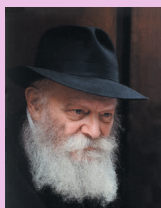


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion Noach, we read of G-d's command to Noah to build an ark. The ark would be a safe-haven during the flood that will last for 40 days and 40 nights. Into the ark Noah will bring his family and pairs of all of the world's animal life to be saved from the flood. The turbulent waters that destroyed so much were the very same water that lifted the ark high above the highest mountain tops, carrying Noah, his family and the animals who repopulated the world.

The key is to enter the ark, especially when the waters get rough. The ark symbolizes an environment of hope, trust and closeness and commitment to G-d.

The word for "ark" in Hebrew is "teiva." Teiva also means "word." Jewish teachings relate this to words of Torah. The Torah is a source of strength and a refuge in times of difficulty. It also gives you the right perspective, which will keep you positive.

In Noah's ark, animals of prey coexisted with the other animals. This occurred because in the ark the "light" of Moshiach shone; an atmosphere of peace and no strife permeated the ark. The times of Moshiach is the goal of our existence, and when you understand the purpose and are focused on the goal, the waters are easier to navigate.

Being on the ark was hard work for Noah. He had to feed and take care of all of the animals. But the outcome of all of his hard work was that he saved the world. Doing what G-d wants is hard work, but what it accomplishes is amazing. That is the way struggles, traumas, difficulties, etc., are. They can destroy you, but with the right attitude they can lift you up. Just like the waters of the flood, they can destroy or they can uplift. Having a strong support system in difficult times and looking toward a goal that makes you part of something greater enables you to be stronger than you would be on your own.

We have to realize that our struggles are of extreme importance, and when we finally complete our work, we will have brought the world to its ultimate destination, and the reward will be unlimited.

May we merit to see the completion of our toil and our struggles once and for all, with the coming of Moshiach.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the Rebbe's teachings, yitzihurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

WAKENINGS

This article is based on a true story.

A heavy silence hovered over the small Indian village. There was no wind, not even a breeze to ruffle the leaves. The palm trees dropped, the large leaves of the banana tree were shriveled and lifeless. Dust filled the air. The skeletal cows wandered aimlessly through the dirt roads. Children stood in the doorways of thatched huts, their eyes black and somber in their dark faces. The sun beat down mercilessly upon the parched village. The fields were empty. There were no men singing as they worked. There was no rain.

The July monsoons had not yet arrived. People lay on their mats, squatted in doorways, waiting for the rain they might never live to see.

Ruchama arrived that afternoon. For years she had come to India to learn the art of native dancing. But this time it was different. She had come to India as a Torah observant Jew. She stood by the hotel room window and looked down upon the village square. How far away Brooklyn seemed from this remote corner of India. It was Friday afternoon, and sunset came quickly. She bent over her knapsack, and took out the two brass candlesticks, the white cloth, the challahs.

She noticed a movement in the square. The aged wise man of the village was calling the people together. Slowly people emerged from the houses and came shuffling toward him. They stood listlessly as he spoke to them. She could not catch his words.

It was time to light the Shabbat candles. She struck the match. The candles glowed in the dusk. Covering her eyes she said the blessing slowly, saying each word with deep feeling: "Baruch Ata Hashem--Blessed are you G-d. May Your bounty be drawn into this world. Elokeinu--our G-d, but also King of the world, King even

here, in this starving village at the end of the world, Who has commanded us to kindle the Shabbat candles." It occurred to Ruchama that these were probably the first Shabbat candles ever lit on this spot, that indeed, it must be the first Shabbat ever welcomed in this portion of India.

The Shabbat candles flickered. A small breeze sprang up from the open window. The flames leaped joyfully. The wind began to blow more strongly and the flame grew. The first rain drops fell. Ruchama closed the window against the storm. She watched as the water came down in sheets.

The wise man stood gazing at her window. He walked with purposeful steps to the hotel door, and tapped on it gently. Ruchama opened the door. The wise man greeted her with a warm smile. He gestured with his withered hands at the candles.

"Who are you, my daughter, and what are these lights?" "My name is Ruchama, and these are Sabbath candles."

"And what is the purpose of these candles?" "They bring light and blessing into this dark world."

"Where do you come from and who are your people?"

"I am a Jew."

He spread his hands over the candles in blessing.

"Ah, the Jews. You are a holy nation protected by a Mighty G-d. With these two candles you have brought rain--life--to our village." He bowed, and walked out into the torrents of rain.

Ruchama had a feeling that this would be the last time she would come to India. Her purpose here had been fulfilled.

Reprinted from The Yiddische Heim.

SLICE OF LIFE

Holiday Celebrations Around the World

As the month of Tishrei with its many holidays starting with Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, followed by Sukkot and Simchat Torah comes to an end, we share with you special moments of holiday celebrations from around the world.

May the blessings and inspiration of the holidays continue to be with us, giving us the clarity and strength to illuminate and uplift our surroundings with the light Torah and Mitzvot.

Yom Kippur in Moscow

At the Marina Roscha shul in Moscow, erev Yom Kippur was marked with kaporos and the giving out lekach, sweet honey cake. Before Yom Kippur worked the office of Russia's Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar with an extensive team to accommodate the throngs of guests, from all shades of the Jewish spectrum in the Russian Capital.

Distributing Shabbos candles, yahrtzeit candles, yarmulkes, kitlach, tallisos, arranging comfortable seats, machzorim prayer books with translation, and wonderful cantors, all in the large, air-conditioned synagogue.

As the fast concluded on Motzei Shabbos, the crowds burst into spontaneous singing and dancing of "Napoleon's March," while the Chief Rabbi enthusiastically waves them on.



Russia's Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar addressing the crowd at the concluding of Yom Kippur.

USS Aircraft Carrier Welcomes Kosher Sukkah on Deck

Amid its mission in the Arabian Sea, where it closely monitors and addresses threats to U.S. interests, the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier has welcomed a unique addition to its deck.

After navigating through extensive paperwork and permits, just in time for Sukkos, Lieutenant Yehoshua Rubin, a chaplain serving with Carrier Air Wing Nine, successfully erected a fully kosher Sukkah on board using wood pallets attached together. A fighter jet whose wing protruded above the sukka was duly moved to make the sukka kosher.



The Sukkah aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier

The Sukkah will provide Jewish servicemen with a place to observe the mitzvah of sukka, including the shaking the lulav and esrog, which Rubin received just in time after they were flown in from Bahrain.

Amidst Ukraine's War, Jews In Kharkiv Celebrate Sukkos

In the heart of Ukraine's warzone, Kharkiv defied adversity by hosting a sukka large enough for hundreds, embodying the indomitable spirit of Jewish unity. Despite the ongoing conflict, the streets were alive with music, laughter, and celebration as over 500 people came together to shake the lulav in a demonstration of pride and resilience.

As the vibrant melodies filled the air, men, women, and children flocked to the expansive sukka in front of the shul. They shook the lulav and soon gathered for a grand concert, where Rabbi Moishe Moskovitz, the chief rabbi of Kharkiv, emphasized the power of unity and the importance of coming together, even in wartime. His message resonated deeply in a city renowned for its strength and determination against all odds.



Rabbi Moishe Moskovitz addressing the large Sukkah gathering at the large Kharkiv Sukkah gathering.

Sukkah Stands Tall at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland

Nestled within the U.S. Army's oldest active proving ground, a sukka was built at Aberdeen Proving Ground, thanks to the efforts of Baltimore Chabad Shliach Rabbi Chesky Tenenbaum, director of the Jewish Uniformed Service Association of Maryland. The Sukka was available for use by the

Jewish members of APG throughout the days of Chol Hamoed.

JUSA hosted a Sukka Party on the third day of Chol Hamoed that was well attended by soldiers and employees of APG, were they had a chance to do the Mitzvah of Lulav and Estrog and make a Brocha in the Sukka.



Chabad Rabbi Chesky Tenenbaum, director of the Jewish Uniformed Service Association of Maryland, in the Sukkah at the Aberdeen Proving Ground.

600 Celebrate Simchas Bais Hashoeiva in San Francisco

San Francisco's Jewish community gathered in unprecedented numbers on Sunday Chol Hamoed for a grand Simchas Bais Hashoeva, hosted by 14 local Chabad Houses and Shuls. With over 600 attendees, the celebration of Sukkos filled the streets with music, joy, and unity.

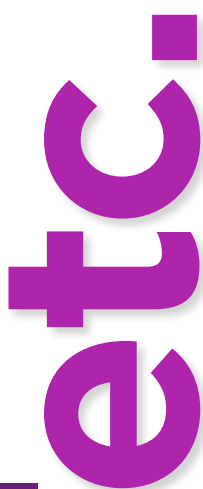
The festival offered a wide array of activities for all ages, from a rock climbing wall and moon bounces to edible sukka crafts and balloon sculpting. Juggler Jefferson stole the show with a dazzling fire juggling performance that had the audience captivated.

But the night reached its peak when singer Oriyah Shiff, together with one-man band Yoey Muchnik on keyboard, led the crowd in a rousing rendition of "Ivri Anochi." Hundreds joined in the spirited dancing, with the energy of the crowd rising to new heights.

The message of the evening was clear: "After a challenging year, we need to double the joy," explained Rabbi Nosson Potash, one of the event's organizers. The lively music, dancing, and festive atmosphere reflected this message perfectly, as young and old celebrated together in a display of resilience and community spirit.



Grand Sukkot celebration in San Francisco



New Shluchim to the USA Niagara Falls in New York

Niagara Falls, New York, a city known for its majestic waterfalls and breathtaking natural beauty, is about to experience a spiritual surge with the arrival of its new shluchim: Rabbi Yehuda and Yehudis Lorber who will serve the local Jewish community and visitors alike.

Rabbi Lorber and his family join the Regional Shluchim of Chabad Lubavitch of Western New York under head shliach Rabbi Nosson Gurary. "After several years of successful programs it was time to establish a permanent Chabad Center" says Rabbi Lorber. With a special permit from Niagara Falls State Park the Mitzvah Tank has access to enter and operate right in the center of the tourist attraction. A unique Tanya was printed which drew hundreds of people. Public Chanukah Menorahs are placed at the City Hall, Niagara Falls Airport, and at the Niagara Falls State Park. Last year during Sukkos for the first ever on the American side, a Public Sukkah was built right by the Falls. Another outstanding accomplishment is the city's declaration of Education and Sharing Day honoring the Rebbe on his birthday signed by the Mayor, and the initiation of the Rebbe's Moment of Silence program in the entire School District of the City of Niagara Falls.

CUSTOMS

Are there any special customs associated with traveling?

A special "Prayer for Travelers" (Tefilat HaDerech) is said upon reaching the outskirts of the city from which you are traveling. If one will be away for more than one day, the prayer is said--without using G-d's name--each subsequent day after the morning prayers.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

MARRIAGE: TRULY ONE 8 Tishrei, 5722 (1962)

I received your letter, in which you write about the various problems relating to the arrangement of your wedding in a happy and auspicious hour.

Generally speaking, and as I have written to you before, and to others in similar circumstances, it is necessary to bear in mind that a marriage is not only the beginning of a partnership, but the beginning of a union, where both parties truly become one, and united for life, in order to set up an "everlasting edifice," as mentioned in the text of the sacred blessings.

Therefore, it is clear that everything should be done in order to assure the maximum degree of compliance with the will of G-d, the Creator and Master of the universe and of man, Whose Providence extends to everyone individually.

Even if it is a question of Hiddur [enhancement of a mitzva], or even an extra measure of Hiddur, and even if there are some difficulties to overcome in this connection, no effort should be spared to do even that, because it is all for the added benefit of the "everlasting edifice."

Incidentally, even among non-Jews, tremendous importance is attached to the marriage ceremony, which is attended by all sorts of customs and practices designed to bring good luck and good fortune to the newlyweds, with all sorts of symbols, good omens, etc.

As for the question of the actual problems, it is necessary to consult an Orthodox Rav in your vicinity, to whom you could personally and orally explain all the details.

It is also essential to remember that the ways of the Torah are ways of pleasantness and peace, and nothing is more hateful than dissension and strife, while nothing is more praiseworthy than peace, which is the vessel" for all blessings. It is in this spirit that the various problems and differences should be settled...

27th of Shevat, 5722 (1962)

I received your letter of the 20th of Shevat, in which you bring to my attention the problem of a certain businessman in your community, Mr. K., who is generally an observant Jew, but is involved in a business which makes it difficult for him to observe Shabbat, but now a suggestion was made to him to enter another field in which he could avoid the desecration of Shabbat.

It is clear to the unbiased mind, and even to plain common sense, that the Al-mighty, Who is the Giver of the Torah and mitzvot, is also the Creator and Master of the world, Whose benevolent Providence extends to everyone individually. Therefore when G-d commanded us to live in the way of the Torah and mitzvot, He has also given us the ability to live accordingly under all circumstances, and He has given us also the power to overcome any obstacles.

It is only a matter of will and determination on the part of every Jew, since, potentially, he has the fullest capacity to live up to the will and commandments of G-d, the Creator and Master of the world.

It is also obvious that this is the only way for a Jew to be truly happy, materially and spiritually. It is only because G-d is infinitely merciful and patient that He does not immediately impose the consequences of any breach of His commandments, in order to permit the individual to mend his ways.

It is also equally obvious that no lasting good can come from breaking G-d's laws, especially such a fundamental law as Shabbat observance, for the important thing is not how much money a person earns, but that he should be able to spend it in good health and on happy things, which is entirely in the hands of G-d.

In view of the above, it is quite clear what your attitude (of the businessman in question) should be, even if there were no other immediate business proposition. For it is necessary, without delay, to give up the kind of business which interferes with Shabbat observance, with the full confidence that He who feeds and sustains three billion people and all living things will also be able to take care of the individual and his family, and provide him with a source of parnasa [livelihood] which should not be in conflict with the will of G-d.

I trust you will convey the above to the Gentleman in question, as well as to others who might be in a similar position.

Hoping to hear good news from you,

The laws of the Sanctuary, its building and maintenance, should not be viewed as a theoretical exercise, but as something of immediate relevance. The lessons and morals are more than associated analogies; they are the blueprint for our inner Sanctuary, a structure as solid and physical as even the holiest building..

(From Reflections of Redemption based on Likutei Sichos 36, by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann o.b.m.)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'Chaim Publication.

From the Archives

The holidays are past; the days of introspection for the previous year have come and gone. This week, Parshat Noach, is therefore an appropriate time to make a good account of the coming year.

As we continue to improve on the past and try to plan for the future, we need to keep one thing in mind: Although an individual may realize that he has things and areas that need improvement, as a whole the Jewish people have accomplished what needs to be accomplished. As the Rebbe taught, "We must be conscious that all the service necessary has been completed and we are 'ready to receive Moshiach.'

Therefore, even if there is a particular dimension of our own personal service which is lacking... this does not diminish the fact that as a whole, our service is complete and we are ready for the Redemption. "On the contrary," the Rebbe explained, "the fact that, as a whole, we are prepared for the Redemption, makes it easier for us to complete all the individual elements of our service and to do so with happiness." The Rebbe went on to use an analogy to further explain this concept.

When a person is healthy as a whole, if he has a small ailment in one of his limbs it can easily be cured. Similarly, since as a whole, the Jewish nation is healthy, i.e., our service has been completed, teshuva [repentance] which is described as "healing," can cure all the particular difficulties of both individuals and the Jewish people. Whether or not on an individual basis there are small ailments that need to be cured, as a whole, the Jewish people are healthy and our service in this long and bitter exile has been completed.

Let us not, Heaven forbid, give G-d excuses as to why we are still in exile. As the Rebbe told someone at Sunday dollars who suggested that there are conditions that still need to be met before Moshiach can come, "Why are you making conditions? Moshiach is long overdue!"

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.



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MOSHIACH MATTERS

One of the accomplishments of Moshiach will be the rebuilding of the Temple. Indeed, this is one of the final proofs of Moshiach's identity. Obviously, then, anything connected with the Temple is perforce connected with Moshiach.



IT HAPPENED ONCE

Many years ago there lived a Chasid of the Baal Shem Tov who was very poor. When someone suggested that he rent a certain tavern and become its manager, he took the advice and went to find the owner of the establishment. As the tavern was located in a very desolate spot, far off the beaten path, the owner didn't even ask how much he was willing to pay, and immediately agreed.

The Chasid then borrowed money to buy provisions, and moved into the inn with his family. Although the Chasid was no longer starving, the inn provided a very meager source of income. One time, the Baal Shem Tov was passing through the region and stopped at the inn, much to the Chasid's joy. The Baal Shem Tov asked him to prepare a fine meal for himself and his attendant, but before they could eat he called the Chasid over and told him that he had lost his valuable snuffbox.

The Baal Shem Tov asked the Chasid to take his horse and search through the surrounding forest until he found it. The Chasid immediately complied, although it was the middle of the night. Suddenly, he heard a voice calling from the distance. "Someone help! Please save me!" Going over to investigate he discovered that the carriage of a wealthy nobleman had fallen into a ditch and was stuck in the mud. The Chasid was able to extricate the carriage and the nobleman, who introduced himself as Prince so-and-so, was extremely grateful. As the Prince was soaking wet and trembling from the cold, the Chasid invited him back to the inn to warm up. The Baal Shem Tov then insisted that the meal that had been prepared for him be served to the nobleman instead.

The next morning, the Baal Shem Tov told the Chasid that if the nobleman wanted to offer him money, he was to refuse it. Indeed, before the Prince's departure he offered the Jew 2000 rubles as payment for his kindness, but he refused to accept it. "Perhaps you'd like more," the nobleman then pressed him. "Here is 10,000 rubles." Again the Chasid refused. When the Prince offered him the staggering sum of 100,000 rubles, he ran back to the Baal Shem Tov to ask if he was permitted to accept it. "I've told you not to accept even a penny!" the Baal Shem Tov replied. The Chasid returned to the nobleman and declared, "I will not take any of your money. I did not help you in order to receive a reward." The Prince then offered him a treasure in gold coins in addition to the rubles, but the Chasid stood firm.

When the Prince saw that it was impossible to change the Chasid's mind, he asked him for his name so he could at least record it for posterity. The Prince then went on his way. Before the Baal Shem Tov departed, he asked the Chasid if he wished to give him a few cents for a pidyon (as is customary among Chasidim when asking for a blessing). The Chasid gave him his last few coins, and the Baal Shem Tov blessed him with good fortune. After the Baal Shem Tov left the Chasid's wife let out a huge sigh. Not only had they refused a great fortune, but now they were completely penniless! At that moment there was a knock on the door. Someone was requesting a glass of whiskey.

The Chasid told his wife to pour water into the empty whiskey barrel; maybe the water would somehow acquire the taste of whiskey from the few drops left at the bottom. Surprisingly, the customer reported that the whiskey was delicious and unusually strong. The process was repeated, and again the water was miraculously transformed. Over the next few years the Chasid and his wife made a fine living selling this whiskey. They eventually bought the inn and became very wealthy. Sometime later, two gentile businessmen lodged at the inn. In the middle of the night they had a violent argument, and one of them

murdered the other. The next morning the guilty party accused the Jewish innkeeper of the crime (supposedly to rob the businessman), and the Chasid was hauled off to jail. The case was tried, and the Chasid was found guilty and sentenced to death. In the meantime, the Prince who had once been helped by the Chasid had become King. As supreme monarch of the land, all executions had to be personally approved by him before they could be carried out. When the case came before the King, he recognized the name at once. He insisted that he would not sign the decree until he had spoken to the accused. The prisoner was summoned to the palace. When the King saw the Chasid he thought to himself, "Surely, someone who refused 100,000 rubles when he was on the edge of starvation would not commit murder to steal money as a wealthy man." Further inquiries were made, and the real murderer was arrested and hanged. And the treasure the Chasid had refused years before was finally bestowed on him, together with several valuable properties.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just, perfect man in his generation (Gen. 6:9)
 Rashi comments: This verse teaches us that the most important legacy of a righteous person is his good deeds. A righteous person is not defined by his lineage or by his noble ancestry, but by his own actions and behavior. (*Divrei Yisrael*)

A just, perfect man in his generation (6:9)
 Noah's perfection was that he followed G-d's will completely and with all of his being throughout the day, not just when he learned and prayed, but with mundane matters as well. (*Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

And it [the flood] blotted out every living thing...both man and animal (7:23)
 If mankind sinned, why did the animals have to be punished, too? This is explained by a parable. A person prepared a great wedding feast for his son's upcoming marriage, and procured the finest delicacies for the celebration. Before the marriage could take place, however, the son died. The father then dismantled the wedding canopy and threw away all the elaborate preparations he had made, saying, "What do I need all these for? Now that my son is dead all this is useless." Similarly, when G-d saw that mankind had sinned, He said, "What use is there for the whole animal kingdom now? I only created them to serve mankind."
 (*Sanhedrin Kach*)



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