



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

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

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

For this one thing they prayed every day.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

When the time arrived to choose a bride, they came upon a problem: the poor couple

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

The father agreed, and he went into the fields and prayed from the bottom of his heart. “G-d, You know that we always put Your will before our own in the rearing of the son You gave us. Now, we are unable to find our son a bride without Your help, and so we call upon You to join in the mitzva of bringing our son under the marriage canopy.”

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

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him.” (Gen. 18:19)
 Rashi comments that the phrase “for I know him” implies love and affection for Abraham. G-d loved Abraham because He knew that Abraham would teach his children to follow in his footsteps. As great and impressive as Abraham’s worship of G-d was, more worthy of merit was the fact that he could be counted on to instruct others. (*Hayom Yom*)

When G-d bestows wealth and abundance on a Jew, he must honestly judge himself and ask: “Am I really worthy of all this goodness? What have I done to deserve these blessings?” When a person is thus honest with himself, it will cause him to realize that the sharing of his wealth with those less fortunate is truly *tzedaka* – righteousness. (*Sefer HaMaamarim*)

In all that Sara says to you, listen to her voice (Gen. 21:12)
 The Talmud states: Three *tzadikim* were given a taste of the World to Come in this world – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In the World to Come, the prophecy – “the female will surround and encompass the male,” and “a woman of valor is the crown of her husband” (*Proverbs*) will be fulfilled. Abraham was given a glimpse of this when G-d told him to heed the words of Sara, who was an even greater prophet than he. (*Likutei Torah*)



4:24 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
 17 Cheshvan/Nov 11
 Torah Portion *Vayeira*
 Shabbat ends 5:24 PM

Dedicated in memory of a dear friend of the Lubavitch Youth Organization
Mr Jerome Belson OBM

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L'Chaim

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נסד תוד ימי השלושים
 Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
 “My help comes from G-d, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:2) Year of Unity - Hakhel

LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

This week’s Torah portion, *Vayeira*, begins with the words, “And G-d revealed Himself to Abraham...” This revelation took place three days after Abraham circumcised himself at the age of 99 as commanded by G-d. That same day, three guests appear at Abraham’s tent. They are angels, disguised as men. One of the guests announces that, in exactly one year, the barren Sara will give birth to a son.

Later, G-d “remembers” His promise to Sara. “And G-d remembered Sara as He had said, and G-d did for Sara as He had spoken. And Sara conceived, and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the appointed time of which G-d had spoken.”

(The day on which G-d remembered Sara was 1 Tishrei - Rosh Hashana, and we read this Biblical narrative as the Torah reading on that day.)

The above verses can give each one of so much strength. They can fill us with joy, belief and trust.

How? Why?

For starters, the Jewish people according to the laws of nature are not supposed to be here, our entire existence is a miracle. These verses express how Abraham and Sara are blessed with a baby, though Sara was infertile. On top of that, he was 100, she was 90, far past the age of childbirth. G-d returned Sara’s youth to her and opened her womb to conceive; to Abraham he gave the ability at this advanced age to sire children. The birth of Isaac, our forefather, is only by miracle.

Imagine Sara’s joy when she recognized that she was pregnant after all this time, her anticipation to give birth and finally, holding her baby in her arms. Just the thought can fill us with happiness.

G-d promised Abraham that he would have a child with Sara. Through His messenger He told them when. At the precise moment, G-d gave them Isaac, from whom all Jews descend.

In G-d we can trust, in G-d we can believe. G-d makes promises and delivers on them. One can never lose hope, because G-d can and will do miracles for you, just as He did for Abraham and Sara.

He will also keep His promise, to send Moshiach and take us out of this long and dark exile. The time has come.

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.

An Island in Time

by Yehudis Cohen

I was definitely distracted by my phone. In fact, I was so preoccupied that I absent-mindedly handed the cashier my credit card after he rang me up! Who hands the cashier their credit card nowadays?

In that moment, many thoughts ran through my head including how much I was looking forward to Shabbat when my phone would be put away and stay put away for 25 hours. With a sheepish smile, and still distracted, I said to the cashier, “Thank G-d for Shabbos when I won’t be disturbed by my phone! How do you do Shabbos?!”

Now I was **really** embarrassed! The cashier at this store in my Orthodox Jewish neighborhood isn’t Jewish. I knew that! And he knew that! And he knew that I knew that!

So imagine how surprised I was when he said, “Actually my wife and I don’t use our phones on Shabbos. We take walks. We talk to our kids. We read. We like the idea of being phone-free one day a week!”

“Let’s talk,” Mom says to Jeremy. “Sure, Mom,” delicious. “I just need,” tasty. “One more sugar star!” Sweet.

“Let’s talk,” Melissa says to Dad. “Sure, hon. As soon as I’m done paying these bills I’ll be right with you. Give me about an hour.”

“Let’s talk,” Grandma says to Jennifer. “Sure, Gram. But I have to run out to the store before it closes. They’re having a great sale and I

want to see if the sweater I tried on last week....”

Just imagine. A candle-lit dinner. Fine wine. Delicious food. And the family together to enjoy each other’s company for a couple of hours without the distraction of all of our personal devices as well as the t.v., shopping, or the bills.

That’s a Shabbat meal, and it’s yours for the taking.

Today, a Shabbat meal is truly an island in time.

It’s simpler than you might think.

Start the meal by sanctifying the Sabbath with the blessing over the wine. You’ll be surprised at how many exquisite kosher wines are available these days. (You thought, maybe, that while technology has raced ahead kosher wines have stayed in the dark ages and are all syrupy sweet?)

Then, wash your hands and say the “*Hamotzee*” over challah – home-made, store bought, whole wheat, or sour dough, any will do just fine.

And then, enjoy a Shabbat meal with your family. Cook the night before with everyone pitching in, or buy it at your local kosher take-out place. Serve it on your finest china (and help the environment) or use throw-away so clean-up is easier. Enjoy traditional Jewish foods, or organic vegetarian, or anything in-between.

But don’t forget one of the main parts of this whole experiment: take time to talk and listen, without extraneous interruptions.

Try a Shabbat dinner with your family or close friends. You’ll be amazed at how special it is.

SLICE OF LIFE

A Lizard, A Dreidel and a Torah by Yehudis Cohen



Rabbi Elie and Bracha Filler and family

Shmulik and Yehudit Kravitsky travelled from Brooklyn to Prescott, Arizona, for the Sukkot holiday. They were visiting their daughter Bracha and son-in-law Rabbi Elie Filler who, together with their five children, are the Rebbe's emissaries in Prescott.

(A former gold and silver mining town in central Arizona, Jews have been in Prescott since the early 1800s. Michael Goldwater and his son Morris moved to Prescott in 1876, with the idea of providing goods for the miners who had come to Arizona. Michael and Morris opened a general merchandise store, J. Goldwater and Bro. Morris was elected mayor in 1879 – at age 24 – and held the position for the next 22 years.) “During the intermediate days of the holiday,”

shares Shmulik, “I went with Rabbi Elie and my nine-year-old grandson Mendl through the streets of Prescott to meet Jews and offer them an opportunity to make the blessing on the Lulav and Etrog.”

Shmulik was amazed at how comfortable and confident Mendl was when approaching people to help them make the blessing. “Excuse me, are you Jewish?” Mendl would ask. And if the answer was “yes,” the next question was “Are you right-handed or left-handed” after which Mendl put the Lulav in the person’s dominant hand ready to coach him or her on what came next. There was no question in Mendl’s mind that this person would agree to perform the mitzva so he didn’t even ask!

“We met one young man who was walking along the street with his pet lizard on his head. After he acknowledged that he was Jewish, I offered him a *kippa* to put on his head before saying the blessing on the Lulav and Etrog,” recalls Shmulik.

To Shmulik’s surprise, the man said that his pet lizard, which he took everywhere with him always atop his head – would be his “*kippa*.”

“This guy had never before in his life made the blessing on the Lulav and Etrog. Perhaps if I made a fuss about the lizard and insisted he wear an actual *kippa* he would no longer agree to do the mitzva...?” Shmulik decided to go with it and helped the pet-lizard-toting fellow do the mitzva. He recently consulted with a number of rabbis who told him that what he had done was 100% acceptable.

“We also met Noah, a 21-year-old Jewish man who works at a local supermarket. After shaking the Lulav and Etrog, Elie invited him to stop by the Sukka at the Chabad House the next morning for some refreshments. Elie also invited him to join the dancing at

6:30 pm on Monday night of Simchat Torah. Noah said he would try to make it, but “no promises.” Since he worked the evening shift which would only end at 10:00 pm, Noah didn’t think it was an option. “But maybe, if the manager sees that I’m working really hard, he’ll let me take off earlier.”

On Monday night, at 8:45 pm, Noah walked in. He had a shy smile on his face and an amused or perhaps confused look in his eyes. He was trying to take in the scene of dozens of Jews dancing with joy while holding the Torahs scrolls.

“Elie spotted him immediately and honored him with leading the final *Hakafa* (circuit) with the Torah. Noah slowly read the verses that are recited before dancing with the Torahs. Then Noah was asked to name his favorite Jewish song. Everyone would sing and dance together to whichever song Noah chose.

“I only know one song,” Noah said. “I have a little dreidel, I made it out of clay...”

And so, there they were, a group of Jews at Chabad of Prescott, joyfully singing a Chanuka song on Simchat Torah and dancing with the Torahs.

Concludes Shmulik, “And we danced, until we had no more strength to move. Three men in the traditional, formal Chabad long black coats, a group of people in *shul* – some of whom had never danced before with the Torahs, and one young Jewish soul who had worked hard to leave his job early so he could participate in a Jewish celebration that he had never even heard of before that day. There we were, repeating again and again with great excitement, ‘Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel, I made you out of clay...’ We sang and danced in this genuine moment of pure joy, unity and holiness. If this is not the essence of a Jewish soul, I don’t know what is!

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

1st day of the Week of Vayero 5730 [1969]

It is a Jewish custom to relate the events of the week to the weekly portion of the Torah, and thereby to derive true instruction from the Torah of Truth (“Torah” means “Instruction”).

This week’s *Sedra* [Torah portion] tells us of the birth and upbringing of the first Jewish boy, born of Jewish parents, namely Yitzchok, the son of Abraham and Sarah, the first ancestor of our Jewish people.

The circumstances surrounding Yitzchok’s birth were supernatural and miraculous. His *Bris* (circumcision) took place when he was eight days old, and his upbringing was fraught with difficulties and trials.

Jewish existence is not dependent upon natural forces, but upon G-d’s direct intervention and providence.

Quite different was the case of Abraham’s son Ishmael, whose birth was quite normal, and who was circumcised when he was thirteen years old, i.e., at a mature age. Yet it was Yitzchok whom G-d chose to be Abraham’s true heir, from whom the Jewish people would descend.

Thus, the Torah teaches us that when new generations are to be born who are to ensure the Jewish continuity and future, the approach must not be based on natural considerations and human calculations. For Jewish existence is not dependent upon natural forces, but upon G-d’s direct intervention and providence.

Similarly, the education and upbringing of Jewish children is not to be determined by

the same considerations and criteria as in the non-Jewish world. Jewish parents do not wait until the child becomes mature enough to determine his behavior and find his own way to *Yiddishkeit* [Judaism]. He is given the strongest and fullest possible measure of Jewish training from infancy. Only in this way is it possible to ensure the “everlasting covenant” with G-d, to come through all difficulties and trials with strength, and endowed with G-d’s blessings materially and spiritually.

With Blessing,

Fifth day of the Torah portion *Vayeira*, 5731 (1970)

... This significant event, taking place on the day after the reading of the weekly Torah portion of *Vayeira*, is indeed related to the concluding highlights of the portion, namely, the birth and upbringing of the first Jewish child, Isaac, born of the first Jewish parents, Abraham and Sarah.

The Torah tells us that Abraham made a “great feast” (when Isaac was two years old), at which the leading dignitaries of the era were present (Rashi, quoting the Midrash).

Some of those who attended thought the celebration unrealistic, seeing no future for a single Jewish child, surrounded by a hostile world.

Yet G-d promised that this child would be the father of a great and holy nation; a nation which, though overwhelmingly outnumbered, would not only outlive its enemies, but would be a leader and a guiding light to the rest of mankind.

A hint to the fulfillment of the Divine promise is to be found in the passage immediately following the above narrative, in which the Torah tells us of Sarah’s heartfelt concern for Isaac’s upbringing and proper environment even at that early age.

Thus, the Torah sets the pattern for Jewish education.

It teaches us that regardless of the odds, the future of the Jewish child, as of the Jewish people as a whole, is assured by Divine promise, provided the parents fulfill their responsibilities, even to the point of self-sacrifice, if necessary. Not the least, it teaches us that in matters of Torah and holiness, even “a small beginning flourishes exceedingly in the end.”

age, it is specifically of Isaac that we will say “for you are our father” (a verse from the book of Isaiah). According to *Chasidut*, the name Yitzchak is an expression of laughter and delight; when Moshiach comes, the supernal joy and delight of our present service of G-d will be fully revealed. (*Likutei Sichot*, Vol. 1)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Monday, the 20th of Cheshvan, is the birthday of Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber (1860-1920), the fifth Chabad Lubavitch Rebbe.

A beautiful story is told about an important lesson that Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber (known as the “Rebbe Rashab”) taught his son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok, who was later to become his successor:

Once, when Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok set out on a journey, the Rebbe Rashab asked him to try to do a certain favor for one of the *chasidim*, a businessman, who was in need of help.

When Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok returned he told his father: “I did everything you told me to do, and the favor to that man I did meticulously.”

“You err,” said the Rebbe Rashab. “You did a favor to yourself, not to him. G-d did a favor to him, by arranging for an emissary, such as yourself, through whom the will of Divine Providence could be realized.”

The Rebbe Rashab was teaching us a lesson that permeates the whole of Judaism. When we do a mitzva, especially one which ostensibly allows us to help another person, we are G-d’s emissaries. And, more than helping the other person we are, in essence, helping ourselves.

Tzedaka, charity, is a prime example. When we give *tzedaka* it should be with the knowledge and understanding that G-d has bestowed upon us a privilege—the privilege to administer His money in a righteous manner. Certainly, this is the reason why our Sages teach, “More than charity does for the recipient, it does for the donor.”

This attitude can and should permeate all “favors” we do for others. In addition to being the correct attitude, it stops us from feeling self-righteous!

Shmuel Butman

L’ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA
לזכרון חיה'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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Amazing Miracles Stories

Children of all ages will love *Amazing Miracle Stories for Kids*, an incredible collection of 51 stories that will entertain, inspire and build connections with renowned tzadikim. With dynamic stories about the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his emissaries, the Baba Sali, Reb Shayale Kerestirer, the Ribnitzer Rebbe, the Yenuka of Stolin, the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh, the Baal Shem Tov and Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev and many, many more, children will be drawn in by the vivid full-color illustrations, creating a golden opportunity to teach important values and concepts. Written by Baila Brikman, Shani Eichler and Levi Liberow, illustrated by Mihailo Milijanovic



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The increase of excitement that every person will bring about by gathering together the people with whom he has a connection, and inspiring them study the Torah and do mitzvot (commandments), including the purpose of Hakhel – “to fear G-d” – will have an effect on all those assembled. The reenactment of the ancient Hakhel gathering in Temple times will generate an awe of G-d that will continue “all the days,” with energy and power, “as if one is now being commanded regarding the Torah and is hearing it from G-d” like at the Giving of the Torah. (*Likutei Sichos*) Find out more about making your own Hakhel this year at hakhel-nation.com.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

“And Abraham called the name of his son... Isaac (Yitzchak)” (*Gen. 21:3*) In the Messianic