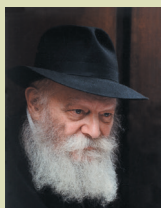


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

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

In this week's Torah portion, *Emor*, we read about the care of newborn animals. "When an ox, a sheep, or a goat are born, for seven days it should remain under its mother's care, from the eighth day and on it will be acceptable as a sacrifice to G-d."

Later, in the same paragraph, the Torah commands us, "And you should not desecrate My Holy Name, that I may be sanctified amongst the children of Israel..."

What could possibly be the connection that brings these two laws together?

The newborn animals are symbolic of our emotions that our intellect, the mother, gives birth to. Rather than allow your emotions free reign, "Seven days it should remain under its mother's care." Allow your mind time to develop the emotion before expressing it.

This is especially important to remember in situations that are out of our control, meaning that they are clearly and directly from G-d. Especially when it is impossible to make sense of. Here we need to let our thought process the notion that G-d knows what and why He does these things. Our job is to find a way to sanctify G-d through these events, so that it changes us in a positive way.

This Friday is *Pesach Sheni* (the "second" Passover). If one was impure or far away when the Passover sacrifice was to be brought, he was supposed to bring it on *Pesach Sheni*, a month later.

A unique aspect of this *mitzva* (commandment) is that the Torah tells us how it came to be. "There were people that were impure... They came before Moses... Why should we lose out?... " Another unique thing is that the Jews only asked for this dispensation if they were impure, which was through no fault of their own. However, G-d added that if the individual is far, which is understood to mean a minimal distance, this too can be made up on *Pesach Sheni*.

What is the lesson from these two oddities, the story behind the *mitzva* and the addition of being far which is not really far at all?

There is the possibility to be close and far at the same time – near in distance yet detached and distant in attitude. Being here in body and elsewhere in mind, for example when praying, you are saying the words but your mind is wandering. G-d wants us to be close to Him, to love Him and yet, it is possible to be so close and totally ignore Him. To this G-d is saying, "I still want you to be close to Me, try again, do it better." Only like the people in the story of *Pesach Sheni*, you need to really want it. If you do, it will always be possible to get close to G-d.

At home too, our family yearns for our love and closeness. While we might be with them physically, they often feel ignored because our attention is not focused on them. How do we observe *Pesach Sheni* today? By realizing what you are missing out on and truly wanting to change. When it comes to family, know that they yearn for connection and will welcome your love. Don't give up on the best thing you have.

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 Lesson from a Stone

Lag B'Omer is one of Judaism's days of festive celebration. One of the reasons we celebrate it is that on this day, a plague that killed 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva's students ended.

What was the reason for that plague? Because, our Sages explain, Rabbi Akiva's students did not show respect for one another.

That explanation has raised many questions. Rabbi Akiva placed great emphasis on sharing and unity. It was he who taught: "Love your fellowman as yourself" is a great general principle in the Torah." How then could his students depart from their master's path and fail to show one another respect?

Chasidic thought explains that because every person is unique in his nature and thought processes, he has a unique path in the service of G-d. Similarly, each of Rabbi Akiva's disciples had his own approach. Because they were highly developed individuals, each had internalized his particular approach to the point that it dominated his personality.

Operating from within his own perspective, each considered any approach different from his own as incomplete and inadequate. Being men of integrity, they no doubt spoke their minds plainly. And since all were intensely involved in their own paths of service, none would change. The tension between them escalated, as the deep commitment every student felt to his own particular approach prevented him from showing respect for those who followed a different path.

What was wrong with the students' perspective? Nothing and everything.

Nothing, because every one of the

paths proposed by the students could have been correct.

And everything, because their tunnel-vision prevented them from seeing any version of the truth other than their own.

No matter how deeply we are involved in our own service to G-d, we must remain broad-minded enough to appreciate that someone else may have a different approach. Other paths may appear inadequate, but this perception may stem from our own limitations.

Furthermore, even if someone is indeed underdeveloped, his deficiencies need not prevent us from looking upon him in a favorable light. For every individual possesses a potential for growth. We should concentrate on helping others realize that potential, rather than merely accentuating their need to do so.

Rabbi Akiva's own life serves as an example of how any person can reach greatness regardless of his background. Rabbi Akiva descended from a family of converts, and did not begin to study until the age of 40. Nevertheless, he attained such heights of scholarship that our entire knowledge of the Oral Law rests on his teachings.

We needn't wait for miracles to inspire us. Rabbi Akiva was motivated to begin studying Torah by a simple physical observation. Noticing how a rock had been worn away by the constancy of dripping water - though each drop had no apparent effect – he understood that Torah (which is likened to water) could refine even those aspects of his nature that were as rough as stone.

From *Keeping in Touch* by Rabbi E. Touger; published by Sichos in English

SLICE OF LIFE

Not Too Late

by Yehudis Cohen



I wake up early without the alarm. I have plenty of time this morning. I grab my coffee and sit down with my “Chayeinu” booklet that has the daily Torah topics I study (or at least read) each morning.

After I finish, I look at the clock and run upstairs to find my white sneakers buried deep in the closet. As I tie them I am enveloped by their firm support. My son bought them for me when I said I was going to start walking every day.

I haven’t worn these sneakers since November (2021🙄). But, it’s never too late! And that, according to the previous Rebbe, is the theme of Pesach Sheni, the “second Passover” coinciding this year with Friday, May 5.

While we were in Texas for Passover last month, I had a thought to write about my home-away-from-home “*shtetel*” of Plano. Sunday, Monday and Tuesday passed and I hadn’t written a word. But today, as I walk and contemplate the restart of my training, my dream, the theme of Pesach Sheni, I realize it’s not too late and I reminisce about Texas.

Our children Esther and Yudi Horowitz have been in Plano as emissaries of the Rebbe for

16 years. We’ve visited dozens of times. So on this visit we reconnect with old friends and new friends.

For the first Seder, Esther, Yudi and two children are leading the Seder at the Chabad House. We are at their home with the rest of their children and two of our own for a family Seder. When they finish the community Seder at 11 pm, it’s not too late. We’ve just started “*Shulchan Aruch*” – the meal!

I walk to Chabad of Plano on the first day of Passover. People don’t really walk in Plano, except in the morning or evening with their dogs. But when they do walk, or even when they’re driving, they make eye contact with you and say “hello” – even from across the street and even though they don’t know you. (I think about this as I walk near my Crown Heights shtetel, passing within a few inches of hundreds of people and not one person makes eye contact or returns my nod of hello.)

At services there are already 80 or more people. The community has grown since we first started visiting. I immediately notice the magnificent new armoire for the *talleisim* (prayer shawls). I note the familiar, tastefully designed decor of the *shul* that always looks fresh to me. And I eagerly await Rabbi Menachem Block’s sermon. From past experience I know I will enjoy his content and delivery – though on this morning after days of Passover preparations, the late night Seder and four cups of wine, I hope I will be able to focus.

Rabbi Block, who founded Chabad of Plano/Collins together with his wife Rivkie 31 years ago, makes everyone feel comfortable, including old guests (like us) and new guests. “Who would have thought that Plano would become a destination for a Passover getaway,” Rabbi Block smiles, as he welcomes two sisters, their husbands and children who travelled from New York. They are in Plano for Passover, although they don’t know anyone here. But they were sure that if they rented an Airbnb walking distance to Chabad they would have an enjoyable holiday experience.

To the pleasure of the community, one of the New York guests is a gifted singer and composer who graciously leads the holiday services more than once. He also agrees to

join the Monday evening “Kumsitz” Hakhel Gathering at the Block’s home to which the greater Plano Jewish community is invited. Everyone is delighted when he free raps about his family’s experiences so far in Plano and seamlessly weaves in summaries of Rabbi Block’s and Rabbi Horowitz’s sermons.

I think about my children who are quite literally all over the world this year for Pesach: Texas, New York, Costa Rico, London, Turkey, Greece, Israel. I didn’t have a chance to speak with all of them before the last days of Passover started. As we are in a significantly earlier time-zone than most of them it gets too late to call them. I’ll make up for it with calls before Shabbat... or on Sunday. After all, it’s never too late or too long of a break to connect with family. Like our extended Chabad of Plano “family,” many of whom we hadn’t seen for years.

In the present, I’m passing the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens for the second time this morning as I begin the loop back home. I look at my watch and decide to cut through the parking lot of the Brooklyn Museum. I don’t want to be late to say goodbye to my daughter and two granddaughters as they go off to school. A small piece of artwork on a sign-pole catches my eye. It is two feet running and the word “LATE.” What is that all about? I don’t have time to check it out now, but tomorrow is another day!

I near the house and I look at my watch again. The girls have it timed precisely, exactly. If they leave at 8:28 am (or is it 8:27 am?) they can be in their high school building around the corner on time by 8:30 am. But will I be home to send them off?

As I start to cross the street, I see the three girls leave the house. I jog the last few yards. With a smile and a wave we pass each other. I can’t hear exactly what they say but I think that they’re excited that I’ve taken the message of Pesach Sheni to heart and restarted my morning walks. “Have a great day! Learn *shtark!* (Study strong)! I love you!” I tell them, repeating the same words I’ve been saying to my children (and now my grandchildren) for over three decades when sending them off to school.

So what’s my takeaway from Pesach Sheni? The project that I stopped, or never started? I’ll do it now. It’s never too late!

New Chabad House

Close to a thousand people packed the new, state-of-the-art Chabad House of Morumbi in S. Paulo, Brazil for its opening. The new new building will accommodate the growing community and the Chabad House’s many activities. Besides the beautiful synagouge, it has a play room, youth lounge, women and men’s mikva, a ballroom with a big balcony and an industrial kitchen. Hebrew School classrooms, a library and special guest rooms to host visitors complete the new Chabad House in Morumbi.

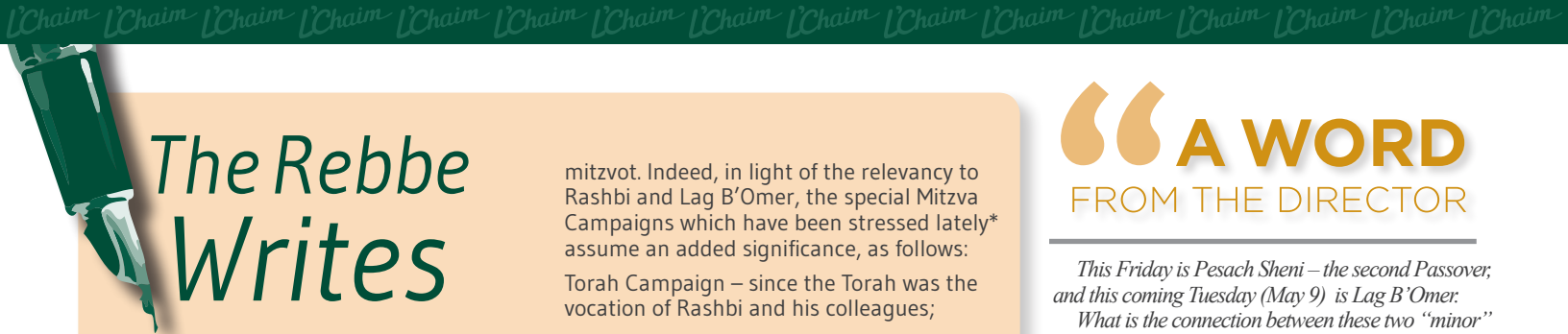
Historic Synagogue Restored

Hundreds of Jews from Bryansk, Russia, and the surrounding district as well as rabbis and dignitaries attended the reopening of an historic synagogue. The Bryansk Synagogue was established in 1891 and confiscated and nationalized in the 1920s by the communist regime. The reconstruction and restoration project took over a decade and incorporated unique wooden decorations, stained glass, and mosaics.

Hakhel–Unite

What is Hakhel all about? Every seven years we get back together to hear the word of G-d. This is not so much about gaining information, but new inspiration. It’s meant to give us the energy to do even more. To bring us back to that state of mind when our mission was crystal clear, and our passion was young and energetic. It helps us realize that we are part of something bigger and it reminds us why we are here and what our mission is. (*Hakhel Nation/CTeen*) To learn more visit hakhelnation.com





The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Official free translation

On the third day – twice blessed with “It was good” of weekly portion of Counting the Omer, 5735 [1975]

To the Sons and Daughters of Our People Israel, Everywhere G-d bless you—

The auspicious day of Lag B’Omer is approaching, the day of Rabbi Shimon Ben Yochai’s [known as “Rashbi”] *simcha* [rejoicing]; the day of which it is said: “On this day it is a mitzva to celebrate Rashbi’s *simcha*, and for those living in the Holy Land – to go to his grave and rejoice there greatly.

This year Lag B’Omer significantly occurs on (Tuesday) the day on which the Creator expressed His special satisfaction by repeating “it was good” twice – an allusion to two “goods”: good to Heaven and good to the creatures.

It is, therefore, surely an auspicious time – the day of Lag B’Omer itself, as well as the days immediately preceding and following it, which respectively serve as preparation for, and first-fruits of, Lag B’Omer – to rejoice greatly with the *simcha* of mitzvot, especially mitzvot that combine both “goods,” good to Heaven (man’s duties to G-d) and good to the creatures (man’s duties to man).

This includes, of course, the mitzva of encouraging Jews to do mitzvot (or do them more devoutly), as this effort of spreading the observance of any mitzva is also an act of loving-kindness.

And since influence in this direction generally – indeed, inevitably – involves quoting words of Torah and instructing in the laws of the particular mitzva, it comes under the mitzva of Torah-learning and teachings.

Thus both – the effort to encourage Jews to do mitzvot, and the manner of this effort – are mitzvot of “good to the creatures.”

Hence it is an opportune occasion to remind everyone again and again, what has been urged for some time now, in regard to active promotion of the observance of

mitzvot. Indeed, in light of the relevancy to Rashbi and Lag B’Omer, the special Mitzva Campaigns which have been stressed lately* assume an added significance, as follows:

Torah Campaign – since the Torah was the vocation of Rashbi and his colleagues;

Tefilin Campaign – concerning which it is said in Rashbi’s Book, the Zohar, that tefilin is a G-dly crown, and one who adorns himself with this “Supernal Sacred Crown” is given the title of King of the Earth, companion to the King in Heaven, the Holy One blessed be He.

Mezuzah Campaign – the Zohar says: When a person affixes a Mezuzah at the entrance to his house... he adorns himself with his Master’s crown and keeps evil things away from his door.

Tzedaka Campaign – of which it is said in the Zohar: whoever shows heartfelt compassion for the poor... rules over all creatures of the world.

House Filled with Sacred Books – of Torah and Tefila (Prayer) – of which it is said in the Zohar that studying Torah and worshipping G-d command everybody’s respect and awe.

Candle-lighting to usher in the holy Shabbat – of which Rashbi declares that it is a sublime honor for her (who lights the candles)... to be blessed with children... who will foster peace on earth, etc.

May G-d grant that through the said activities, in the spirit of all that has been said above, and within the framework of commitment to Torah and mitzvot in the daily life, beginning with the Torah Campaign (both the Revealed and Inner Torah), thereby removing the cause of the protracted Exile, namely, bitul Torah (neglect of Torah) – we will see the realization of “G-d is my King since the days of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth,”

And will soon merit the true and complete Redemption through the Melech HaMoshiach; Then it will come to pass that “None shall any more have to teach the other... for all will know Me” which Rashbi explains: Because everyone will be filled with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and valor, knowledge and fear of G-d.

Note: In subsequent years the Rebbe added the following Mitzva Campaigns: Family Purity and Kashrut in 1975; Love of a Fellow Jew and Jewish Education for Children in 1976; Letter in a Torah Scroll in 1981; Study of Maimonides’ Mishna Torah in 1984; intensification of the Moshiach Campaign in 1991.

the harvest. Leave them for the poor... “(Lev. 23:22) Rabbi Abdimi asked, “Why did Scripture choose to place this law in the middle of the section dealing with the festivals? To teach us that whoever leaves the ‘corners’ and ‘gleanings’ for the poor, it is as if he built the Holy Temple and presented his festival offerings there. (Maayana Shel Torah)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Friday is Pesach Sheni – the second Passover, and this coming Tuesday (May 9) is Lag B’Omer.

What is the connection between these two “minor” festivals?

The Previous Rebbe explained that the lesson of Pesach Sheni is that “nothing is ever lost.” Provision is made for a person who was impure, or far away from the Temple, to correct his situation. He is even given this opportunity if he willingly brought himself to these circumstances. This also relates to Lag B’Omer for Lag B’Omer is also associated with aiding individuals who are not in the place personally where they should be. This is obvious from Rabbi Shimon’s statements: “I have the potential to free the entire world from judgment.”

Indeed, this year the connection is even more than in other years. Why? Because Friday is always associated with Shabbat, as the preparations for the Shabbat meals must be carried out beforehand. Furthermore, if the Pesach Sheni sacrifice was offered on Friday, it was to be eaten on the night of the 15th – the night of Shabbat.

And Shabbat is always the day that blesses and influences the upcoming days of the week – and this week contains Lag B’Omer.

Pesach Sheni teaches us that when it comes to helping another Jew; be it an individual who is needy in a simple sense and requires charity; or one who is “spiritually needy,” it is impossible to procrastinate. Particularly now, in the last moments before Moshiach comes, it is impossible to postpone performing the favor. One must act immediately and with that act, one may, to quote Maimonides, “tip the balance in one’s own favor and... in the favor of the entire world and bring redemption and salvation.”

This is also related to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai who desired that all Jews, without differentiation, celebrate on his day of rejoicing with open and revealed happiness.

We look forward to the day when we will once again celebrate Pesach Sheni and Lag B’Omer with Rabbi Shimon himself, may it happen NOW!

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

In this week’s portion we read: “When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap the corner of the field or the gleanings of



This story took place 78 years ago and was recorded in the book Hilulai D'Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, written by a man who was a first-hand witness to this event.

The outer yard surrounding the room where the graves of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (also known as the Rashbi) and his son were buried was jammed with Jews from all over Israel. They had come to Meron on Lag B'omer, the 33rd day of the counting of the omer. Lag B'omer is the anniversary of the passing of the Rashbi, who had enjoined his disciples to celebrate, rather than mourn, on the day of his passing. Today, all of those gathered in Meron would cut the hair of their three-year-old sons for the first time, leaving only the side-locks.

The voices of hundreds of Jews could be heard as they recited Psalms. There were Jews of all types, whose ancestors had come from all over the world. All were praying and begging G-d to help them raise their children in Torah and good deeds in the merit of Rabbi Shimon.

It was already after mid-day on Friday and time to get ready for Shabbat. The visitors from Tiberias, Tzfat, Haifa and the residents from other cities and towns in the Galilee started to leave for their homes in order to arrive before the commencement of the Sabbath.

Many of the visitors though, especially the ones from Jerusalem which is quite a distance, chose to remain in Meron for Shabbat.

On Friday night, the beautiful melodies of the various groups praying reached the heights of the nearby mountains. Their hearts were overflowing as thousands of Jews joined together to dance and sing.

Shabbat morning arrived and the men gathered in large groups to descend the valley to the small Megiddo Lake where they immersed themselves to prepare for the morning prayers. When the morning prayers had finished a scream pierced the Sabbath atmosphere. A woman who had brought her son just yesterday for his first haircut was crying hysterically.

Her son had suddenly become sick and had died. Doctors who were sent from the British government to the area immediately put the entire section under quarantine. No one could come and no one could leave.

Suddenly, the mother gathered the boy in her arms and went into the room where the Rashbi was buried. She placed the dead child on the Rashbi's grave and started crying out, "Oh great tzadik (righteous one). I, your servant, came in your honor to cut the hair of my child. I came to make my son, my first and only child, into a good Jew. I kept my promise to come here on Lag B'omer. Only yesterday I held him here and cut his hair in song and joy. Now, great tzadik, how shall I return home without my child? How can I show my face in my home?"

In the midst of her prayers, the mother arose and said, "Tzadik, Rabbi Shimon, I am laying down my child on your grave as he is. I beg of you, with tears, do not shame me. Give me back my child just as I brought him here. Let the holy name of G-d be exalted along with the name of the great tzadik. Let everyone know that there is a G-d ruling over this world."

The woman concluded her prayers and left the room, leaving her son on the grave of the Rashbi. The doors of the room were closed as everyone left the room.

A few moments later a child's scream was heard from behind the closed door. The mother ran into the room and to her great surprise she saw her son standing on his feet and crying for a glass of water. Happiness and commotion filled the room. The local doctors examining the child announced in wonder that this was not a natural occurrence or a normal incident, but rather a miracle which must have happened in the merit of the great Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.

The government agents immediately reopened the gates and the masses once again poured inside. Everyone seeing the revived child pronounced the blessing "Blessed be G-d Who revives the dead."



And you shall not profane My holy name (Lev. 22:32)

The Hebrew word for profane comes from the root *chala*, meaning an empty space. When a person sins, it causes an "empty space" or interruption between himself and G-d. The Torah advises us not to let this happen. Similarly, arrogance and pride repel the Divine Presence, also causing an "empty space" devoid of G-dliness. (Likutei Sichot)

The opposite of profaning G-d's name is the sanctification of G-d's name. When a Jew performs a mitzva (commandment) with devotion, and with pure intent, he is sanctifying G-d's name. When a Jew behaves in such a manner that only good things are heard about him, that too is a sanctification of G-d's name. However, the opposite is also true. (Rambam)

You shall count for yourselves from the day after the Shabbat, from the day that you brought the Omer of the waving; seven complete weeks shall they be. (Lev 23:15)

This verse discusses the laws concerning Sefirat HaOmer - the counting of the Omer which takes place between Passover and Shavuot. Rashi explains that "from the day after the Shabbat" refers to the day after the festival, i.e. the second day of Passover. He further explains that the word "complete" teaches us that one begins to count from the evening (the second night of Passover) or else the weeks are not truly complete. The word "u'sefartem - and you shall count" is from the same root as the words "sapphire" and "bright" as if to say, "Work on 'yourselves' until you are shiny and bright." (The Maggid of Mezritch)

In counting sefira, the days between Pesach and Shavuot, we learn about the importance of time. Counting the days before Shavuot, the day on which we received the Torah, is a preparation for receiving the Torah, which emphasizes the value of time. Every Jew is obligated to occupy as much time as possible in Torah study, and not waste time that could be used for this purpose. (Likutei Sichot)

In the manner that he has caused a defect in someone, so shall it be done to him (Lev. 24:20)

If one finds a defect or something lacking in his fellow man, this is a sign that "so shall it be done to him" - that he himself is the one that has the defect. "He who charges others, charges them with his own faults." (Kometz HaMincha)



7:38 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
14 Iyar/May 5
Torah Portion Emor
Ethics Ch 4
Shabbat ends 8:42 PM

לעילוי נשמת
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