



It was the custom of the Baal Shem Tov to extend his third Shabbat meal until it was well into Saturday night, thus prolonging the holiness of the day. But one week he made an exception to his usual practice and concluded Shabbat immediately at nightfall. He said the *Havdala* prayer separating the Sabbath from the rest of the week and at once and made arrangements to set off on a journey. His coachman harnessed the horses, and as soon as the Baal Shem Tov mounted the carriage, the horses set off at great speed. Where was the Baal Shem Tov rushing, and why was it important enough to alter his normal Shabbat routine?

It was still night when the carriage bearing the Baal Shem Tov pulled up outside the study house “Chachmei Kloiz” in the city of Brody. Inside, a secret meeting had been convened with the object of placing a *cherem*, an order of excommunication, on the Baal Shem Tov and his followers. The selected invitees had been sworn to secrecy to assure that no news of the plan would reach the outside. The leader of the Brody group was the famous Reb Moshe Ostrer, a scholar of great renown.

By the time the Baal Shem Tov arrived, the doors of the study house were locked with a guard posted outside barring any uninvited from trying to enter. The Baal Shem Tov approached the doorman and entreated him to open the doors, but to no avail, since he had no invitation. Finally, the Baal Shem Tov said to the guard, “Please, go inside, and tell those gathered that someone wishes to enter, and if they refuse, they are putting their own lives in danger.”

The shaken doorman went inside and conveyed the message to the distinguished assembly. A murmur circulated through the crowd. Who, they asked, is this stranger who makes such a dire threat? The doorman relayed the response of the stranger: “Tell them I am Yisroel Baal Shem Tov, and that I have come just now from Medzibozh. I wish to be admitted before them so that they can judge me in person.”

The shocked participants allowed him to enter, and he began speaking: “There are 250 participants here tonight. Your plot to excommunicate me has caused the curse of Korach’s rebels to be brought against you, and you have been sentenced to perish as they did. Several of those present quickly stood and counted the men in the room; true to his word, there were two hundred and fifty people present. The hushed crowd sensed the power of the Baal Shem Tov and understood the profound error of their intentions; they begged for his forgiveness, which he readily gave.

Next, as a gesture of apology, their leader, Reb Moshe Ostrer, rose and presented the Baal Shem Tov with a copy of his new commentary, *Arugas Habosem*, which had not yet been released for general distribution. The Baal Shem Tov accepted the book, flipped through the pages, kissed it, and announced: “I see that your work contains pure truth from the beginning to the end; it is because your soul was empowered by the spirit of King Solomon that your writing is so close to its source.”

Reb Moshe was astounded; how could anyone absorb an entire volume just from quickly ruffling through its pages? The Baal Shem continued, saying, “The entire Song of Songs is explained in your volume, except for the words ‘arugas habosem.’ Those words are not commented upon.”

The author objected, “That is absolutely not so. I most certainly did include an explanation of those words!”

“Show it to me, then,” challenged the Baal Shem Tov.

Reb Moshe took the book and looked where he knew it to be, but to his surprise, the

explanation was missing, apparently lost in a printing error.

The assembled group no longer harbored any doubt that the Baal Shem Tov was a tzadik. They rose to accompany him to his carriage, grateful to have been saved from a grievous mistake.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

### And Korach took [a bold step] and they rose up before Moses (Num. 16:1-2)

The Mishna states in Tractate Avot (5:17): “Which is a controversy that is not for the sake of Heaven? The controversy of Korach and all his faction.” The Mishna specifically avoids calling it a controversy between Korach and Moses, because even within Korach’s group of 250 followers there was dissention, each one vying with the others for honor and glory. Indeed, this was a sure sign that their argument was not for the sake of Heaven. (Ye’arot Devash)

A person who is broadminded will not respond to taunts, as he is mature enough to disregard them. By contrast, a person who is narrow-minded is unable to tolerate anything that goes against his will, and becomes immediately angered like a young child. In Chasidic terms, unity is derived from “broadness of the intellect”; controversy results from “smallness of intellect.” (Maamarei Admor HaZakein)

### And they assembled against Moses and against Aaron and said, “Why do you raise yourselves up above the congregation of the L-rd? (Num. 16:3)

It is characteristic of controversy that righteous people are accused of sins that are entirely inapplicable to them. The Torah testifies that Moses was “the most humble of any man on the face of the earth”; thus Korach’s accusation that he was arrogant was inherently absurd. (Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk)

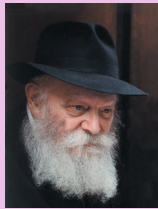
### And Korach gathered all the congregation against them (Num. 16:19)

When it comes to doing a mitzva, it isn’t all that easy to find people who are interested. Unfortunately, however, when it comes to inciting controversy, everyone comes running. (Mateh Aharon)



## 8:13 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area  
4 Tammuz/June 26  
Torah Portion Korach  
Ethics Ch 4  
Shabbat ends 9:21 PM



## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

This week’s Torah portion, *Korach*, tells us about the rebellion of Korach against Moses. Korach’s complaint was about the leadership of Moses and the appointment of Aaron as High Priest. He asked, “The entire congregation – all of them – are holy... Why do you raise yourselves above the congregation of G-d?”

Aaron’s appointment was months earlier. Why did Korach wait so long to voice his complaint?

Korach’s complaint came after the incident of the spies. According to Chasidic teachings, the spies wanted to stay in the desert, where they could live completely spiritual lives, and bask in the light of Torah. Moses explained to them that action is the most important thing, i.e., the performance of *mitzvot* (commandments). Mitzvot are done with the physical, infusing it with holiness, and transforming the world into a home for G-d. This can only be accomplished by entering the land and engaging in the physical world.

Now Korach’s complaint begins to make some sense. If action is the main thing, mitzvot in the physical, Korach asked, “Why do you [Moses and Aaron] raise yourselves above the congregation?”

When it comes to Torah study, everyone is different. One person understands more than the other, each according to ability. Moses, who received the Torah directly from G-d, was above and beyond all of the Jewish people. So too with Aaron who was taught by Moses. Moses and Aaron connect us to the highest levels of Torah.

However, when it comes to mitzvot, which are our actions, there are no levels, everyone is equal. So, Korach asked, why do we need to be reliant on Moses? But Korach was making a big mistake.

Mitzvot are commonly referred to as “good actions” (“*maasim tovim*”). Shouldn’t they just be called “actions”? They are called “good actions” because they should shine, as a result of being done with the right intentions. Action alone is still a mitzva, but it doesn’t shine. For a mitzva to transform the physical, infuse it with G-dliness and illuminate the world, it needs to shine.

That’s why we need the assistance of Moses in our mitzvot as well. Our connection to Moses can make our mitzva shine, by helping ensure that our mitzvot will be done in a way that refines us and the world around us and draws down G-d’s presence into our world.

Both the spies and Korach were making a mistake, and sometimes we make the same mistake. Some of us think like the spies, that in Judaism the main thing is the spirituality, the heart. Others think like Korach, that the main thing is the performance of mitzvot, the action, the deed, even if it is lacking feeling and meaning.

G-d wants both. Of course the action is the main thing. But the actions have to shine, thereby fulfilling G-d’s desire to make a home in this physical world, a world of 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.

## What is Peace?

The kids are fighting. Over something petty as usual. “He did it.” “It’s mine.” “I was using it.” “I had it first.” “He cheated.” And of course there’s no way to get to the bottom of it. You’ve got work to do, it’s been a long day, you had enough confrontation at the office, traffic was miserable, the committee, the phone, etc. All you want is a little peace and quiet.

So what do you do if the kids are fighting and can’t get along? You separate them of course. “Go to your room and stay there.” It works with adults. Theoretically. Separate the antagonists. Keep them apart. Then there’s peace.

After all, that’s what peace means – everyone has his or her own space. I’ve got mine, you’ve got yours. The boundaries are set and respected. Nobody infringes or imposes. Nobody moves into someone else’s territory. That’s true in families, in business, between nations. Respect the borders and leave what’s inside alone.

But deep down we know that that’s not true peace. That’s isolation, separation. It may even be a cessation of hostilities. But it’s not peace.

The absence of war is not peace. Not between nations, not within a country, not between competitors, or friends or in a family. Just ask friends or family members who aren’t speaking to each other. Are they at war? No. But are they at peace?

For there to be peace, there must be an interaction. Each one in the relationship must relate to the other in the relationship. There has to be mutual influence, a crossing of borders, a give-and-take, a blurring of boundaries. An exchange and an obscuring – not an elimination, but a smudging – of mine and yours.

We know this instinctively and the true meaning of peace finds its highest expression in the Hebrew word for peace: “Shalom.” Shalom means not only peace, but completeness, wholeness.

How do we become complete? The

analogies are numerous: an orchestra, a sports team, a play.

We can extend the analogy. The orchestra, the sports team, the actors all need support personnel: ticket takers, concession workers, stage managers, set crews, etc. Without them the performance, the game, the play is incomplete.

So to be complete, to have peace, there must be interaction. But not just any interaction. The interaction has to be harmonious. Imagine if the violins tried to play a drum solo, if the quarterback tried to play linebacker. You get the idea.

Peace, completeness also means knowing one’s place, that where we’re “higher” – and in something, some way, each individual has a superior talent or ability – we give to the lower. And where we’re “lower,” we receive.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism, has an analogy. The Jewish people can be compared to a body – a unit made of different limbs each with its own function. Each is essential to the completeness, the peace of the whole. A hangnail hurts the heart.

While the head is higher than the feet, the feet too have an advantage – they can move and take the head with them.

On a practical level, then, we can answer the question, what is peace?

First, recognition, seeing one’s own boundaries and limits, and the boundaries and limits of those in one’s environment; second, interaction, accepting from those above and transmitting to those below. Third, harmony, “playing one’s part,” staying in rhythm.

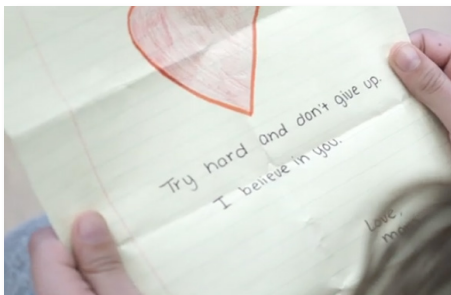
When we see different factions – in the family of nations, in the family of the Jewish people, or within our own families – not at peace – even if they’re not at war – surely they’re missing one of the ingredients of peace.

So let’s not send each other to our rooms. Let’s give true peace a chance.



# SLICE OF LIFE

## Moment of Silence



Rabbi Avraham Frank has been a driving force in the campaign to introduce a “Moment of Silence” in schools throughout the United States. The idea was initially proposed by the Rebbe in 1980 and over the next seven years the Rebbe spoke many times on the subject in his public talks.

Explains Rabbi Frank, “We wish to have all schools implement a Moment of Silence, as this would be the most efficient way to improve society. Together we will nurture our children with moral values, bringing goodness and kindness to all mankind.”

The Rebbe emphasized that the parents would be the ones telling their children what to think about during the “Moment of Silence.” Explained the Rebbe: “When parents realize that they must tell their child what to think about during the ‘Moment of Silence,’ it will cause them to begin to concern themselves with a child’s spiritual nourishment — to train him to be a truly human being.”

Last year, after the murder of Lori Kaye at the Chabad House in Poway, California, Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein powerfully brought the

message of a “Moment of Silence” to the public once again. A group of Chabad emissaries began working on getting legislation passed in their respective states. We wish them much success.

What follow are excerpts of letters that Rabbi Frank has received from students and principals regarding the “Moment of Silence.”

### Students

**Melinda:** During the Moment of Silence I think of what my dad always said to me. Never give up on your dreams and try to make it to the top. (A main component of “A Moment of Silence” is that the parents suggest and discuss with the child what to contemplate during the MOS.)

**Chandler:** We just started a thing called the Moment of Silence. My thought about the Silent Moment is that it is a good time to think about things like stuff you haven’t done or something you want to do. But one thing I wish about the silent moment is if it was like five minutes for more time to think.

**Halle:** Our Quiet Moment is awesome. Because you get time to think about you and your family. Can we do it for two minutes instead?

**Tyrig:** A Moment of Silence means that I can think of the people in Trinidad who don’t have shoes and clothes.

**Autumn:** The Moment of Silence makes me feel good. It makes me feel proud of myself. It makes me feel like I’m somebody.

### Principals

**Patrick:** We have been doing our Moment of Silence for two months now.... We call it “Our Quiet Moment.”

I received 175 written comments. 88% were positive and 6% were neutral and 6% were negative. Interesting, don’t you think? The ten negative comments were mostly from grade 7 but the comments were along the lines of “...I don’t like being quiet.” One student didn’t like putting his head on a desk. I am going

to suggest that he doesn’t have to put his head on the desk. He can just sit. Almost all of the positive comments mentioned liking the quiet, peacefulness, and how their brain relaxed.

I have not made any profound observations about improved behavior or improved attitude towards learning yet. However, I do like how the whole school feels during and after “Our Quiet Moment” and I like how it makes me feel too. Reading the 88% of the positive messages has convinced me that we are doing the right thing and we will build on this success by talking about it more with parents.

**Solomon:** We began the “Moment of Silence” this school year in October. We did not know what to expect but we thought it was a good idea. I was under the impression that the “Moment of Silence” was not accepted by the Chancellor, but Rabbi Frank showed me a letter from the Chancellor’s Office giving it his stamp of approval. I tried it a few mornings and my staff and parents gave it their blessings. We do it every morning as a steady part of our morning announcements. It creates calm among the children.

I have been here at this school for 17 years and something wonderful happened this year. I cannot say that the “Moment of Silence” had everything to do with our testing results, but we had a 12 percentage point increase in our reading scores this year (State English Language Assessment).

We will continue to do the “Moment of Silence” for the remainder of this year and next year because it is something that we need to do. I would recommend that my colleagues adopt the “Moment of Silence” immediately because socially and emotionally it does make a difference!

For more information watch JEM’s “A Moment to Save the World” video essay. Visit Rabbi Frank’s website [momentofsilence.info](http://momentofsilence.info) or contact him at [afsilence@gmail.com](mailto:afsilence@gmail.com). See also [savinglivescamarillo.net](http://savinglivescamarillo.net) to learn about their “Quiet Moment” Campaign that has been implemented in the Camarillo (California) Public schools.

# The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence  
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

26th of Nissan, 5724 [1964]

... In reply to your inquiry as to whether or not there has been a change in my views on the question of prayer in the public schools, inasmuch as this issue has again become a topic of the day in connection with congressional efforts to introduce a constitutional amendment to permit certain religious exercises in the public schools,

Let me assure you at once that my views, as outlined in my letter of the 24th of Cheshvan, 5723, have not changed. As I stated then, my views are firmly anchored in the Torah, *Torath Chayim* [a living Torah]. Their validity could therefore not have been affected by the passing of time. On the contrary, if there could have been any change at all, it was to reinforce my conviction of the vital need that the children in the public schools should be allowed to begin their day at school with the recitation of a non-denominational prayer, acknowledging the existence of a Creator and Master of the Universe, and our dependence upon Him. In my opinion, this acknowledgment is absolutely necessary in order to impress upon the minds of our growing-up generation that the world in which they live is not a jungle, where brute force, cunning and unbridled passion rule supreme, but that it has a Master Who is not an abstraction, but a personal G-d; that this Supreme Being takes a “personal interest” in the affairs of each and every individual, and to Him everyone is accountable for one’s daily conduct.

Juvenile delinquency, the tragic symptom of the disillusionment, insecurity and confusion of the young generation, has not abated; rather the reverse is the case. Obviously, it is hard to believe that the police and law-enforcing agencies will succeed in deterring delinquency and crime, not to mention completely eliminating them at the root, even if there were enough police officers to keep an eye on every recalcitrant child. Besides, this would not be the right way to remedy the situation. The remedy lies in removing the cause, not in merely treating the symptoms. It will not

suffice to tell the juvenile delinquent that crime does not pay, and that he will eventually land in jail (if he is not smart enough?). Nor will he be particularly impressed if he is admonished that law-breaking is an offense against society. It is necessary to engrave upon the child’s mind the idea that any wrongdoing is an offense against the Divine authority and order.

At first glance this seems to be the essential function of a house of prayer and of the spiritual leaders. However, anyone who does not wish to delude himself about the facts of house of prayer attendance, both in regard to the number of worshippers and the frequency of their visits, etc., etc., must admit that shifting the responsibility to the house of prayer will not correct the situation. Nor can we afford to wait until the house of prayer will attain its fitting place in our society, and in the life of our youth in particular, for the young generation will not wait with its growing-up process.

Children have to be “trained” from their earliest youth to be constantly aware of “the Eye that seeth and the Ear that heareth.” We cannot leave it to the law-enforcing agencies to be the keepers of the ethics and morals of our young generation. The boy or girl who has embarked upon a course of truancy will not be intimidated by the policeman, teacher or parent, whom he or she thinks fair game to “outsmart.” Furthermore, the crux of the problem lies in the success or failure of bringing up the children to an awareness of a Supreme Authority, Who is not only to be feared, but also loved. Under existing conditions in this country, a daily prayer in the public schools is for a vast number of boys and girls the only opportunity of cultivating such an awareness.

On the other hand, as I have emphasized on more than one occasion, only a strictly non-denominational prayer, and no other, should be introduced into the public schools. Any denominational prayer or religious exercise in the public schools must be resolutely opposed on various grounds, including also the fact that these would create divisiveness and ill-feeling. Likewise must Bible reading in the public schools be resolutely opposed for various reasons, including the obvious reason that the reading of the Koran and the New Testament will arouse dissension and strife. Moreover, the essential objective is a religious expression that would cultivate reverence and love for G-d, and this can best be accomplished by prayer, while Bible reading is not so important in this instance.

continued in a future issue

# A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are now in the Hebrew month of Tammuz, which oddly enough, was the name of a Babylonian idol! Why would our sages choose such a seemingly inappropriate name for a month on the Jewish calendar?

The literal translation of the word Tammuz is “heat,” which alludes to the intense heat of the sun at this time of year. The Book of Psalms explains that the heat of the sun is used as a metaphor for G-d’s power. G-d’s strength expresses itself in two ways, creating positive energy and destroying negative forces. By using the name Tammuz, our Sages emphasized the infinite power of the Divine. In the same way the idol Tammuz was destroyed by G-d’s wrath, all negativity encountered by G-d will be mocked and ultimately destroyed. G-d is always in control.

Moreover, in Chasidic terminology, the revelation of the Tetragrammaton – the unpronounceable four-letter Name that alludes to G-d as He transcends the natural order – is strongest at this time of year. The name Tammuz thus emphasizes this deeper dimension of G-dliness.

The numerical value of the Hebrew word Tammuz is 453, which is the same as “tagein” meaning “a protection or shield.” This refers to G-d’s protection of the Jewish people from the dangers posed by our adversaries. G-d protects and nurtures us even during our darkest moments. And when the letters of “tagein” are rearranged, the word “ginat” is formed, meaning “a garden.” This image is a metaphor for the love and pleasure G-d derives from the Jewish people. In the same way a gardener stands in loving admiration of the rose’s beauty despite the thorns on the rosebush, so too does G-d forgive His people for all their transgressions, for His love for us is constant and unwavering.

Shmuel Beilman

## L’ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לְזִכְרוֹן חַיָּה י מוֹשְׁקָא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



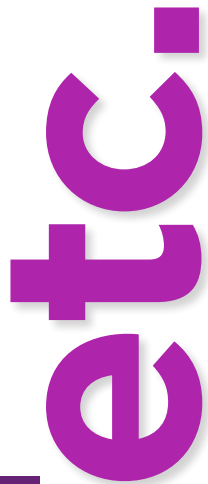
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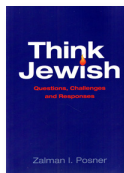
## Sefer Haftarat

Newly released, the *Book of Haftarat* is an interpolated translation and commentary based on the works of the Rebbe. Each Haftarah is prefaced by an overview, which provides an “executive summary” of its content. The side-by-side Hebrew/English text of the haftarah is accompanied by a commentary containing Chasidic and Kabbalistic insights into the inner dimensions of the text. Includes the complete texts of the haftarat according to Chabad, Ashkenazic, and Sephardic custom. Kehot Publication Society



## Think Jewish

The eloquent, eye-opening essays in *Think Jewish* by Rabbi Zalman I. Posner – an instant classic since its publication in 1978 – have been reprinted in a brand new edition. The words remain as on-target as ever. Think Jewish slices through the niggling conflicts that block a Jew from living Jewish.



## WHO’S WHO?

**Yissaschar** (pronounced Yissachar, **Issachar** in English) was the son of the Jacob and his wife Leah. When Jacob blessed his sons before his passing, he blessed Yissaschar: “Yissaschar is a strong-boned donkey... He saw tranquility that it was good, and the land that it was pleasant, yet he bent his shoulder to bear...” Rashi explains this blessing regarding how hard Yissaschar labored in Torah study. Ultimately, his tribe was renown for their devotion to Torah study and partnered with the tribe of Zevulun who supported them.

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Rabbi Yaakov said: “This world is like an ante-room before the World to Come; prepare yourself in the ante-room so that you may

enter the banquet hall.” (*Ethics 4:16*) The preparations have already been completed. To borrow an expression from the Previous Rebbe: We have already “polished the buttons” – everything necessary to bring about the Redemption has already been accomplished. (*Sefer HaSichot 5752, Vol. 1, In the Path of Our Fathers, a study of Pirkei Avot, sie.org.*)