



One day, she awoke early with a nebulous feeling that something was very wrong. Maybe it was just that everything looked so desolate in the stark grayness of the morning. She got out of bed and looked around the one room dwelling. The children were sleeping soundly, huddled under the ragged blanket like a litter of kittens in the one bed they shared.

She never expected that her husband would leave, and without warning... She opened the heavy wooden door and allowed her eyes to wander across the empty yard. The fear in the pit of her stomach made her nauseous, and she walked inside and sat down on a chair. It was true – he was gone.

The next day it was a little easier to think, to plan. She would travel to the Rebbe Rashab. Only the holy Rebbe would know how to help her out of this terrible situation. Sympathetic neighbors watched her little ones, and even lent her the money for the trip, and soon she was sitting nervously on the train traveling to the Rebbe's court.

When she alighted from the train, she had no trouble finding the Rebbe's synagogue, but gaining a private audience with the Rebbe was another thing altogether. Some had been waiting for days, some for weeks, some even longer. Finally, one man told her, "Your best chance is to write the Rebbe a letter. Explain the whole situation, and he will surely answer you."

The poor woman, now even more distraught, wrote the letter. The Rebbe's shamash (assistant) took it and promised to present it to the Rebbe at an opportune moment. Not more than a couple of days passed when the woman was called to the shamash. "Come quickly," she was told, "The Rebbe has answered your letter."

The woman came running to the Rebbe's residence. "Here," said the Rebbe's shamash, "here is your answer." She unfolded the sheet of paper and on it was written but one sentence: "Go to Warsaw."

What could it mean? she wondered. And how in the world would she get to Warsaw? It was wartime; she had no money; she had small children.

Perplexed, she returned to her town and showed the Rebbe's answer to the Chasidim there. "If the Rebbe says, 'Go to Warsaw,' then go to Warsaw you must," they concurred. They gathered money for the woman and soon she was sitting on the train to Warsaw.

When she arrived in the metropolis, she had no idea where to go or what to do, for the Rebbe had given her no further direction. Suddenly, she was stopped by a Chasid.

"What do you need?" he asked. She replied that she had come to find her husband. The Rebbe had sent her to Warsaw, but she had no clue where to begin her search. "Go to -- Street. There is a factory where many immigrants go to work. You will most likely find your husband there."

With nothing to lose, she made her way to that street and asked to speak to the foreman. He was a kind-hearted man and, after hearing her story, allowed her to search through the list of workers. Her eyes widened with shock as her husband's name leaped up at her from the page. She went to him and pleaded with him to return home with her. He remained adamant until she told him how she had managed to find him. If the Rebbe had sent his wife to him, then he would return home with her.

She decided it was only right to return to the Rebbe's court and thank him for the miracle he had done for her, and so she traveled there once more.

This time, as well, she was not permitted to enter the Rebbe's chambers. "Wait until the Rebbe comes out to pray, and then approach him," she was told. So, she waited by the door, mentally composing the words she would use to thank the Rebbe. Suddenly the door opened. Upon seeing the Rebbe's face she fell down in a dead faint.

The Chasidim surrounded her, all wanting to know what had happened. When she was revived she told them, "When I saw the Rebbe's face, I realized that the chasid who had suddenly appeared and helped me on the street in Warsaw was the Rebbe!" Word of this amazing happening spread like wildfire. The Chasidim calculated and figured and finally

determined the exact time that this strange meeting had occurred.

It had been on a day when the Rebbe had not prayed publicly with the minyan as usual. The Chasidim had been concerned about his welfare, and one young student had gotten up the nerve to climb up a tree and peer into the Rebbe's room. He put his face near the window, and looked in. There stood the Rebbe, looking like nothing he had ever seen. The Rebbe's face was aflame and his eyes were peering into the distance, totally unseeing. The boy was so overcome by the sight that he lost his balance and fell to the ground.

This story was related by the one who had been that young student during World War I and had himself witnessed the events described here.

THOUGHTS

THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar (Lev. 1:7)

Even though a heavenly fire descended from on High to consume the offerings, the priests were still required to bring ordinary fire as well, to the altar. We learn from this that one may not rely solely on the "fire that descends from on high"- the natural, innate love of G-d which is present in the soul of every Jew. Each of us must also bring an "ordinary fire," kindle that innate love of G-d by taking the initiative and contemplating His greatness, to further nurture that inner spark. (*The Rebbe*)

You may not burn any leaven or any honey as a fire offering to G-d. (Lev. 2:11)

"Any leaven" is a person who is moody or melancholy. In the morning or evening, on Shabbat, holidays or weekdays, he is always sour. "Any honey" is one who is always pleasant and sweet. Whatever happens, he's always smiling. "You may not burn [either of them] as a fire offering to G-d!" You cannot properly bring a sacrifice to G-d from either of these emotions. A person must rule his character traits, even his positive attributes. For surely there are times when one must be "leaven" and times when one must be "honey." (*Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch*)

With all your sacrifices you should offer salt (Lev. 2:13)

The sacrifices are symbolic of the revealed part of Torah, which is likened to meat; the salt alludes to the esoteric part of Torah that deals with more abstract and spiritual matters. Just as salt preserves meat in the literal sense, so too does learning the innermost aspects of Torah ensure that the revealed part will remain preserved. (*Likutei Torah*)



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LIVING WITH THE
REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, *Vayikra*, we read about a person who transgressed against G-d, by being dishonest to another person. "When he realizes that he sinned and that he is guilty," first he must correct the wrong and only after can he go through the process to receive atonement.

Why does the Torah call it a transgression against G-d when a person is dishonest? What does "when he realizes that he sinned" mean; doesn't he know that he was dishonest?

When two people make a business deal without a contract and without witnesses, and one is dishonest and swindles his partner, he feels confident doing so because no one else was there. But in truth, G-d was there! His dishonesty is not only against his friend, but even more, it is a denial of G-d's existence.

There is a deeper level of dishonesty, being dishonest with yourself. This is when you knowingly underestimate your potential. Are you using all of your strengths? Are you maximizing your potential? You have the ability to make a difference, to change the world for the better. G-d has given you these gifts just for this purpose. Not using them is an affront to G-d.

Dishonesty finds its roots in selfishness - not being able to see anyone but yourself. When everything is about "me," it is impossible to use your potential for G-d, because your abilities are busy satisfying your selfishness. Whether your dishonesty is against a friend or yourself, it is very difficult to correct the situation. Being selfish means I am right, I deserve it, everyone owes me. Me me me.

The only way out of this situation is for the person to realize on his own, to acknowledge that he sinned, and to admit his guilt. Only then can he begin to make amends, first to his friends, and then to G-d.

For many of us, it is so difficult to admit that "I was wrong." On the other hand, doing so and apologizing is freeing and endearing. When one partner is selfish there is no relationship. When you make room for the other to exist, the relationship begins, first with the other, and then with G-d.

We are now at the end of this dark exile That was brought on because of senseless hatred for one another. This hatred is also rooted in selfishness. We can find a way to overcome selfishness, make room for another and recognize G-d. Then we will be well on our way to healthy relationships, closeness to G-d, fulfilling our potential and bringing Moshiach.

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.

The Paradox of Thrift

by Dr. David YB Kaufmann *obm*

A concept we might want to delve into, especially these days, is the "paradox of thrift." Around since the 1700s, it means that when the economy's in a severe recession, the more an individual saves, the worse it is for the economy as a whole, and ultimately, for the individual saving as well.

At first glance, that doesn't make sense; that's why it's a paradox. We're supposed to save, right? So how can saving, especially in tough times, be counter-productive? It works like this:

We get a paycheck and do three things with it – pay for necessities, save, and spend on non-necessities. Money spent on goods and services creates jobs, and the people who have those jobs spend money just like we do.

Now, if a few people decide to save more, that might be bad news for a particular business but it doesn't hurt the whole economy. Plus, the extra money they're saving becomes available to the banks to lend to other people.

But when lots of people aren't spending, banks and investors aren't lending, because, nobody's buying. And we get into a vicious cycle.

We only get out of it when someone – on a scale this big, the federal government – borrows money and hires the unemployed people. Now people have jobs, and money, and can pay their bills, and can spend on goods and services that employ more people – cycling out of the paradox of thrift to economic health.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that everything we encounter is a lesson in our Divine Service. So even the "paradox of thrift" has a lesson for us:

There are two things we can spend: time and money. And we have to spend both

to avoid getting into a spiritual paradox of thrift.

The paradox of thrift says that if we save when we should spend, others lose and ultimately, we lose. When times get tough, pulling back, is instinctive. And yet, that's precisely when we not only must continue to give *tzedeka* (charity), but to actually increase our giving.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad, points out that "saving one's self first" doesn't mean that our luxuries come before another's necessities.

In Jewish law, even a poor person who survives on *tzedeka* has to give *tzedeka*. Because there's always someone else who needs help more.

In short, since the way to get out of an economic recession is to spend money on goods and services, the way to get out of a spiritual recession is to give *tzedeka* – spend money on the needs of others.

There's another lesson in the "paradox of thrift" – how we spend our time. If we save our time for ourselves, that pulls "spiritual time" out of circulation, making "spiritual time" less accessible to others, who will hoard theirs, and so on.

What do we mean by "spiritual time"? Time spent increasing Jewish knowledge, time spent praying, time spent doing a *mitzva* (commandment). The more time we spend on these, the more "spiritual time" is available for others to do these things, and the more Torah study, prayer, and mitzvot get into circulation.

So, to avoid the paradox of thrift – spend! Spend money on *tzedaka*, spend time reading the weekly Torah portion, or taking extra care with a mitzva, or a few more seconds devoted to prayer.

That way, we stimulate the spiritual economy and get out of the spiritual recession with the coming of Moshiach!

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SLICE OF LIFE

Finding Diamonds in Cluj-Napoca
by Chaya Chazan



Rabbi Dovber and Fraidy Orgad founded and have been directing Chabad of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, for five years. The Orgads initially moved to Romania from Israel to work together with Rabbi Naftali and Risha Deutsch, who established Chabad Lyubavitch of Romania in 1999. The Orgads spent four years in Bucharest until the need became apparent for an additional Chabad Center in Cluj.

Today about 8,000 Jews still live in Romania. Cluj, originally known as Klausenburg, was the seat of the Klausenberg Chassidim before World War II.

Rabbi Orgad recalls, “Our first Shabbat in Cluj, it was just me, my wife, and our children around the table. On our second Shabbat, our table was expanded by two students. Now, five years later, we host between 70-100 people every Shabbat. Our table is a colorful mixture of locals, tourists, and students, so our meals are multilingual! We speak in Romanian for the locals, Hebrew for the tourists, and English for the students.”

Reaching out to individual Jews is a big part of the Orgads work. Often, finding the Jew - and letting him or her know that they are Jewish - is

the first part of the job. Explains Rabbi Orgad, “I visit local prisons every so often, searching for Jewish prisoners in need of connection and inspiration. One time when our car was in the shop I called a taxi. As I climbed in, I noticed the large cross dangling from the rearview mirror, but I didn’t say anything.

“The driver kept glancing at me in the mirror, noting my black suit, hat, and beard with curiosity.

“‘Are you Jewish?’ he finally blurted out.

“‘Yes,’” I answered. ‘I’m the rabbi in Cluj.’

“He was silent for another moment. ‘I think I have Jewish roots,’ he finally said. ‘My mother’s mother survived the war. I think she was Jewish.’

“It was a painful reminder of how much the Nazis – may their memories be erased – destroyed. Not only did they murder six million innocent souls, hundreds of thousands more were left orphaned, confused, and unsure of their identity. Romania is full of Jews who have only the vaguest idea that they’re Jewish. For many of them, recent history is too traumatic to even admit to their Jewishness.

“I learned that the driver’s name was Andrei and I was so happy to make his acquaintance – one of these lost souls who was willing to admit his Jewishness – and even explore it! When we returned to the Chabad House, Andrei put on tefillin for the first time in his life. It was a moving and emotional experience for both of us. Andrei is getting involved in our community, rediscovering his grandmother’s heritage.”

Rabbi Orgad is eager to share another story: “The first time Sergiu called me, I was in New York for the annual Conference of Chabad Rabbis. We got in touch with I returned to Romania and we spoke for a long while. He lived in Satu Mare (originally called Satmar), a three hour drive from Cluj. He asked to meet face-to-face. I agreed, but told him I’d need to clear my schedule for the long drive.

“Two days before Chanukah I finally met Sergiu. His hair was gray and his back was bent with age. He told me he’d read about Chabad of Cluj somewhere, and wanted to meet with an Orthodox rabbi.

“‘Here I am! What can I do for you?’ I asked.

“Sergiu shared his life story with me. He’d grown up in Transnistria, a German-occupied strip of land between Moldova and Ukraine. Many Romanian and Hungarian Jews were transported to Bogdanovka, a labor camp in that area. He’d led a fascinating life, eventually joining the Securitate, the secret police of the Communist regime.

“‘I called you because I wanted to reconnect with my Judaism,’ he concluded.

“‘What made you seek me out now?’ I asked him.

“‘Last Yom Kippur, I attended synagogue for the first time,’ he explained. ‘It woke something up inside of me, and I decided to contact you.’

“‘He refused to put on tefillin and any other suggestion of a mitzva that he could practically was met with a similar response.

“But two days later, Sergiu sent me a picture of himself and his wife next to a menorah that they had lit, along with the caption, ‘Rabbi, you’ve warmed my heart.’

“I visited a quaint little village just outside of Cluj called Cojocna. I asked my friend if there were any Jews in the area.

“Not since the war,” he told me, shaking his head.

We continued driving through the village.

“Wait,” he said, suddenly. “Turn here!”

He led me through a bewildering number of turns, until we parked in front of an old farmhouse, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. Chickens and pigs grazed freely in the yard, supervised by an old man.

“He might be Jewish,” my friend said.

I approached the farmer and introduced myself. Emil, the elderly farmer, was 92 years old! He was born in Austria, pre-World War II, to a Jewish mother. His father was from Cojocna, and they relocated there when Emil was just a boy. Meeting a rabbi so randomly was a shock for him. Surrounded by picturesque scenery and snorting pigs, Emil wrapped tefillin around his arm for the first time in his life.

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Hakhel – Unite!

Hakhel emphasizes the Torah-education of our children. It follows that those who are grown in years but still “children” in Jewish knowledge; all those who for one reason or another, did not get the proper Jewish education, and even those who do not feel that they are missing something – they also must be assembled to let them hear and learn about Judaism in a way that will imbue them with awe and respect of G-d. And most importantly, that they should “observe and do all the words of this Torah...as if they heard it from G-d himself.” (*The Rebbe, 19th of Kislev, 1987*)

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

8th of Nissan, 5722 [1962]

your letter, is that the next one coming from you will be more cheerful.

I trust that during the time since our meeting much has been accomplished in the matters which we discussed. More over, I hope that the difficulties which seemed to exist at the time turned out to be much less formidable than anticipated, and that this will therefore stimulate greater and much more rapid advancement, especially as when one is determined to do the right thing, one receives special help from On High, as our Sages assure us.

With the approach of Pesach, the Season of Our Freedom, may G-d grant every one of us a greater measure of freedom from all manner of anxiety and difficulty, so as to be able to serve Him with joy and gladness of heart without hindrance, in good health physically and spiritually, which go hand in hand together.

Wishing you and yours a kosher and happy Pesach,

12th of Nissan, 5739 [1979]

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th of Adar, which reached me with considerable delay. May G-d grant the fulfillment of your heart’s desires for good.

As in all good things, there is the assurance of *Yogato u’Motzozo* [he worked hard and succeeded].

If you will let me know also your mother’s Hebrew name, as is customary, I will remember you in prayer when visiting the holy resting place of my father-in-law of saintly memory.

With reference to your writing “I do not ‘hold’ by a Rebbe now. My allegiance is to the Yiddishkeit with which I grew up,” etc. – of course, what is expected of you, as of every Jew, is that the daily life and conduct should be in accordance with the Torah, *Toras Chaim* [the Torah of life], and this is the very essence of Yiddishkeit. However, inasmuch as the Torah is described as “longer than the earth and wider than the sea,” it is normal that no individual, however proficient he is in Torah and Mitzvos, and however educated he is, isolates himself from others, from whom he can learn a better and deeper understanding of Torah, at any rate, in those areas where he has not yet attained the highest level. This is the function of a Rebbe, a teacher and instructor who have in their sphere of learning devoted more time and attained a higher level of knowledge, etc.

Wishing you a Kosher and inspiring Pesach.

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

For the first 13 days of the month of Nisan, a special portion of the Torah known as the “*Nesi'im*” is read, enumerating the offerings that each leader of the 12 tribes brought to the Sanctuary. As the Sanctuary, and later the Holy Temple, occupy a central place in Judaism, let us take a deeper look at their significance.

G-d, of course, is everywhere, as the Torah states, “The earth is filled with His glory.” In the same way that the soul animates the body, G-d’s Divine Presence fills and sustains the world.

Nonetheless, G-d commanded the Jews to build a special Sanctuary in which His Presence would be openly manifested, to remind them that G-d was always in their midst. The instructions for erecting the Sanctuary were given to Moses on the day after Yom Kippur, in the second year after the Exodus.

The Sanctuary was a portable structure with many components: the Tent of Meeting, the Holy of Holies, the menorah and altar, the ark in which the Ten Commandments were kept, etc. The Sanctuary served as G-d’s dwelling place on earth for a total of 479 years: 39 in the desert, 14 in Galgal, 369 in Shiloh, 13 in Nov, and 44 in Givon.

At that point the focus turned to Jerusalem. No longer would the Sanctuary be moved from place to place. The first Holy Temple was built by King Solomon, and stood for 410 years. The second Holy Temple stood for 420, until the time of the Romans.

The third Holy Temple will be built by Moshiach. Superior to all the structures that preceded it, it will be an eternal edifice that stands forever. In the Messianic era, G-d’s Divine Presence in the world will be restored, and His dwelling place on earth established for eternity. At that time, the entire world will be bathed in a G-dly light.

May we merit to see it immediately.

Shmuel Butman

L’ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חי'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.



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MOSHIACH MATTERS

When Moshiah comes everyone will manifestly see how the life-force that animates the organs of the body stems from Divinity,

explains Rabbi Sholom Ber of Lubavitch in a Chasidic Discourse. It will then be seen that every individual organ lives from the Divine life-force that is drawn into it by the fulfillment of the particular mitzvah which relates to that organ. For, as is well known, the 248 positive commandments correspond to the 248 bodily organs. (*The Rebbe, parshat Shemini, 1953*)