



As Yom Kippur approached, Reb David of Michaelov, one of the Baal Shem Tov's most illustrious Chasidim, would begin his annual journey to the Baal Shem Tov in Medzhibozh. His sojourn with the Baal Shem Tov, which would last from Yom Kippur until the end of Sukot, gave Reb David the spiritual sustenance he needed for the entire year.

One year, Reb David traveled through a small village which had a tiny Jewish community. They begged Reb David to spend Yom Kippur with them so they could have a minyan for the holy day. Reb David was torn. He would have liked to agree to their request, but how could he forgo the exalted experience of Yom Tov with the Baal Shem Tov? No, he simply couldn't remain.

When Reb David finally arrived in Medzhibozh and entered the Baal Shem Tov's shul he immediately felt a distinct lack of warmth from the Baal Shem Tov. Try as he may, Reb David couldn't figure out the reason he was being ignored.

When Sukot drew to a close, the Baal Shem Tov finally explained himself. "Reb David," he began, "by not remaining in the village over Yom Kippur you have caused great damage. In that village there was a soul which had been waiting seventy years for your arrival in order to be redeemed. And not only did that soul suffer, but your own soul suffered as well, for your two souls come from the same root source." The Baal Shem Tov explained that the only way for him to repair the damage would be to go undergo an indefinite period of wandering.

Reb David asked, "How will I know when the period of exile has ended?" "You will receive a sign, and it will be clear to you," the Baal Shem Tov replied.

Reb David was soon on the road. Although he was a well-known figure, he passed unrecognized through towns and villages. Posing as a "maggid," a simple preacher, he spent a few days in a location, delivered an inspiring sermon and then moved on. After two years, Reb David arrived in the town of Slonim, where he was to deliver his sermon on Shabbat. However, a renowned preacher arrived that same week, and Reb David's sermon was postponed.

Both preachers were lodging in the home of the town elder. When the famous preacher met Reb David, he asked, "And who are you?" to which Reb David replied, "I am a simple traveling preacher. I was to deliver my speech this Shabbat, but in deference to you, I will wait until next week."

"Is that so! Let's hear what you can say right now!" the preacher said condescendingly. The town elder pressured Reb David as well and he had no way out. After Reb David made a few short remarks on the weekly portion, the famous preacher bellowed, "This fellow's an ignoramus!" An embarrassed silence ensued after which everyone retired to their rooms for the evening.

The following day, the host was horrified when he realized that all of the family's valuables had been stolen. Suspicion fell on Reb David as he was a total stranger, although in truth, the thief was none other than the "famous" preacher!

That Shabbat, the preacher addressed the crowd with words of rebuke and chastisement which could shrivel the heart of the most hardened criminal. When Shabbat ended, Reb David was brought into the shul and openly accused of the theft. Reb David said nothing to defend himself. Suddenly a voice was heard coming from outside the shul, saying, "Is Reb David Michaelov among you?" People ran outside to see who was speaking, but no one was there. Once more, it was demanded of Reb David that he admit his guilt. Again, a voice asked, "Is Reb David Michaelov there?" Still, there was no one outside. Finally the voice shouted: "Reb David, why don't you answer your accusers?"

At that, Reb David remembered the words of the Baal Shem Tov, and he knew that his penance had been accepted. Now Reb David movingly explained to the spellbound

assemblage the events of the past few years. He began with the story of how he had made the mistake of spending Yom Kippur with his Rebbe rather than with the small Jewish community. He continued with an inspiring appeal to seize every opportunity to do a *mitzva* (commandment). He described how the past two years had served as a spiritual cleansing and repaired the damage to his soul and that of the villager.

Soon, the "preacher" confessed. The entire community begged forgiveness of Reb David for wrongly accusing him and he gladly forgave them.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

And G-d spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aharon when they had come close to G-d and died. (Lev. 16:1)

Thus begins the Torah portion read on Yom Kippur. Several commentaries explain that the two sons, Nadav and Avihu, experienced such an intense and lofty state of spirituality that there was no way that they could return to the material world. On Yom Kippur we experience a heightened sense of spirituality, and on that day we all "come close to G-d." But we have to carry that spirituality with us after Yom Kippur and into our everyday material lives. (*Likutei Sichot*)

You shall afflict your souls [i.e., fast] on the ninth day of the month at evening

A question is asked in the Talmud (Yoma 81b): "Why does the Torah state 'on the ninth day,' when we actually fast on the tenth of the month, on Yom Kippur? To teach that a person who eats and drinks on the ninth [in preparation for the fast] is considered to have fasted on both the ninth and the tenth." And why is eating on the day before Yom Kippur deemed so important? For, eating for the sake of heaven is far more difficult than fasting for the sake of heaven. (*Malbim*)

G-d's infinite capacity for forgiveness
The dynamics of forgiveness between human beings are different from the dynamics of forgiveness between man and G-d. When a human being wrongs another person and apologizes, the wronged party will find it difficult to forgive him if he goes and does the exact same thing again; a third or fourth time. But this is not the case with G-d. Because His forgiveness is derived from the Divine attribute of mercy, which is endless and infinite, there is no difference between a first and thousandth offense, provided our repentance is sincere. (*Tanya*)



6:55 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
4 Tishrei/Sept 10
Torah Portion Vayeilech
Shabbat Shuva
Shabbat ends 7:52 PM

L'Chaim

בס"ד

1689

4 Tishrei, 5782

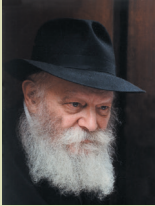
Sept 10, 2021

The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"...I have called out to the L-rd and He answered me" (Psalm 120:1)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In the Torah portion of *Vayeilech*, Moses says, "Take this book of the Torah and place it beside the Ark of the covenant of G-d your G-d."

The Talmud cites two opinions as to where the Torah was actually placed. One says that it was inside the Ark together with the tablets of the Ten Commandments. And the other says that it was on the side of the Ark. But according to both opinions, both the Torah and the Ten Commandments were in the Holy of Holies, the chamber that housed the Ark.

The Holy of Holies was above nature, the place where the Ark stood was miraculous, though the Ark was there, it didn't take up space. The natural dimensions of time and space were suspended in the Holy of Holies. On one hand it was there and it could be measured, and at the same time, it didn't take up space.

The Ten Commandments were engraved in the tablets. When you engrave letters into stone, nothing is added to the stone, as many words as you engrave into the stone, it remains the same size and the same dimensions. Similar to the Holy of Holies and the Ark which were there, they weren't taking up space.

The Ten Commandments were also miraculous, the engraving went all the way through and through the stone, yet the letters *final mem* and *samech*, one being a square and the other a circle, in other words, the engraving completely encircled the center of the letter, nevertheless the center of the letter remained in place.

So it seems that the objects in the Holy of Holies had a common theme. They were miraculous and above space and time.

The question is, what was the Torah doing there? With letters written with ink on parchment, the letters took up extra space and there was nothing miraculous about it. What purpose did the Torah fulfill?

The purpose of the Holy of Holies, the Ark and the Ten Commandments, were not to remain hidden. Rather, that their G-dly light spread out to the Temple, to Jerusalem, throughout the land of Israel, affecting all the Jewish people, and ultimately to the whole world affecting the non Jewish people as well.

Being that the Holy of Holies, the Ark and the Ten Commandments were above nature, there had to be a go between, a conduit, to bring their light into the natural world. The Torah served as that conduit. It is the Torah that brings the supernatural G-dly light into our lives, and by us keeping the Torah, we spread that light throughout the world affecting all peoples.

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.

Help!

A princess, an only child, was very beloved by her father, the King. Designers created her exquisite clothing. The finest chefs prepared her meals. And her friends were only people of culture and class.

When she was of marriageable age, she could find no match. No prince suited her fancy, no noble was good enough for her.

The king became so annoyed that he decreed: "The very next bachelor to walk in will be your husband!"

Moments later, a young gardener who had lost his way appeared. The horrified princess looked at the gardener. But the king was a man of his word. The princess would wed this gardener!

When the princess got to know her husband, she found him to be kind and gentle, albeit simple. She began to enjoy her unrestricted lifestyle: she did what she wanted, wore what she chose, ate what she pleased. It was exhilarating to be "free."

Months passed thus, and then one day, the gardener returned home to find a forlorn wife.

He considered the situation and had an idea. "I have guessed the cause of your sadness. Tomato season is over and weeks have passed since we've had them! Though they are very expensive, I will buy them, for what importance is money except to make you happy?"

The gardener looked at his wife and to his surprise saw tears rolling down her cheeks.

The following evening, the gardener came home with a gift. "My dearest, yesterday I erred. I realize that in the palace, you did not work. The broom handle, which is rough, must hurt your tender hands. I have brought you a broom with a smooth handle!"

The princess burst into bitter tears. With a trembling voice she whispered,

"What a terrible mistake. I can never be a gardener's wife. I am a princess!"

Every Jew has a soul that resided at the foot of the Throne of Glory, delighting in G-d's presence and enjoying a close relationship. This is because the soul is truly the King's daughter. Eventually the soul must come into this world to accomplish a mission. The soul is wed to the "gardener" – the body. She becomes enamored with her apparent freedom and by the novelties that did not exist in the King's palace.

But one day, the soul feels a strange sensation. She can do what she pleases and the gardener is indeed pleasant. But, she misses the King's palace. "I did not appreciate what I had and even felt restricted. But now I understand that those were special."

The gardener - the body - sensing that his wife is unhappy, tries to find a solution. But his simple peasant intellect can conceive of nothing more than tomatoes and broomsticks. He offers his wife these in the hope that they will satisfy her. "We'll move to a new house in a nicer neighborhood, with radiant heating, all wooden furniture from an environmentally sound source and live-in help!"

But the soul can no longer restrain herself. "I yearn for the life of royalty and how can you, a simple and coarse body, comprehend me?"

"You understand furniture and food, but do you know what closeness to G-d is? About Torah and mitzvot? You cannot understand why I am sad, and what I am really lacking!"

Especially on the High Holidays, our souls plead with us to be heard and understood. "Do not try to placate me with tomatoes and smooth broom handles. I am the King's daughter, help me renew and enhance my connection to my Father in Heaven."

SLICE OF LIFE

The High Holidays in Samarkand

by Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman



Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman addressing the U.S. Senate
Excerpted from *Samarkand*, Rabbi Zaltzman's memories of the Chasidic underground that operated in the Soviet Union, upholding Judaism during communism.

The High Holidays in Samarkand were an experience unto themselves. The two days of Rosh Hashana were solemn and awe-inspiring. Our *minyan* took place in a private home, and was made up of some 15 to 20 men, each person sitting in his place, totally immersed in prayer. We were very careful not to utter anything unrelated to the holiday, and even when we needed to communicate, we preferred to motion with our hands so as not to get caught up in idle talk. Every free moment was devoted to reciting *Psalms*.

At one point, we found out about the Lubavitch custom to arrange, by roster, for the *Psalms* to be recited continuously throughout all 48 hours of the holiday. Although there weren't enough people between us to arrange a full *minyan* for each shift, we divided up the hours and each of us took a shift. The shifts would begin ten minutes early and end ten minutes late, so as to ensure a seamless transfer, without any interruptions. In that manner the *Psalms* were recited constantly, with the exception of the times of the actual prayer services.

As I write this, the memories draw me back to those wonderful days. I find myself back in *shul* for the High Holidays, and it is hard for me to describe

the feelings that engulfed us in the small room our *minyan* was held in.

Reb Berke Chein stands in one corner, covered with his tallis and saying *Psalms* in a soft and tearful voice. Reb Moshe Nissilevitch stands in another corner, words gently drifting from his mouth. Dovid and Eliyahu Mishulovin sit with their prayer shawls over their heads, reciting *Psalms* with tremendous concentration, and so on.

As the *minyan* started, everyone began to daven with intense focus, each person as their ability and energy allowed them. Each person looked inside his prayerbook and uttered every word clearly, trying his best to think over the meaning of the Hebrew words.

When the leader reached the *Shemoneh Esrei*, the silent portion of the prayers normally recited together with the *minyan*, some congregants would still be making their way through the various earlier stages of the prayers. Although we always made sure we had enough people together before beginning *Shemoneh Esrei* and enough people ready to answer to the Leader's Repetition, we never tried to hurry anyone. We simply didn't dare interfere with someone else's prayer.

This silent prayer always had a unique aura; whispered voices rose and fell, with the sound of quiet sobbing in the background. One cried, another sighed, and yet a third shed tears silently onto the pages of his prayerbook.

After the Leader's Repetition on Rosh Hashana, we tried to wait for those who were still praying on their own so that they too could be together with the *minyan* when the time came for the blowing of the shofar; while waiting, the others recited *Psalms*. With Reb Berke leading the proceedings, the shofar-blowing ceremony, including its prefatory prayers, lasted an hour. His tears would intermingle with drops of sweat, soaking his prayerbook and the table he stood at.

After prayers of this intensity, even the way we walked down the street on the way back home was changed. We walked with a focused mindfulness, our heads bowed, looking only within our immediate vicinity. We hurriedly ate the festive meal so as to provide sufficient time for the afternoon prayer and the riverside *tashlich* ceremony.

I particularly remember Yom Kippur in Samarkand. Reb Moshe Nissilevitch would come to the house where the *minyan* was held, with his prayerbook and

Psalms, and remain there until after the fast. From the time he entered the house, he would stand opposite the wall, covered with his tallis, murmuring words of *Psalms* or praying quietly. Reb Moshe always made an effort to stand the entire day. He said it was his father's custom, and it was one that he kept his entire life. This was his Yom Kippur: completely engrossed in his prayers, oblivious of the goings-on around him; always praying at his own pace, even if the *minyan* was ahead of him. His quiet, hoarse voice could barely be heard, and every so often a tear would make its way down his cheek. His *Shemoneh Esrei* was quite lengthy, as he tried to enunciate each word properly. He would often repeat words of the prayers, apparently to ensure that he had pronounced each one just so. He would be extremely careful not to utter any unnecessary words outside of the prayers.

Another person who comes to mind is Reb Aharon Friedman, who arrived in Samarkand in the 1950s. Reb Aharon had come from prison, where he was thrown after attempting to cross the border in 1946. He was totally permeated with a spirit of defiant self-sacrifice. He didn't remove his beard, and would walk to the synagogue in open view, even though he was a young man—as a rule, only the elderly would dare be seen walking to shul. He was brave and fearless, and after his experience in jail nothing frightened him. We, being extremely wary of the secret police, were afraid to have him join our *minyan*.

He would recite *Kaddish* at every opportunity, and would proclaim the words "may He bring near the time of Moshiach," accompanied by dramatic hand movements, with his long blond beard swaying to and fro. On Yom Kippur he would come to shul wearing an old, bloodstained coat over the white *kittel* customarily worn on the holy day. He explained that during his interrogation, when the interrogator tried to remove his *tizis*, before thinking twice, he slapped the man. The interrogators, in turn, beat him viciously, and the blood from his many wounds stained his coat. "It is with this coat that I want to pray before G-d on Yom Kippur," he concluded.

After leaving Russia, it was difficult to become accustomed to the different type of conduct we observed elsewhere. During my first Rosh Hashanah in Israel, I still cried as I prayed; but to be honest, those tears were less from the atmosphere of Rosh Hashana itself than from my longing for the High Holidays in Samarkand.

Rabbi Zaltzman is the director of *Chamah*, an organization that shares the beauty of Judaism with immigrants from the former USSR.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

In the Ten Days of Teshuva, 5736 [1975]

...Inasmuch as we are now in the propitious days of Aseres Yemei Teshuva (Ten Days of Return), it is well to remember that this is the time of the year which our Sages identify with the verse, "Seek G-d when He is found, call on Him when He is near." This "nearness" is described as the "nearness of the Source of Light to its spark." May G-d grant that this be reflected in the daily life throughout the whole year, in all aspects, both spiritual as well as material.

Indeed, since all expressions used by our Sages, as all words of Torah, are exact, the said expression, "nearness of the Source of Light to its spark," is particularly meaningful. For, the proximity of the Source of Light increase the spark's flame and power, and so in the spiritual realm, where the nearness of G-d, the Source of Light and Source of Blessing, sets the Jew's heart and mind aglow with love of G-d and awe of G-d, stimulating him (and her) to observe and the channels and vessels to receive G-d's blessings in all needs, materially and spiritually.

With the blessing of *Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo* [be fully sealed for good] and good things in all above,

5th Tishrei, 5736 [1975]

I received, with considerable delay, your letter of Elul 6, in connection with the induction of your esteemed Rabbi Mordechai Gutnick.

However, a blessing is always timely, especially in the propitious days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, which our Sages identify with the verse, "Seek G-d when He

is found; call on Him when He is near." This special nearness to G-d, the Source of Blessings, surely brings Divine blessings, materially and spiritually.

I am therefore pleased to take this opportunity of extending to you and the entire Congregation prayerful wishes that your association with your esteemed Rabbi be blessed with much *Hatzlocho* [success].

...As is well known, a Jewish congregation is called *Kehilla Kadisha*, a Holy Congregation. To make this a reality, it is the function of the synagogue to inspire each and all of the members and worshippers to carry the holiness of the *Mishkan Me'at* ("Small Sanctuary") into their homes and homelife, in fulfillment of G-d's desire *v'shochanti b'sochom* – "I will dwell among them" – within each and all of them.

Rabbi Gutnick has the additional distinction of being a Kohen, of whom it is written, "A Kohen's lips preserve knowledge and Torah is sought from his mouth" (Malachi 2:7). In addition to being the traditional teachers of our people, kohanim have been also chosen by G-d "to bless His people Israel with love," and these blessings include, of course, well-being and prosperity in every respect, materially and spiritually. May G-d grant that this be so for your entire Congregation with your esteemed Rabbi, and in a growing measure.

With prayerful wishes for a *Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo* for a good and sweet year,

5th of Tishrei, 5721 [1960]

...I was very pleased to read in your letter about the improvement in the observance of the Mitzvos in the family, and may G-d grant that this continues in a growing measure. Needless to say, if you will show a living example, and act with affection and respect, it will have a considerable effect.

I trust that you are taking full advantage of the present days of Divine benevolence and forgiveness, the Ten Days of Repentance, and the month of Tishrei in general, since these days inaugurate the New Year and have a lasting effect and influence throughout the year...

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The celebration of Yom Kippur will continue even after the coming of Moshiach. We will also fast on this day just as was done prior to Moshiach's coming. The purpose of this fast will be to atone for sins performed when the evil inclination was still intact. Nevertheless,

the other prohibitions, such as no wearing leather shoes, no bathing, no anointing, and the prohibition against marital relations, will be rescinded. If the seven days of inauguration of the third Temple will fall during Yom Kippur, then on that Yom Kippur we will not fast, just as was done during the seven days of inauguration of the first Temple in the times of Solomon. This is due to the Simcha required to be shown during the inauguration. (*shulchanaruchharav.com*)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Yom Kippur is called the "one and only day in the year." The words "one and only" teaches us that Yom Kippur is the day that unites the Jewish people and makes them "one," as if they were one person with one heart.

Yom Kippur also unites the Jewish people with the One Hashem. We see this unity between Hashem and the Jewish people very clearly at the end of Yom Kippur, when everyone cries out in one voice, "Shema Yisrael - Hear, O Israel." In essence, we are saying, "We accept, all of us together, the rule of the One and Only G-d."

Immediately afterwards, we repeat three times, "Baruch Shem K'Vod - Blessed is the name of His Glorious Kingdom Forever and ever." Thus, we are declaring that G-d rules in all the worlds and we accept Him as our King."

Finally, in one united heart-rending voice, we cry out seven times, "Hashem Hu HaElokim - G-d, He is the L-rd." This is our unequivocal acceptance of the King of Kings.

Yom Kippur is the end of the Ten Days of Repentance. On Rosh Hashana, the first of the Ten Days of Repentance, we began the process of "coronating" G-d as our King. On the final day, the "one and only day," we complete His coronation - we stamp and seal it.

At the very end of Yom Kippur, a mighty shofar blast is sounded. We call out with hope, faith and belief, "L'Shana HaBah B'Yerushalayim - Next year in Jerusalem" These last moments remind us of the time when the sound of the shofar will announce the coming of Moshiach and the complete Redemption.

May it be G-d's will that the Holy Temple will be rebuilt and the words "Next year in Jerusalem" will be fulfilled, quickly in our days.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA
לזכרון חיה'ה 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.



Published by
Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St, Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000
Chairman Rabbi David Raskin
Director Rabbi Shmuel Butman
Program director Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Secretary Rabbi Moshe F. Goldman
Administrator Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
Editor Yehudis Cohen
Associate Editor David Y. B. Kaufmann
Chairman Editorial Comm. Rabbi Nissen Mangel
Rebbe photo S. Roumani

L'Chaim contains words from sacred literature. Please do not deface or discard.
All contents © 2021 by LY.O. ISSN 1050 0480

L'Chaim Subscriptions
For a one year subscription send \$47,
payable to LY.O (\$60 outside of USA) to:
L'Chaim, 1408 President St., Bklyn, NY, 11213
L'Chaim on the Internet
Current issues and archives: lchaimweekly.org
Learn about Moshiah
Visit www.moshiah.com or call (718) 953 6100

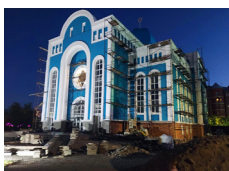
New Mikvas

McAllen, Texas, with a small Jewish presence for more than 100 years, now has its first-ever Mikva. The Mikva is dedicated to fallen IDF hero Sgt. Sean Nissim Carmeli, who gave his life during "Operation Protective Edge" in Gaza.

Seven Chabad Centers in small Jewish communities in North America have teamed up to raise money to build their own local Mikvas. **Regina, Saskatchewan; Kelowna, British Columbia; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Arcata, California; Fargo, North Dakota; Salem, Oregon; Mobile, Alabama.**

World Without Borders

The Grand Synagogue of **Nursultan, Kazakhstan**, is being renovated. Chabad of Nursultan, in the country's capital city, serves hundreds of locals, as well as thousands of Jewish visitors and foreign diplomats.



Today Is...

6 Tishrei

The word "*teshuva*" (return) is spelled in Hebrew with five letters, each one representing a different component of *teshuva*. The third letter, *Vav*, represents – *V'ahavta...*, "Love your fellow as yourself." Rabbi Shneur Zalman taught that this love is an instrument, a means to "Love the Eternal your G-d." This is explained in the statement, "Whoever is pleasing to man is pleasing to G-d." This service of *teshuva* stems from goodness of heart.