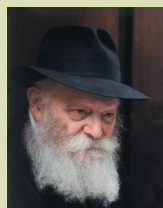


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

*from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion*

In the Torah, two different names are used to refer to the tribes of Israel—"shevatim" and "matot" (as in the name of the first of the two Torah portions read this week, "Matot"). "Shevet," literally a staff and "mateh," literally a rod or stem, both denote the branches of a tree. The difference between them is that a shevet is a supple branch, attached to a living tree, whereas a mateh is a hardened stick already cut from the trunk.

The two names have spiritual significance, and refer to the type of connection every Jew has with G-d. When the connection between the Jewish soul and its G-dly source is revealed, the word shevet is used. When, however, the bond between the Jew and G-d is hidden the word matot is used.

In general, the first description refers to the Jewish soul as it exists before coming down into the physical world, when the soul is united with G-d, just as the branch is still connected to its source of life.

After the soul makes its descent into a physical body, however, it more closely resembles the mateh which has been severed from the trunk. The afflictions of the physical body and the demands of the material world harden the tender soul, make the soul tough and less sensitive to spirituality.

Yet despite the fact that the shevet is still connected to its source, it is not as strong and rigid as the superior mateh, which has been tempered by its experience. The branch, while attached to the tree, is green and flexible. Only after it is cut off does it become a sturdy and dependable rod.

This, in essence, is the purpose for which the soul is sent down into this world and distanced from its G-dly source—to uncover the soul's hidden strengths and enable it to reach an even higher level of spiritual closeness to G-d than before. When the soul overcomes the challenges of the Evil Inclination and the hardships of a physical existence, its bond with G-d becomes infinitely stronger and deeper.

The distinction between shevet and mateh exists on another level, too. When the Holy Temple existed and G-dliness openly illuminated the world, the Jewish people were on the level of shevet. After the destruction, however, and the advent of the dark and bitter exile, we find ourselves on the level of mateh.

When Moshiach comes and the G-dliness which is concealed within all of creation is revealed, the Jewish people, through having uncovered the "mateh" within their souls, will then enjoy an even closer relationship with G-d, the true purpose of the entire exile.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Do You Like the People You Love?

By Rabbi Nechemia Schusterman

"I love you, but I'm not in love with you!" So goes the old cliché. Kind of a bizarre saying, as how can you separate the two?

Stranger still is this line: "I love you, but I don't like you." If you love someone, most certainly you like them!

But you see, there can be a phenomenon where a person can have what "seems" to be the higher degree of affection, without the lower one.

Here's what I mean: Between Passover and Shavuot we observe a minor level of mourning. We don't listen to live music or get married (amongst other mourning practices), since during this period of time the 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva, the great Talmudic sage and teacher, died.

Why did they die? The Talmud states that it was because they did not accord honor to one another.

How is this possible? First of all, these were not students in your fourth-grade class, where petty rivalry is the norm. These were among the greatest and holiest Torah scholars to have ever lived. How could they be guilty of not respecting one another?

Even more puzzling is that these were the students of the great Rabbi Akiva, who lived by one primary credo: "Love your fellow as yourself." How could his students, the first line of promulgators of their teacher's teachings, not observe their mentor's lesson?

This can be understood, perhaps, by considering the difference between loving and liking.

I love that which is me or mine. My child is mine. He is but an extension of me, so of course I love him. Not loving him would be akin to not loving my hand. It is a part of me. I naturally love it, as I do my child.

My kids will often ask: Which of us (seven children) do you love most? I always answer that this question is like asking me which of my fingers I love

most. I love them all equally.

However, when it comes to liking, I may not like them all the same. It is actually harder to like a person than to love him or her. Liking someone means accepting that about them which is different from you.

I can love my child and still not like him. I love them because they are an extension of me, but I may not like how they are behaving.

If my child is acting in the manner I see fit, then I don't need to like him, as I already love him. To truly like someone is to embrace all of his or her differences. Then I am liking the other person. Not myself.

To like my child is to respect all of his idiosyncratic behaviors. To respect him despite the thoughts, speech and actions that are not to my approval. If I can respect him enough to have a difference of opinion, then I not only love him, but I like him as well.

Rabbi Akiva's students certainly loved one another, in keeping with their master's teachings. When focusing on their similarities—all children of G-d and students of Rabbi Akiva—they were able to love their fellow.

However, to like their colleagues, to respect opposing points of view and allow each other to have a competing opinion without judgement—well, in that regard, there was still work to do. That is where they needed to improve.

In the world of parenting, to like your children is a lot harder than to love them, but it is oh-so-much more important. When I have a child who is behaving in a manner that is not in line with my vision, yet I still find room in my heart for acceptance without feeling the need to fit him or her into my mold, my image—I show that I truly like the child.

They know it, they can feel it, and they respond to it.

This season, let's try not only to love one another, let's try to like each other too.

SLICE OF LIFE

From Siberian Exile to Spiritual Renewal



R' Mordechai Gorelik at his grandsons Bar Mitzvah.

Tears streamed down Mordechai Gorelik's weathered face as he watched his grandson Notch wrap tefillin around his arm for the first time. The winter sun cast long shadows across the frozen Siberian landscape, illuminating a moment that bridged generations—a bar mitzvah celebration in the very place where his grandparents had once risked their lives to practice Judaism in secret.

"Warm tears flowed from my eyes when I saw my grandson putting on tefillin in frozen Tyumen, in the same place where his grandparents risked their lives to observe mitzvot underground," recalls Mordechai, an 81-year-old architect born in Samarkand in the former Soviet Union. "There, in Siberia, a circle of generations closed, from darkness to light."

This poignant moment represented the culmination of a remarkable family journey spanning continents and decades. Mordechai, who immigrated to Israel in 1971 and now lives in the Chabad neighborhood of Kiryat Malachi, had returned to Siberia to witness two significant events: the dedication of a mikvah (ritual bath) in the Chabad House directed by his son, Rabbi Yerachmiel, and his grandson Notch's bar mitzvah.

"When the community gathered around my grandson, and Rabbi Berel Lazar, the Chief Rabbi of Russia, affixed a mezuzah in the new Chabad House during the mikvah dedication

that I had the privilege to design—I felt Siberia's soul awakening anew," Mordechai reflects with evident emotion. "Once they persecuted us there for our Judaism, and today my grandson stands proudly as a Hasidic Jewish boy. For me, this was the pinnacle of a fascinating family journey."

Their story begins decades earlier in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where the dream of leaving the Soviet Union seemed impossibly distant. Mordechai's father had endured eight grueling years in a Siberian labor camp, and his repeated applications for exit permits were systematically denied.

"Through unofficial channels, he sent a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe asking for a blessing," Mordechai explains. "The Rebbe's response arrived in a letter sent by a cousin living in New York: 'Travel to Almaty (then the capital of Kazakhstan), pray at the grave of my father (Rabbi Levi Yitzchak), and salvation will come.' We set out—my father, my two brothers, and I."

In Almaty, after praying with all their hearts, they meticulously photographed the gravesite from every possible angle. Shortly thereafter, a partial miracle occurred—Mordechai and his older brother received exit permits, but his parents and younger brother did not. "We immigrated to Israel on the 21st of Av, 1971, and my greatest desire was to travel to see the Rebbe."

On the eve of Yom Kippur in 1972, Mordechai finally arrived in New York. "I saw the Rebbe blessing the congregation with the Yom Kippur Eve blessings. I managed to receive a piece of cake from his hand." During his first private audience, Mordechai asked for a blessing for his parents and brother still trapped in the Soviet Union. The Rebbe's enigmatic response would resonate for years to come: "Your father is still needed there."

After the month of Tishrei, Mordechai secured another private audience, this time bringing the photographs from Almaty. "The Rebbe examined them with a magnifying glass," he recalls. "He asked: 'What's the distance to the non-Jewish graves? Who is buried next to him?' I answered to the best of my ability. And suddenly the Rebbe turned his gaze to the window, and his voice was soft as a prayer: 'Is it possible to transfer the gravesite to New York? Has there been such a precedent?' After a long silence, he remarked: 'Let it remain as is... and please tell your father that I wish to renovate the tombstone.'"

The Rebbe provided Mordechai with detailed instructions: create a new stone with identical text to the existing one, preserve the Star of David, attach the stone with cement only—no screws. Most importantly, the engraver must be Shabbat-observant. All expenses were to be recorded, and the Rebbe would cover everything. When Mordechai's father received these instructions, he began the challenging work. Finding a Shabbat-observant engraver in Soviet Kazakhstan proved nearly impossible. Eventually, they discovered a Jewish man named Gabriel, whose father had been an engraver and who had observed his craft. Mordechai's father set a strict condition: daily immersion in a mikvah.

After engraving just two lines, Gabriel fell seriously ill. But Mordechai's father declared with unwavering faith, "There's a blessing from the Rebbe; you will recover!" Remarkably, Gabriel did recover and completed the tombstone.

The spiritual rewards of this sacred mission soon became evident. Immediately after the tombstone's completion, in Tevet 1972, Mordechai's parents and brother received their long-awaited exit permits. "It was truly miraculous!"

Mordechai's father and brother traveled to see the Rebbe for the 11th of Nissan, 1972. Before Passover, they received four whole matzot from the Rebbe, and during their private audience, he told them: "What you did for me—I will pay. And what you did for fellow Jews—G-d will pay from His full and open hand." The Rebbe requested the list of expenses and paid them in full.

Years later, at a global convention of Chabad emissaries, Mordechai encountered Gabriel's grandson, who serves as an emissary in Vienna. "The grandson told me: 'My grandfather had a terminal illness, and thanks to the tombstone project, he lived for another thirty years.'"

As Mordechai watches his grandson praying in Siberia today, the story comes full circle. Where his father once suffered in a labor camp, his grandson now celebrates his Jewish heritage openly. The mysterious words of the Rebbe—"Your father is still needed there"—now make perfect sense. His father had one final mission to complete before he could leave: to restore the gravesite of the Rebbe's father, preserving a sacred link in the chain of generations.

Adapted from Sichat HaShavua



World's Largest Mezuzah Installed at New Chabad Center in South Brunswick, N.J.

On the side of Route 130 in South Brunswick, N.J., a striking new sight is drawing both local traffic and out-of-town visitors: the world's largest kosher mezuzah, towering over six feet tall, mounted proudly at the entrance of Chabad of South Brunswick's newly built center since it was installed on June 13.

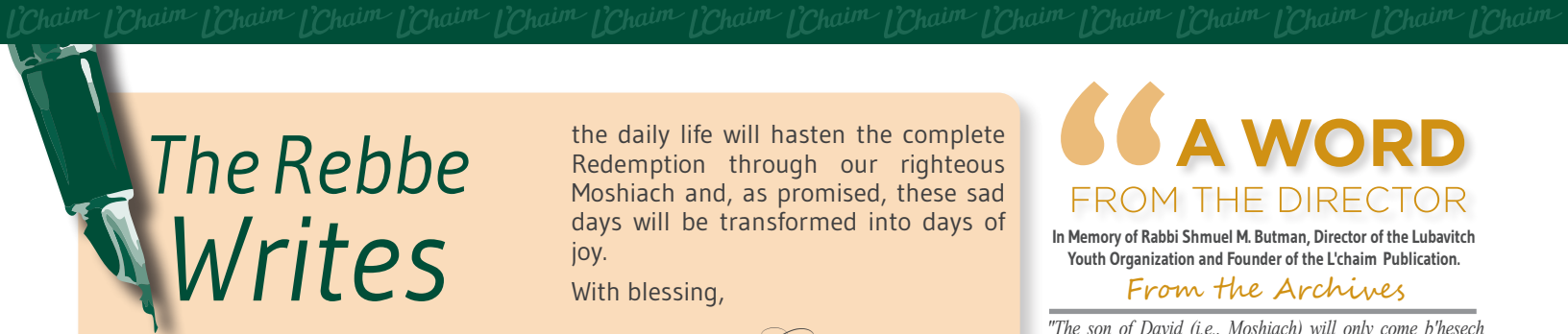
The mezuzah was commissioned by the children of Rabbi Levi and Goldie Azimov, who direct the center, to mark the occasion of their community's new building. It was written by a scribe in Israel and measures two full meters (6.5 feet) in height. It surpasses the famously large mezuzahs at Ben-Gurion International Airport (1.01 meters) and the Western Wall (1.4 meters), making it the largest documented mezuzah in the world.

In addition, from now until Rosh Hashanah, the community will offer assistance to anyone in need of kosher mezuzahs for their home, with many provided at minimal cost. The program will also help facilitate home visits to inspect them and ensure they are properly affixed and kosher.

ETHICS OF THE FATHERS: CHAPTER TWO

Rabban Gamliel the son of Rabbi Judah HaNassi would say: Beautiful is the study of Torah with the way of the world, for the toil of them both causes sin to be forgotten. Ultimately, all Torah study that is not accompanied with work is destined to cease and to cause sin.

Those who work for the community should do so for the sake of Heaven; for then merit of their ancestors shall aid them, and their righteousness shall endure forever. And you, [says G-d,] I shall credit you with great reward as if you have achieved it.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

HIS GUIDING VISION

From the time that I was a child attending cheder, and even before, there began to take form in my mind a picture of the future redemption—the redemption of Israel from its last exile, a redemption such as would explain the suffering, the decrees and the massacres of galut...

Excerpt from a letter dated Nissan 11, 5716 (March 23, 1956)

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5724 [July 10, 1964]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Neshei u'Bnos Chabad

Blessing and Greeting:

As we are now commemorating the sad events which led to the Destruction of the Beth Hamikdash and the beginning of the present Exile, it should be remembered that the purpose of this commemoration is not just to inflict a sad period upon ourselves, but rather that we should be reminded and inspired to do all we can to lessen, and eventually remove altogether, the cause which brought about the sad events which we are now commemorating.

For, as we declare in our prayers, "Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land." It was the neglect of the Torah and Mitzvoth, in the daily life and practice, which resulted in the Destruction and Exile. Therefore efforts to strengthen and spread the observance of the Torah and Mitzvoth in

the daily life will hasten the complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach and, as promised, these sad days will be transformed into days of joy.

With blessing,

By the Grace of G-d
23rd of Tammuz, 5727
[July 31, 1967]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to receive regards from you through Rabbi Yitzchok Dubov, who also brought me your letter.

As requested, I will remember you in prayer when visiting the holy resting place of my father-in-law of saintly memory, for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good in all the matters about which you write. May G-d grant that you should have good news to report.

While we are at this time in the period of the Three Weeks, it has always been the Jewish fervent hope, in accordance with prophetic promise, that these days will be turned into days of gladness and joy. Hence they already carry the seeds of auspicious promise.

Needless to say, the way to hasten the fulfillment of the said promise is to do everything possible to remove the causes which brought about the period of the Three Weeks, namely "because of our sins we have been exiled from our land." Consequently the effort on the part of every Jew to spread the Torah and Mitzvoth helps to clear the way, and to hasten, the end of the Golus and the beginning of the true Geula. This is particularly important in the case of one whose field is Jewish education, as in your case, in accordance with your writing.

With blessing of Hatzlocho in Beth-Hillel,

him that his opinion is that Moshiach already exists here in the world and is presently doing what he needs to do—in a concealed manner—and that we have to strengthen our prayers and our repentance, for it is possible for us to hasten the chain of events leading up to our Righteous Moshiach and merit his complete revelation speedily in our days, amen"

(From Pirkei Teshuva U'Geula by Rabbi Sholom Shachne Zohn, 1970).

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 son of David (i.e., Moshiach) will only come b'hesech hadaat—unexpectedly," is a well-known saying. If this is true, how can we pray for, await, study, teach, and speak constantly about Moshiach?

We don't have to look very far to find the answer to this question. First, nowhere do our Sages make exactly the above statement. In the Talmud (Sanhedrin) it says, "The son of David won't come until they despair from exile," and "Three things come unexpectedly, they are: Moshiach, a 'find' (metzia), and a scorpion." This tells us, in no uncertain terms, that the Redemption will come suddenly, without us being notified in advance exactly when it will come.

Thus, the simple meaning of the statement from the Talmud is that the Redemption will be as much of a surprise as finding a "metzia" or a scorpion stinging. This is despite the fact that we are to constantly pray and think about and hope for the Redemption.

Even more so, the two examples given by the Talmud show us that thinking about and awaiting the Redemption do not contradict the teaching that it will come unexpectedly. A person can go around a whole day looking for a find or a bargain. But at the moment when he actually finds the "metzia" he is certainly surprised and elated. Similarly, even if one is warned that a field has scorpions in it, and one passes cautiously through the field, constantly looking all around for scorpions—one is certainly shocked if the scorpion does bite.

In addition, the "Maharsha" says some amazing things about this saying of our Sages. He explains why in this statement Moshiach is mentioned together with a "metzia" and a scorpion. "If he merits...Moshiach's coming will be for him like the unexpected appearance of a "metzia," he will rejoice and it will be good for him. But if he doesn't merit—the coming of Moshiach will be for him like the unexpectedness or the bite of a scorpion..."

The Rebbe explains that hesech hadaat is a very high level of waiting for Moshiach. We are required to await Moshiach, not on the basis of our own personal understanding of how good it will be for us when Moshiach comes. We must divert our attention from all of our thoughts of the material and spiritual good that will be ours in the Messianic Era; our thoughts need to be on one thing only—that the Divine purpose of the creation of the world will finally be realized—that there will be a dwelling place for G-dliness in this world."

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
Publishing Director
Program Director
Secretary
Administrator
Layout
Associate Editor
Chairman Editorial Comm.
Rebbe photo

Rabbi David Raskin ז"ל
Rabbi Shmuel Butman ז"ל
Rabbi Yosef Y. Butman
Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Rabbi Moshe P. Goldman
Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
Rivky Laufer
David Y. B. Kaufmann ז"ל
Rabbi Nissen Mangell
S. Roumani

L'Chaim contains words from sacred literature. Please do not deface or discard. All contents © 2025 by L.Y.O. ISSN 1050 0480

L'Chaim Subscriptions

For a one year regular or gift subscription, send \$55, payable to LYO (\$60 elsewhere) to: L'Chaim, 1408 President St, Bklyn., NY, 11213 Please call our office before sending in any subscriptions.

Learn about Moshiah

Visit www.moshiah.com or call (718) 953 6100

MOSHIACH MATTERS

"Two or three years ago I asked the Gaon, the great and famous teacher and rav, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, shlita, (z"l), what he says about the coming of Moshiach. He said to me then, and these are the exact words, 'He is certainly already here.' I understood from



The chasidim of Poland were reeling from the shock. Their rebbe, the tzadik Rabbi Moshe of Lelov, had decided to make aliya, to ascend and settle in the Holy Land! How could they possibly go on without his holy leadership?

To his most intimate chasidim he revealed that since early childhood, he had had an overwhelming desire to do something special to hasten the coming of Moshiach. When he was a small boy, Reb Moshe's father, Rabbi David of Lelov, had told him, "I did not merit to see the Holy Land, but you must go there. Through your divine service which you will perform there, you will succeed in bringing Moshiach sooner and hastening the Geula, the Redemption." This was the true reason, known only to a select few, that the tzadik was preparing for his journey to the Holy Land.

He passed through many towns and villages on his way, accompanied by his chasidim. He came to the town of Sadigur and he stopped to say his farewell to the tzadik, Rabbi Israel of Rizhin. But when the Rizhiner heard of the Reb Moshe's plans to journey to the Holy Land he begged him to wait and allow him to go along.

Reb Moshe was impatient to continue his journey. "My white beard is unwilling to allow any postponement," he replied; and so he continued his journey alone.

From time to time, when the retinue stopped, Reb Moshe delivered Chasidic discourses. He expressed his intentions to the chasidim, telling them that upon arriving in Jerusalem he would, "First go to the Kotel [the Western Wall] and blow the shofar so that all the worlds [this world and the innumerable spiritual worlds] will shake. I will refuse to move from that spot until the Moshiach comes.

"I am also bringing with me the kiddush cup which belonged to my teacher and rebbe, the Chozeh of Lublin. This cup is filled with great holiness which will enable me to work many wonders."

The tzadik continued his journey until he reached the point of departure. Then, he bid a final farewell to his disciples and, together with his family boarded a vessel bound for the Holy Land. After a long voyage, they landed on the longed-for shores of the Holy Land. They headed at once for Jerusalem and reached the gates of the Holy City.

No sooner did they approach the city gates when the precious goblet which had belonged to the Chozeh slipped from Reb Moshe's sack and shattered on the stones.

They tried to continue their journey, but Reb Moshe was suddenly overcome with a terrible illness. They had no choice but to break their trip until he recovered. But the tzadik only became sicker and sicker, until he became critically ill. In a few short days, Reb Moshe felt that he would not live much longer. He entreated his family to quickly carry him to the Kotel, and this they did, fearing that his end was, indeed, approaching.

But as they hurriedly carried the tzadik toward the Kotel and were about to reach the final turn, they were attacked by Arabs hurling stones down from the surrounding houses, and were lucky to escape with their lives.

Reb Moshe of Lelov passed from this world without having realized his

fondest dream, and without having succeeded in bringing the Redemption, for it was ordained by Heaven that the time for Moshiach's arrival had not yet come.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the Ethics of our Fathers

"Know what is above you--an Eye that sees, an Ear that hears, and all your deeds are recorded in a book" (Ethics of the Fathers, 2:1).

"All three of these things are 'above' a person in the sense that they are beyond his control: The Eye observes against one's will; the Ear listens against one's will; and all of one's deeds are recorded in G-d's book whether one likes it or not" (*Ktav Sofer*).

"And all your deeds are recorded in a book" (Ethics, 2:1).

"Why does it say that G-d writes our deeds down? Does He really need a notebook to remind him of man's actions?"

"Rather, the fact that each deed is recorded serves to remind us that our actions down below are important and make a definite impression above.

"(It is interesting to note that this saying is attributed to Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi, who was responsible for compiling the Mishna and committing it to writing because of the difficulties and hardships of the exile) (*Blossoms, Rabbi Yisroel Rubin*).

"Rabbi Shimon said: 'One who sees the consequences of his actions'" (Ethics, 2:10).

"Why is meant by 'seeing' instead of 'understanding' the results of one's actions? Although a person may very well understand intellectually that a certain course of action will lead him to sin, unless that rational understanding is internalized, he may not refrain from transgressing. The intellect is not always strong enough to rule over the emotions. Furthermore, the Evil Inclination sometimes presents itself clothed in logical rationalizations, which nonetheless lead a person astray.

"Seeing, however, indicates a degree of understanding deeper than mere intellectual comprehension. It is very difficult to dissuade a person from believing something he has seen with his own two eyes". (*Biurim L'Pirkei Avot*)

"Rabbi Shimon said, 'Be meticulous in reading the Shema and in prayer'" (Ethics, 2:13).

"The Hebrew word for 'meticulous,' 'zahir,' relates to the word 'zohar,' which means 'to shine.' Rabbi Shimon specified reciting the Shema and praying, as opposed to Torah study, because these services are relevant to each and every Jew, regardless of his level of learning. Every Jew is enjoined to shine forth and illuminate his surroundings in this manner. Although in general, the concept of exuding light is associated with Torah study, Rabbi Shimon generated the potential for such light to be produced through the services of reciting the Shema and the daily prayers." (*Lubavitcher Rebbe, shlita*)



8:00 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
29 Tammuz / July 25
Torah Portion Matot-Massei
Ethics Ch 2
Shabbat ends 9:04 PM

לעילוי נשמת ה"חזור
הרה"ג הר"ח בעל כשרון בעל מדות ויר"ש
התמים הרב ר' יואל ז"ל
בן הרה"ח התמים ר' רפאל נחמן הכהן ז"ל כהן
נפטר וא"ו מנחם-אב ה'תשפ"א
ת' נ' צ' ב' ה'