's sister Dina.

Ariel means "lion of G-d." Ariel was a leader who served under Ezra the Scribe. The feminine form is Ariela.

Moshiach Matters


There are three reasons why we can be assured that Moshiach is coming: G-d acts with kindness toward the Jewish people; If He would not (G-d forbid) send Moshiach, it would create a Chilul Hashem (desecration of G-d's name) for the nations of the world would say that G-d has forsaken us or that He cannot help. Out of Kavod Hashem (honor to His Great Name) He will surely send Moshiach; Lastly, G-d has promised that He will send Moshiach. A promise from G-d is 100% guaranteed. ■

(Sefer Halkarim by Rabbi Yosef Albo from revach.net)

News

New Emissaries

Rabbi Yossi and Chaya Mushka Freedman have moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where they will expand Chabad of Cleveland into downtown. Rabbi Zalman and Mushky Loewenthal have moved to Manchester, England, to start Chabad on Campus at the University of Manchester. Rabbi Yosef Chaim and Chaya Sufrin are moving to Clarksville, Maryland, to open a new Chabad House. Rabbi Shmuly and Shaina Feldman are moving to Clay County, Florida, to open a new Chabad House. Rabbi Mendel and Chaya Goldberg have arrived in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, to open a new Chabad House. Rabbi Akiva and Taiby Camissar are moving to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, to start a Chabad House for the 9,000 Israelis there. ■

Important Times <i>Shacharis</i> 7:00am Sunday/Thursday 8:00am Monday 6:45am <i>Minchab/Maariv</i> 5:15pm Shabbos 4:55pm <i>Shabbat</i> <u>Chassidus Club</u> 8:15am <u>Kabbalah of Cholent</u> 9:05am Shacharis 9:30am Light Candles 5:05pm Shabbat Ends 6:02pm	November 19 – November 26 Brought to you by: Chabad-Lubavitch in Cyberspace www.chabad.org Copyright © 2010 Lubavitch Youth Organization www.lchaimweekly.org	Re-printed by: Chabad of Scottsdale (480) 998-1410 chabadofscottsdale.org  The Jewish Learning Center of Scottsdale 480.443.5362
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If Once Happened

In a village, not far from the town of Kovna, there lived a Jewish innkeeper, a humble, G-d-fearing man. His daughter Sara had reached marriageable age but the chances for finding her a worthy husband in this distant village were scarce. However, the innkeeper trusted in G-d and knew that she would find her destined mate.

Sara helped her parents at the inn. One day, the young son of the country squire stopped at the inn. The moment he saw Sara, he wanted her. He called on her to serve him one drink after another, and the more he drank, the more he liked her. When he was well drunk, he said to her, "Will you marry me?"

Sara ignored his marriage proposal. But when he kept on telling her that he was serious, she told him, politely but firmly, that she was Jewish and would never marry out of her faith. For his part, the young squire said that he would return and insisted that he would definitely marry her.

When the young squire told his father that he intended to marry the innkeeper's daughter, the old nobleman tried to dissuade his son but the young man remained adamant. The squire, who had spoiled his son all his life, catering to all his whims, gave in on condition the girl convert.

The young squire raced back to the inn and told Sara that his father had consented to the marriage. Of course, there was the small matter of conversion, but once that was over, she would live a life of luxury and excitement.

Sara was horrified. She told him she would never marry him and ran from the room. She decided not to say anything to her father in the hope that this was a passing whim. But she was wrong. The young squire was not used to being refused. As to the old squire, his pride was hurt to think that a poor Jewish girl was turning down his marriage proposal! The squire sat down to write a letter to the innkeeper. In the letter, the squire stated that his son had graciously consented to marry the innkeeper's daughter. The innkeeper should set a date for the wedding. If he refused, the lease on his inn would be revoked and his family would be driven off the nobleman's estates.

The young squire went to deliver the letter, taking a few of his friends along. En-route, a storm broke out and they were soaked to the bone. The group stopped along the way at the closest inn until the storm subsided. The boisterous company began drinking until they became quite rowdy.

A round of toasts to the young squire were offered. "Drink," his friends said, "once you marry the pretty Jewish girl, the innkeeper's daughter Sara, you will have to behave yourself!" Toasts and laughter followed. All this time, an older Jewish man was sitting in the corner. He was Rabbi Yosef, the teacher of the two sons of the innkeeper from this village. He listened as the young squire read the letter from his father to Sara's father. When the young squires fell into a drunken sleep, Rabbi Yosef closed his book and traveled quickly to the next village where he immediately alerted Sara's father as to the situation at hand.

"Rabbi Yosef," Sara's father cried, "You are wise. What is your advice?"

"Sara must get married immediately. There is no time to wait."

"But to whom? There are no Jewish man of marriageable age in this village," the innkeeper lamented.

"Please understand, I would never have thought to make such a proposal. I am not a young man; I am a widower, and Sara deserves someone worthier. But I am prepared to be the groom in a temporary capacity. When the danger is over, we will arrange for a divorce," said Rabbi Yosef.

The innkeeper was awed by Rabbi Yosef, who surely knew how dangerous this could be. He asked Sara what she thought. "What can I say, father? Rabbi Yosef is ready to risk his life for us. I do not know if I have a right to accept such a sacrifice," she replied.

"Then, all is settled," said Rabbi Yosef. "We have no time to lose."

All of the Jews in the village were awakened and asked to prepare something for the wedding feast. The following morning when the young squire and his companions arrived at the inn, they were amazed to find that they came right in the middle of the wedding feast.

"What welcome guests!" the innkeeper called to the new arrivals. The young squire was flabbergasted. He had come too late; Sara was already married. He and his friends quickly made their exit.

Rabbi Yosef stood up. "We must be truly grateful to the One Above for this wonderful salvation. We celebrated this wedding in order to save the good Sara from a calamity. Now that the danger has passed, I am ready to arrange a divorce so she is free to marry the man of her choice."

The innkeeper once again thanked Rabbi Yosef for his selflessness and thanked the guests for their wonderful cooperation. "Well my daughter, remove your bridal veil, for we are going to the rabbi," he said.

"G-d has brought us together, I am sure this marriage was made in Heaven. I am quite sure that I could not have chosen a more devoted and loyal partner, who risked his life for me!" Sara told her father. Shouts of "Mazal Tov!" rang out in the room.

The following year, Rabbi Yosef and Sara were blessed with a son who grew up to be a great tzadik. He was known as the famous Rabbi Leib Sara's, so called in honor of his pious mother Sara. ■

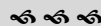
Then Jacob was greatly afraid, and distressed (Gen. 32:8)

According to Rashi, Jacob was worried over the possibility that he would be forced to kill "acheirim," literally "others." Our Sages, however, relate that "Acheirim" was also the name of the famous Rabbi Meir, who was descended from the Roman Emperor Nero, who converted to Judaism. Jacob was thus afraid that if he killed Esau, he would thereby be preventing the great sage from being born. (Peninim Yekarim)



Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau (Gen. 32:12)

The repetition of the word "hand" indicates that Jacob was afraid of two separate dangers: the "hand of Esau," Esau's brute physical power, and "the hand of my brother," Esau's brotherly love. Esau's sword posed a threat to Jacob's physical well-being, but socializing with him would be an even greater threat to his soul. (Rabbi Yosef Ber Soloveitchik)



And he commanded also (gam) the second, also (gam) the third, also (gam) all that followed the droves (Gen. 32:20)

The Hebrew word "gam" (spelled gimmel-mem) is used three times to allude to the three historical redemptions of the Jewish people through the three tzadikim [righteous]: The first was "geulat Moshe," the redemption from Egypt led by Moses. The second was "geulat Mordechai," the redemption in the times of Mordechai which culminated in the holiday of Purim. And the third will be "geulat Moshiach," who will usher in the Final Redemption. (Yosher Adam)

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