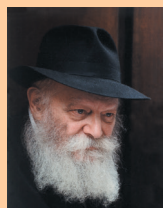


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

This week we read two Torah portions, *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*. In *Vayakhel*, Moses conveys G-d's instructions regarding making the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) in the desert. The men and women donate the required materials. Talented men and women make the *Mishkan* and all of its furnishings.

In the portion of *Pekudei* we read of the priestly garments that are fashioned. Once everything is completed it is brought to Moses, who erects the *Mishkan* and anoints it.

Regarding the donations and the construction of the *Mishkan*, it didn't matter if the person was rich or poor. It didn't matter which tribe they were from. Each gave according to his or her ability, and each participated by using the talents that G-d had gifted them.

They were careful to do everything the way G-d wanted them to, down to the smallest detail.

And they were rewarded for their devotion: G-d's presence filled the *Mishkan*, dwelling amongst them once again.

After 210 years of exile in Egypt, 87 of which were fraught with terrible suffering and slavery, imagine how satisfying, and so exciting, to see G-d's Divine Presence fill the *Mishkan*!

What lessons can we learn from this?

We are here for a reason, to fashion this entire world into a dwelling place for G-d.

Every one of us is necessary to ensure success. We are all different. We have different means, different talents, and different circumstances. But we know we can do it, because we've done it once before – in the desert *Mishkan*! The main thing is that we work together, and that we do it right. Small details matter. As in every project, it is not complete, until each does his or her part, and until the finishing touches have been done.

How about us, haven't we suffered enough? Our exile has lasted almost 10 times as long as the Egyptian exile! And many of those years have been fraught with unspeakable suffering. Has the exile not been long enough? Hasn't the time come, for all this anguish to end?

It is true, the expression of G-d's presence we will experience at the time of *Moshiach*, will be based on our exile experience and our effort, accomplishing G-d's will.

Perhaps G-d is holding out because He wants something more, something deeper, that he knows we can attain. Imagine how amazing it will be, when *Moshiach* will come. G-d, please send him. The time has come.

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.

Work in Progress

Family, coworkers, neighbors, salespeople. The list of people with whom we interact daily – even remotely – goes on and on.

When you're in a good mood, the sun is shining and the stock market is up, it's easy to establish and sustain a positive interaction. But how do you have a positive attitude when you encounter someone with an "attitude?"

Everyone is a "work in progress." None of us are finished products. We are each at a point in our life's journey. And the other person might deserve not only tolerance but respect for how far he has come.

Ultimately, cultivating such an approach to others will turn the *mitzvot* (commandments) of judging others favorably and loving one's fellow Jew into second nature.

And remember: what we see is only part of the picture, not the complete individual.

Imagine: You are on the street and see someone walking with a cast and crutches. You could focus on the cast, the crutches and the clumsy gait. Or, you could realize that weeks earlier the person was hardly able to hobble along on the crutches, but now is mobile and independent.

The same is true for all of us. From the time we are born we all have different qualities, challenges, life experiences; some more positive and some more negative. Through guidance by good role models, and above all through self-improvement, the bad traits become weaker. The crutches become less necessary.

A person must grow throughout his entire life. So it's no wonder that we

can meet a person in the middle of his work and still be able to see the "clumsy gait." This is not necessarily because he isn't progressing. Rather, by every measure he has weakened and reduced his negative traits compared to how he was earlier.

The above analogy was used by the Rebbe when asked for guidance on how to be happy in his family environment. The Rebbe explains that we can reach this objective through living a life of Torah and *mitzvot*.

However, beware of the nagging voice that might argue that since the person conducts himself according to Torah has these negative points, then the Torah is not good, G-d forbid.

Back to the illustration of a person on crutches: If you meet someone on crutches leaving a medical specialist's office, you could think that the specialist is not good; he still needs crutches!

Now imagine that it was explained to you that before the patient was in the doctor's care, his feet were completely paralyzed. The doctor reduced the paralysis and strengthened the patient to the point where he is able to use his feet and even to walk. As time goes on things are improving. Even though he still needs crutches, there may come a time – if he follows the doctor's advice – that he will get rid of the crutches and be completely healed.

If a person who lives a full Jewish life still has negative traits, it is not necessarily because he isn't following the instructions of the "specialist," i.e., the Torah. Rather he has weakened and reduced his deficiencies compared to how he was earlier on. And, like the rest of us, he is a "work in progress."

SLICE OF LIFE

Joy and a Smile



Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik (*obm*) and his wife Rebbetzin Bassie (*she should live and be well*), were among the pioneers of the Chabad House movement. The Rebbe used their selfless devotion to the Italian Jewish community as an example to be held up and emulated by others. What follows are personal reflections from three people whose lives Rabbi Garelik touched:

Chani Benjaminson, from Rome, Italy – Co-director of Chabad of the South Coast North Dartmouth, Massachusetts:

Rabbi Garelik did not have an easy start in life, yet he chose to live happily. There was always a smile on his face. Whatever he was busy with, he did with joy and dedication. Whether it was his shlichus, supporting and cheering his incredible wife, his beloved children, grand children and great grandchildren, his community and the many people he influenced. It was done without fanfare but always with joy and his trademark smile.

I lived in the Garelik home for 12 years. The Gareliks welcomed me and another three to five children, depending on the year, into their special home, so that we could attend the excellent Chabad school they founded. What is incredible here is that they were past the child rearing phase;

their youngest child was 12 and yet they saw a need and jumped in, helping to raise us with love and care – truly acting as parents do for kids they were not related to, aged 7 to 12.

Rabbi Garelik always greeted me with a smile, asked me how my day was and whether I had eaten. Truth is he greeted everyone with a smile and a kind word.

He would often meet people in his office and at home late at night, helping and counseling them along their lives. He was his incredible wife's greatest supporter and cheerleader and so so proud of her. He loved and cherished his family and always made time for them.

If he wasn't doing any of the above, one could find him studying. I have this clear image of Rabbi Garelik sitting on the couch, studying late at night, an often repeated scene...

After my parents got married, Rabbi Garelik offered them the opportunity to go to Rome as the Rebbe's emissary. The early years were very challenging. Rabbi Garelik used to travel down to Rome by train (a nine hour trip one way at the time) to bring them kosher food and to support them in many ways.

Rabbi Alex Namdar, from Milan, Italy – Co-founder with his wife Leah, of Chabad of Sweden in Gothenburg.

Growing up in Milan, in school, at home, in Yeshiva, in 770 by the Rebbe – Rabbi Garelik was a big part of my education and life.

He taught us about the deep bond of chasidim with the Rebbe. He inspired generations of chasidim and created a vibrant Jewish life in Italy.

He was an unconventional educator. Sometimes, in school he would fill in for another teacher. He taught us how to *daven* [pray]. He himself would daven for hours. It was real.

He taught us that Chasidic philosophy is not just to learn. It's also to think. The Rebbe told him in a private audience: "There are those that have a talent in the letters of thought." I found him many times, sitting on a balcony by himself, just thinking. Thinking was an actual activity for him.

He would share his insights with me, and always

with tremendous depth.

He invested years in us. Hours upon hours *farbrenging* with us as *yeshiva bochurim* [students]. He loved the bochurim and the bochurim loved him. He taught by example more than by words. It was who he was. His silences spoke volumes. His tears told even more. He would talk to us and cry. About chasidim of the past. About the Rebbe. How he loved the Rebbe!

In his Russian accented Italian, he would say, "Do you think we can even begin to understand the Rebbe? Why, looking at the Rebbe is "*come un cavallo guarda la luna* – Like a horse looking at the moon!"

Chani Konikov, from Bologna, Italy – co-director Chabad of South Orlando, Florida:

Together with his wife, Rabbi Garelik revived and built up Judaism in Italy in the post war era. Rabbi Garelik arranged for my parents to be sent to Bologna to serve the Jewish population there, as he did all the many emissaries who have been servicing the Jews in Italy over the past 60 years.

Having no school in Bologna, I dorned at his house for 11 years. From second grade through 10th grade, and then again when I came back to teach in the school. He is the ultimate example of a selfless emissary who dedicated his life to the Rebbe, no matter what it took; a respected rabbi of a community; a husband who took pride in his wife's amazing accomplishments and charismatic personality that at times seemed to outshine his more serious and poised countenance.

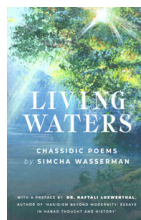
Growing up in his house, I saw a wonderful human side to a giant of a man. I often saw him drying the dishes his wife was washing, and stealing some quality alone time together. I saw him prepare the Shabbat candles and arrange beautiful roses for her every Friday afternoon. I saw a chasid who would fly to New York at every opportunity to be in close proximity to the Rebbe, and a loving father whose eyes lit up and whose smile took over his face when speaking to his children and grandchildren.

His words and actions affect so many, across continents, and generations. May we be united again with the coming of Moshiach.



Living Waters

Living Waters is Simcha Wasserman's newest collection of Chasidic poems. The poems wed deep Jewish wisdom to carefully-crafted poetics. These poems stitch together the mystical and the mundane, unearthing holiness in the least expected places.



Defiance in Samarkand

Defiance in Samarkand is Rabbi Shlomo Chay Niyazov's firsthand account of Bukharian Jewry's self-sacrifice under Soviet rule. Rabbi Niyazov takes us through a journey of a civilization over a millennium old. *Defiance in Samarkand* pays homage to a remarkable corner of the world that proved to be a major center of Jewish life and played a major part in Jewish history.



Today Is...

29 Adar II

My father said at a Chasidic gathering: G-d created the universe and all physical objects *yeish mei'ayin*, something from nothing. Jews must transform the "something" into "nothing," transform the material into spiritual. The avoda of turning the physical into spiritual and making the physical into an instrument for the spiritual, is a personal obligation. Every single person, individually, is required to do this.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

16 Adar, 5712 [1952]

... I have duly received your letter of the 8th of Shevat, but this is the first opportunity to answer it. Should there be any good news in the meantime, you will no doubt let me know.

You seem to be disturbed because you feel that you have not attained the proper level in Torah and Mitzvos [commandments] and cannot see the *tachles* [purpose] etc., which makes you downhearted.

Leaving the details of your complaints aside, I wish to make several observations:

1. A feeling of dissatisfaction with one's self is a good sign, for it indicates vitality and an urge to rise and improve one's self, which is accomplished in a two-way method: withdrawal from the present state, and turning to a higher level (see *Sichah* [talk] of my father-in-law of sainted memory, Pesach 5694).
2. If the urge to improve one's self leads to downheartedness and inertia, then it is the work of the *Yetzer Hora* [evil inclination], whose job it is to use every means to prevent the Jew from carrying out good intentions connected with Torah and Mitzvos.

The false and misleading voice of the *Yetzer Hora* should be stifled and ignored. Besides, as the *Baal Hatanya* [author of the Tanya, Rabbi Shneur Zalman – founder of Chabad Chasidism] states (Ch. 25), even one single good deed creates an everlasting bond and communion with G-d (ibid., at length). Thus, a feeling of despondency is not only out of place, but is a stumbling block in the worship of G-d, as is more fully explained in the above and subsequent chapters of Tanya.

3. With regard to understanding, or lack of understanding, of the *tachles*, the important thing required of the Jew is contained in the words of the Torah: "For the thing is

very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart (and the *tachles* is) to do it." Understanding is, generally, the second step. The first step is the practice of the Mitzvos. (See enclosed copy of my message to a study group).

My prayerful wish to you, as you conclude your letter, is that the next one coming from you will be more cheerful.

3rd of Nissan, 5727 [1967]

Greeting and Blessing:

I just received the telephone message about your condition, and am awaiting good news about your treatment and relief. May G-d grant that you should have a speedy and complete *Refuo* [recovery], and that everything turn out to be for the good, the visible and obvious good.

Having entered the auspicious month of Nissan, the present time is particularly propitious for good tidings for all Jews, both materially and spiritually. Moreover, if at all times throughout the year a Jew is to serve G-d in good health and with joy and gladness of heart, this is particularly true for the month of Nissan, a time of considerable preparation for the forthcoming Festival of Liberation, especially the removal of *Chometz* [leaven] and the bringing in of *Matzoh*, with all that this signifies, including a thorough spiritual "spring cleaning." There is no need to elaborate on this to you.

I had intended to write to you these days in any case, but will now take advantage of this opportunity to express my gratification at the enthusiasm which your speech evoked at the gathering. ... I am also informed that it left a considerable impact on the audience.

Similarly, I have been informed about the success and lasting impressions of your other appearances.

There is a connection in this continuity of the above, since the inference is how much you can achieve in good health, both in your immediate and distant environment. Hence, it will surely stand you in good stead.

Hoping to hear good news from you in all the above, and wishing you and yours a Kosher and inspiring *Pesach* [Passover],

With blessing,

in history, all of the other vessels were also fashioned by other people (i.e., for the First and Second Holy Temples; they will also be made for the Third Holy Temple when it is reestablished). However, there has always been only one ark, made by Betzalel. Although hidden away after the destruction, in the future it will be revealed. (*Meshech Chochma*)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Shabbat we read a special Torah portion, Parshat HaChodesh. It speaks about the month of Nissan, which begins on Sunday.

Our Sages differed over when the Final Redemption with Moshiach will occur. Some opined that "In Nissan our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt; in Nisan the Jewish people will be redeemed in the future." Others argued that the Final Redemption will take place in the month of Tishrei.

There are two reasons why Moshiach has to come. One is by virtue of the Jewish people's cumulative service of G-d over the last few thousand years. The other is simply G-d's promise to bring Moshiach.

According to Chasidic philosophy, the month of Nissan symbolizes the level of G-dliness that transcends our service. G-d took our forefathers out of Egypt on Passover despite the fact that they were spiritually degraded and unworthy. By contrast, Tishrei (Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur), is a time for returning to G-d in repentance and prayer.

The Sages' disagreement over the month for Redemption was based on whichever factor each considered more decisive. Those who believed that spiritual status is more important held that it will occur in Tishrei, insisting that the Jewish people must be aroused to increased observance of Torah and mitzvot [commandments] in order for Moshiach to come. Those who believed that G-d's promise is the determining factor held it will occur in Nissan.

So how was it resolved? Jewish law rules that "in Nissan they will be redeemed" – that the overriding consideration is simply G-d's promise.

May it happen immediately.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה' י מושקא

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



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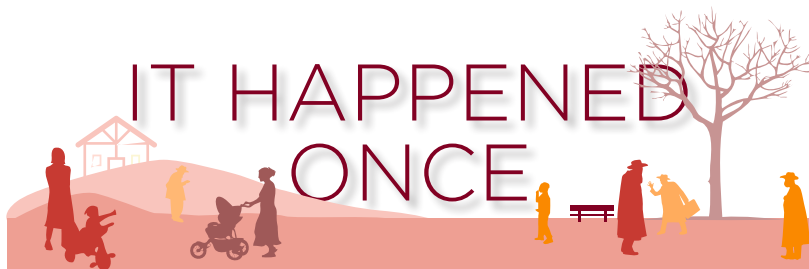
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MOSHIACH MATTERS

In this portion we read: "Betzalel made the ark" (*Ex. 37:1*) Of all the components of the Sanctuary, why is Betzalel's name associated specifically with the ark? At different times



One Friday afternoon a stranger appeared on the doorstep of the famous tzadik, Reb Yitzchak Isaac of Vitebsk, asking him to arrange a “*din Torah*” (a session of the Jewish court). It was already after midday and Reb Yitzchak Isaac was about to go to the bathhouse in preparation for the holy Sabbath. “Must the matter be attended to right now?” he asked the visitor. “Can’t it wait until Sunday morning?”

“I am a *melamed*,” answered the man. “I teach little children from early in the morning until late at night, with a short break in the middle of the day for lunch. On Friday I teach only until noon. Today is the only opportunity I have to come to you!” he pleaded.

“But where is the other party in the lawsuit?” the Reb Yitzchak Isaac.

“He is already here,” the man answered. “I wish to bring a *din Torah* against the Master of the Universe.”

Reb Yitzchak Isaac went back inside and put on the fur hat he wore only on Shabbat, Yom Tov and other solemn occasions. He sat on his judicial chair and prepared himself to hear the case. “You, obviously, are the plaintiff. Please state your complaints,” he said.

The *melamed* got straight to the point. “Our Sages teach in the Gemara and Midrash that there are three partners in the creation of man,” he began. “My wife and I have a daughter who has, thank G-d, reached marriageable age, but we do not have enough money to find her a proper match. The third partner, however, has unlimited funds, but He refuses to part with His wealth. That is the essence of my grievance,” the man concluded.

Reb Yitzchak Isaac shut his eyes and thought the matter over. After a few minutes of reflection he pronounced his judgment. “You are right,” he told the man. “You have won the case.” The thankful *melamed* went home to prepare for Shabbat.

The following Sunday, when the *melamed* returned home during his lunch break, he found an elaborate carriage with several footmen waiting in front of his house. His concerns were somewhat allayed when he learned why they had come: On the same street where the *melamed* and his family dwelled lived a non-Jewish boy who had recently been employed in the landowner’s household. For almost a month the landowner’s wife had suffered from a terrible toothache.

None of the dentists they brought to her had been successful in alleviating her pain. When the new employer saw the woman’s suffering, he mentioned to the landowner that there was Jewish woman on his street who was able to “whisper” a toothache away (a popular folk remedy at the time). He suggested that the *melamed*’s wife be brought to the great estate to attempt a cure.

At first the landowner just laughed at the boy’s absurd suggestion, but after exhausting every other alternative he agreed to send for the Jewish woman. The *melamed*’s wife was summoned to the great mansion.

The landowner’s wife was beside herself in agony. Her cries and moans were pitiful to hear. After a short rest from the long journey the *melamed*’s wife was brought to the suffering woman and asked to perform her cure. She “whispered” over the affected teeth and the painful toothache was miraculously gone.

The landowner and his wife were extremely grateful to the Jewish woman who had brought relief to their entire household. They asked her what she would accept as payment. “My husband is a teacher of small children,” the woman answered. “His salary does not even begin to pay our many expenses. Our oldest daughter is of marriageable age, but we haven’t the money with which to make a wedding.”

“How much money would you need to marry her off?” asked the landowner.

“Five hundred rubles for the dowry, 300 for food, and another 200 for the wedding

celebration,” the woman said.

Without another word, the landowner gratefully paid the astonished woman the entire sum. And when, as an afterthought, the *melamed*’s wife mentioned that she was also in need of pillows and linens, the landowner instructed his servants to fill his entire carriage with household furnishings and other gifts as tokens of his deep appreciation.

In such a manner was Reb Yitzchak Isaac’s verdict carried out.



Moses gathered together all the Congregation of the Children of Israel and said to them: “These are the things which G-d has commanded that you should do” (Ex. 35:1)

As Rashi notes, this gathering took place on the day after Yom Kippur. On the holy day of Yom Kippur, everyone is in awe of G-d, suffused with a sense of peace and brotherly love for his fellow man. Moses gathered the Jews together immediately afterward to teach them that Jewish unity should not be limited to Yom Kippur, but should be felt throughout the year. (*Olelot Efraim*)

Every Jew approaches a *mitzva* (commandment) with his own thoughts and intentions, according to his intellect and understanding. Yet the physical performance of the *mitzva* is carried out in the same manner by all. Moses was able to assemble all the Jews in true unity because the performance of *mitzvot* is common to all Jews, irrespective of other differences. (*Rebbe of Tshorkov*)

All the wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that G-d has commanded. (Ex. 35:10)

It is preferable for a person to do a *mitzva* immediately, as the opportunity presents itself, and not procrastinate. Doing a *mitzva* with alacrity prevents all kinds of obstacles from arising to prevent its performance at a later time. That is why the verse says, “All the wise-hearted among you shall come” – one who is truly wise – “shall come” – without delay. (*HaDrash Vehaiyun*)

Moses called Betzalel and Oholiav, and every wise-hearted man (Ex. 36:2)

Why didn’t the “wise-hearted men” come on their own to Moses, and waited until he approached each of them individually? Because a person who is truly wise-hearted doesn’t consider himself wise; when Moses issued his call, none of them thought he was talking to them. (*Ketoret Samim*)



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Shabbat HaChodesh

Blessing of the new month Nissan

Shabbat ends 6:41 PM

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