

The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"Unveil my eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of Your Torah." (Psalm 119:18)

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, *Chayei Sara*, we read that Abraham purchased the double cave where Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sara, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Leah are buried. He purchased the cave, known as "Mearat Hamachpela" and the field it is in, located in our holy city Hebron.

Abraham starts his purchase request to the Hittites for the burial property, "I am a foreigner and a resident among you." Abraham goes on to purchase the property for 400 silver shekel.

Why does Abraham say that he is a foreigner and a resident? What lesson can we take from Abraham's attitude?

The foremost commentator, Rashi, cites a *Midrash* explaining Abraham's words: "If you like, I'm a stranger, if not I will soon be a resident and take it legally, since G-d said to me, 'I will give this land to your progeny.'"

Hearing Abraham's sure attitude, the Hittites respected him and offered him the land for free. But Abraham insisted on buying it.

Abraham knew who he was, he never flinched, knowing that G-d was with him. He made his case: sell it to me or lose your right to control the land.

Sometimes we forget who we are, what is rightfully ours and Who our only true ally is.

Who are you? You are a Jew, chosen to share G-d's truth with the world. We are respected as "the" people of the book. When we teach truth the world listens.

What is rightfully ours? The whole Torah and the entire Land of Israel, as promised to Abraham.

Our only true ally is G-d, and when we put our trust in Him, instead of the false promises of those who ultimately do what is their best interest, we succeed and the world respects us.

Don't be afraid to be who you are, you will be respected by your neighbors and those you come in contact you. It is time to turn to G-d as you come to realize that He alone can be trusted.

Whether you see yourself as a stranger or a resident makes no difference, only your attitude matters. When you are sure of yourself because you have G-d and His Torah, the Hittites of the world respect and follow your lead.

May we soon merit the coming of Moshiach, who will lead us all to our Holy Land and rebuild our Holy Temple. Until that day, may our brothers and sisters who live in the holy city of Hebron be safe. May G-d bless them and reward them for their self sacrifice.

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.

Recycle

November 15 is "National Recycling Day." Advertising (on recycled paper, of course) encourages people to get involved and make pledges to join, commit and share.

What is our responsibility toward recycling as Jews living in today's world?

The *Midrash* (Ecclesiastics Rabba) states: In the hour when G-d created the first person, He took him and let him pass before all the trees of the garden of Eden, and said to him: See My works, how fine and excellent they are! Now all that I have created for you have I created. Think upon this and do not corrupt and desolate My world; for if you corrupt it, there is no one to set it right after you.

From this teaching it is clear that G-d created the world for people to inhabit and use, but with the understanding that we act responsibly toward all of creation.

Is there, perhaps, more that we can learn from recycling? As everything we see and hear is a lesson for us in our G-dly service, can we learn from the suggestions made in previous years of America Recycles Day?

Commit to "buy recycled" at home and at work: Being a Jew requires a commitment. And that commitment is for home and for work, the two places where we spend most of the 24 hours of our days. Living Jewishly shouldn't be relegated to the time spent in the synagogue or certain holidays.

Think before you buy. Reduce. Reuse. Recycle: Think before you buy into the latest pop-psychology or new-age spirituality. Ask yourself, "Will this reduce my connection to G-d? Should I reuse, i.e., re- experience and

reapply, Jewish traditions before I 'buy' new ones. Can I recycle, rescue, save customs that have been in our family for generations?"

Start a paper recycling program in your office, school, or community: Jewish living is best experienced with others. Start a class in your office, school or community.

Ask your local recycling coordinator about adding additional materials to your community's recycling program: Discuss with your family adding additional mitzvot to your "local" Jewish program.

Tell your local retailers you want them to stock more products made from recycled materials: If you can do it for recycling, you can do it for kosher products in supermarkets, Jewish books in national book store chains, modest clothing in boutiques.

Encourage the use of recycled-content products in your business or school: Reach out to other Jews and encourage them to get more involved in things Jewish. We are encouraged to share every bit of knowledge we have; even if all you know is the letter 'alef,' you should teach it to someone who doesn't even know alef.

Visit a nearby recycling facility or landfill: Visit Jewish sites and scenes. Jewish museums are great, but visit places where Judaism is alive. Tour unique Jewish communities. Go to a matza bakery. Spend a Shabbat in a neighborhood where everyone's doing it. See what the inside of a mikva looks like. Attend a giant menorah lighting ceremony this Chanuka.

This year in particular, make pledges to join, commit and share.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Continued from last week's issue from a letter dated 14th Elul, 5739 [1989]

A further point that has bearing on the subject matter of your letter has to do with the various theories of dating the age of the Universe according to the theory of evolution. The various hypotheses that attempt to set the date, are not only speculative, but are full of contradictions, depending on the criteria used for dating, whether geologic, astronomic, and atomic and the like. They are also mutually contradictory by virtue of the fact that the maximum age according to one theory is smaller than the minimum age according to another. Besides and this too is an essential point, according to the principle of probability which is now universally accepted in modern science, the evolution from simple to the complex, not to mention from the inorganic to organic, would require such a fantastic number of years that would far exceed the various maximum evolution theories.

This is not the place to present a bibliography where all the above can be verified, but a practical bibliography may be found in the book by Avigdor Miller.

I am very sorry that what has been said above is quite categorically at variance with your interpretation, in which you evidently invested great deal of time and thought. But surely you wished to hear my candid opinion and not some equivocal palliative remarks, especially as there is no room for palliatives in matter that are basic to our religion and beliefs.

Wishing you a *Kesivo vachasimo tovo* for a good and sweet year,
With blessing,

22nd of Iyar, 5721 [1961]

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter in which you write about the apparent contradiction between the latest scientific attempts to penetrate outer space, especially the efforts to place a man on the

moon, which seems to you to contradict the statement in the Torah "the heavens belong to G-d, and the earth He gave to the children of man."

Actually there is no contradiction at all, if you consider the term "earth" not in the narrow sense referring only to our globe, but in its proper sense, as meant in this verse, which includes also the atmosphere and the whole physical universe, with which mankind is concerned and directly affected by. We must not confuse the terms "Heaven" and the "planets". The stars, planets, moon, etc. are not called "Heaven", since "Heaven" is something spiritual, whereas those planets are physical and belong in the physical universe.

The fact that G-d created the heavenly bodies

...does not preclude man's attempt to learn all about them.

The fact that G-d created the so-called heavenly bodies to serve our world, and to give light, warmth, and energy to it, and placed them in the firmament of the sky at a certain distance from our earth, does not preclude man's attempt to learn all about them. Similarly, when the Torah states that G-d placed the moon in the sky to give light on earth, this does not exclude the possibility of man's landing on it at some future time. The meaning of the verse "the Heavens belong to G-d," etc., is in the sense that while G-d is everywhere, including the Heavens, man was placed in the physical universe, and is part of it, and, therefore, must make the most of it, as long as there is life on this earth. There is nothing in actual scientific experiments and accomplishments that contradict the Torah, nor is there such a possibility since the Torah is Truth, while science does not claim absolute certainty.

Judging by your writing and background, I firmly hope that you are conducting your daily life in strict accordance with the Torah, which is called *Toras Chayim*, the Law of Life, and the mitzvot whereby Jews live, and that you attempt to make steady advancement along this road, in compliance with the principle that "All things of Holiness should be on the upgrade."

With blessing,

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Our Torah portion ends: "And these are the years of the life of Ishmael: ...and he expired and died and was gathered to his people... before all his brothers he dwelt (lit.

fell)" (Gen. 25:17-18) With these words the Torah portion of Chayei Sarah concludes, to be followed immediately by, "And these are the generations of Isaac, the son of Abraham," the beginning of the Torah portion of Toldot. This alludes to the ultimate fall of Ishmael in the End of Days and the subsequent triumph of Moshiach, the son of David, who is descended from Isaac. (*Baal HaTurim*)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Starting on Wednesday, 24 Cheshvan/Nov 11 and concluding on Monday, 29 Cheshvan/Nov 29 is the annual International Conference of Chabad-Lubavitch Shluchim – Emissaries of the Rebbe. Last year, nearly 6,000 people attended last year's Conference, emissaries of the Rebbe and their guests from every continent in the world. After five days packed with Torah study, prayer, workshops, round table discussions, and farbrengens, they went back to their communities with renewed energy to continue carrying out their mission to prepare the world for Moshiach!

This year's Conference is taking place virtually, which means that every single emissary – even those who for various reasons in the past were unable to travel and participate – will be able to join in during these unique times.

This Shabbat is also the Shabbat on which we bless the new month of Kislev, the third month of the Jewish calendar.

The name Kislev represents a fusion of opposites. "Kis" refers to a state of concealment or covering over; whereas "lev" (lamed-vav) is symbolic of the ultimate in revelation. (Lamed-vav, numerically equivalent to 36, six times six, represents the highest level of revelation of our six emotional powers.)

Kislev, in Chasidic tradition, is also called "the month of redemption." The 10th of Kislev is the anniversary of release from Russian imprisonment of Rabbi Dov Ber; the second Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch and the 19th of Kislev is the release and anniversary of redemption of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism. And, of course, we have the victory and redemption of the Jewish people at the time of Chanuka that we celebrate on the 25th of the month of Kislev.

May the coming month truly be a time of thanksgiving and redemption for the entire Jewish people, with the coming of Moshiach and the Final Redemption.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקה

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
- Director
- Program director
- Secretary
- Administrator
- Editor
- Associate Editor
- Chairman Editorial Comm.
- Rebbe photo
- Rabbi David Raskin ז"ל
- Rabbi Shmuel Butman
- Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
- Rabbi Moshe P. Goldman
- Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
- Yehudis Cohen
- David Y. B. Kaufmann ז"ל
- Rabbi Nissen Mangel
- S. Roumani

L'Chaim contains words from sacred literature. Please do not deface or discard. All contents © 2020 by L.Y.O. ISSN 1050 0480

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



IT HAPPENED ONCE

Once there was a husband and wife who lived together in a little village, one of the hundreds of little villages which peppered the countryside of Russia and Poland in the times of our grandparents, and great-grandparents and the dozens of generations which preceded them.

Like many such couples, they were very poor, subsisting from day to day by the work of their hands. And although life was hard, their eyes ever turned upward to their Father in Heaven, beseeching Him to remember them, and never to forsake them. Thus they lived for many years, in harmony, with peace and love reigning between them.

And although they thanked G-d every day for the goodness He bestowed upon them, they suffered from one great sorrow which cast its shadow over their placid lives--they had no children.

For this one thing they prayed every day.

On Shabbat and the holidays, when the wife would don her pure white kerchief, cover her eyes and bless the candles, she murmured a prayer begging G-d to grant her a child. And when the husband stood in silent prayer, he, too, would remind the Creator of his craving for a child.

After many years had passed, their greatest wish was granted, and the wife gave birth to a baby boy. Their joy and thankfulness were unbounded as they watched their little son grow.

The days and months passed by joyfully, until the day came when the child was ready to be weaned. The parents consulted each other as to how to embark on this new step.

They wanted to purchase the proper food for their precious child, but were unsure how kosher it would have to be to qualify as kosher enough for a child.

The couple was quite poor, and so, they decided that if it were kosher, but not exactly up to the very highest standards, it would certainly be good enough.

But then, the mother piped up and said, "You know, it isn't enough to decide between ourselves, for there is a third partner in the creation of a child -- G-d Himself takes part; without Him, no child enters this world.

Her husband agreed, and so they looked in the Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law, where it is written: It is preferable to feed the child food of the highest standard of kashrut.

The loving parents, wanting to do the very best for their son, bought the most kosher food available.

They also decided that it would be proper to consult the Third Partner each time they made a major decision in the child's upbringing.

Days and months passed and it was soon time to choose a teacher for the little boy. The parents wondered, where should they look for a proper teacher, one who would instill in their precious boy a love of learning and values which the Torah held dear.

They looked here and there, spoke to this melamed (teacher) and that, but when it came time to choose, they again decided to do what the Third Partner would wish, and they selected a fine G-d fearing young man, who they felt sure would lead their child on the path of righteousness.

The little boy grew and matured into a fine young man, but his parents still watched over him as carefully as before.

When the time arrived to choose a bride, they came upon a problem: the poor couple had no money to establish a home for their son. What could they do? Finally, the mother spoke up: "From the time of our son's birth, until now, we always did what G-d wanted, without any regard to cost. No matter what sacrifice it entailed, we went ahead, and we footed the whole bill. Now, it is time for the Third Partner to pay His share in the upbringing of our child."

The father agreed, and he went into the fields and prayed from the bottom of his heart.

"G-d, You know that we always put Your will before our own in the rearing of the son You gave us. Now, we are unable to find our son a bride without Your help, and so we call upon You to join in the mitzva of bringing our son under the marriage canopy."

No sooner had he completed his prayer, when a pure gold coin miraculously descended from the Heavens, and the father knew that his prayer was accepted. The mother, the father and the Third Partner rejoiced at the wedding of the beloved son and his new bride.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

And the years of Sara were one hundred and twenty-seven years (Gen. 23:1)

Sara is the only woman in the Torah whose lifetime is explicitly recorded. This is because she is considered to be the mother of the entire Jewish people, as it states (Isaiah 51:2), "And to Sara who gave birth to you." (Zohar)

As Rashi comments, "All of her years were equal in goodness." Unlike some, Sara had no youthful mistakes or faults to correct by the time she approached old age. Each and every day of her life was utilized correctly and appropriately. (Sefat Emet)

And it shall be that the maiden to whom I will say, "Let down your pitcher, I pray you, that I may drink," and she will say, "Drink, and I will also give drink to your camels" (Gen. 24:14)

This "test" of a potential bride for Isaac was not chosen arbitrarily, for it involves the very nature of holiness: The main distinction between holiness and its opposite is that holiness is directed outward; it overflows, influences its surroundings and infuses them with life. The nature of unholiness, by contrast, is to take and acquire for itself. When Eliezer saw that Rebecca not only gave him to drink but provided water for his camels, he took it as a sign that she "belonged" to the side of holiness, and was worthy of marrying the son of Abraham. (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi)

Eliezer was looking for a wife for Isaac who would embody all the good qualities in the world. Yet the "test" he devised would only determine if she was generous and good-hearted. This is in keeping with the statement of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai (Avot 2:13), who said that a good heart contains within it all other positive character traits. (Peninei Torah)



4:21 Candle Lighting Time
 NY Metro Area
26 Cheshvan/Nov 13
 Torah Portion Chayei Sara
 Blessing of the new month Kislev
 Shabbat ends 5:22 pm

Dedicated in honor of
 a dear friend of the L'Chaim Publication
Mr. Gary Stern
 May you continue to see much success in all your endeavors

to dedicate an issue
 call (718) 776 6000