

# L'Chaim

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson  
"To You I lifted up my eyes, You Who dwell in heaven" (Psalm 123:1)



## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

Last week's Torah portion dealt with the subject of dreams—those of Joseph and Pharaoh's officers. This week, in the Torah portion of Miketz, we continue to delve into dreams, but this time, those of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

The common denominator shared by all these dreams is that they collectively portrayed the various stages and factors which caused Jacob and his sons to go to Egypt. As a direct result, the Jewish people were exiled there.

Every word in the Torah is necessary and precise. If the subject of dreams receives so much emphasis and we are told such a wealth of detail, there must be a fundamental connection between the concept of dreams and the concept of exile. Furthermore, by understanding the significance of dreams, we will be better able to overcome the difficulties we endure during our own prolonged exile.

Chasidic philosophy explains that a most outstanding characteristic of dreams is the ability for diametrically opposed opposites to coexist, something which cannot take place in reality. The Talmud gives as an example the image of "an elephant passing through the eye of a needle," which may appear not at all out of the ordinary in a dream.

This is also true of our own exile, an unnatural and abnormal situation, but one seemingly natural and normal to us. It is of such long duration, we can no longer feel the contradictions inherent in the galut itself.

The same contradictions also apply to our spiritual galut. It is understood that self-love and the pursuit of worldly pleasures are the opposite of cultivating a love of G-d and holiness. Yet, we often perform mitzvot under the illusion that we are doing so out of love of G-d and are in close proximity to Him, all the while caring only for our own egos and self-fulfillment. We simply don't perceive the contradiction in this.

Another example of our lack of logic is found in prayer. While praying, the Jew's innate love and emotional attachment to G-d can be aroused, but as soon as he finishes, it is as if he had never experienced this arousal as he returns to his preoccupation with day-to-day life. Although he stood on such a high spiritual level while actually communing with G-d, the feelings dissipate as the individual finds himself led after the cravings of the animal soul.

Thus our very lives are lived as if we are dreaming. The spiritual exile is full of contradictions, yet we must not be discouraged and think that we perform mitzvot and pray in vain, for every positive deed leaves its mark even if its influence is not always easily felt.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

## Wake Up Calls

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

Not everyone is lucky enough to get a wake-up call in life. Some people get theirs just in time. Others get it but don't hear it. Still others hear it loud and clear but refuse to take any notice.

Pharaoh got his in this week's parashah, when Yosef interpreted his dreams and advised him to appoint "a wise and discerning man" who would oversee a macroeconomic plan for the country. Yosef explained to the king of Egypt that because he experienced two dreams and woke up in between, it was a sign from heaven to wake up and act immediately, as the matter was of the utmost urgency. Pharaoh took the message to heart, and the rest is history.

On the health-and-well-being level, a little cholesterol, climbing blood pressure, or recurring bronchitis might be the not-so-subtle signs that it's time for a change of lifestyle. These are the medical wake-up calls we receive in life. Do we really have to wait for a heart attack, G-d forbid, to stop smoking or to start eating less and exercising more? That's what wake-up calls are for: to help us get the message before it's too late.

Then there are the spiritual signs. I will never forget a friend who shared with me the story of his own red lights flashing and how a changed spiritual lifestyle literally saved his life. He was

a workaholic driving himself to the brink. Had he carried on indefinitely he simply could not have survived. Then he decided to give Shabbat a try. What he had never previously appreciated about Shabbat was that it is a spiritually invigorating day of rest and spiritual serenity. And in discovering Shabbos, he rediscovered his humanity. (He also discovered he could play golf on Sundays instead of Saturdays.)

It's not easy to change ingrained habits. But Chanukah, which usually falls during Parashas Mikeitz, carries with it a relevant message in this regard: Take one day at a time. One doesn't have to do it all at once. One light at a time is all it takes. On the first night, we kindle a single Chanukah light; on the second night, two; and on the third night, three. We add a little light each day, and before long the menorah is complete and all eight Chanukah lights are burning bright.

It's okay to take one day at a time. It's not okay to go back to sleep after you get a wake-up call. Whether it's our medical well-being or our spiritual health, the occasional wake-up call is a valuable sign from Above that it may be time to adjust our attitudes, lifestyles, or priorities. Please G-d, each of us in our own lives will hear the call and act on the alarm bells with alacrity.

# SLICE OF LIFE

## Building Faith with Lego Bricks



In the sun-baked town of Netivot, nestled in Israel's southern periphery, Rabbi Gil Manor had a vision: to ignite people's anticipation for redemption. His solution? A unique, self-assembly Lego model of the Holy Temple. "I believe the Moshiach will come in our lifetime," he says with unwavering conviction.

Rabbi Gil Manor, now 47 and a father of five, serves as a Chabad emissary in Netivot. Born in Nahariya to a traditional family, young Gil wasn't raised to observe Jewish commandments. That changed when he was eight years old, marking the beginning of his path to faith.

"It was a Friday evening," Gil recalls. "I was playing with my friends outside our apartment building when I saw our neighbor coming down, dressed in his finest clothes. Curious, I asked him where he was going. He told me he was wearing his Sabbath clothes and heading to the synagogue."

Intrigued, the following week, Gil asked

his mother to dress him up too. He waited for his neighbor and asked to join him. "That was my first time in a synagogue," he says. "It was during the first Lebanon war in 1982."

The synagogue community embraced young Gil, offering him a warm welcome that would shape his future. "I felt drawn to the place, to the prayers. Each prayer service was an experience for me," he says fondly.

His newfound passion led him to request a transfer to a religious school the following year. "Both schools shaped my life positively," he reflects.

As Gil's interest in religious life grew, his family began to follow suit. His father didn't oppose his son's new path, and his mother became more observant herself. Later, his siblings also embraced a more religious lifestyle, with some even transferring to Chabad educational institutions in the north.

Gil's spiritual journey continued to unfold through his teenage years and early adulthood. His mother, seeking guidance for her son's education, consulted with the local Chabad emissary, Rabbi Israel Butman of blessed memory. "Rabbi Butman recommended that I study at the Chabad Yeshiva in Lod," Gil remembers. This advice would prove pivotal in shaping his future.

Following this recommendation, Gil's path became clearer. "Rabbi Baruch Wilhelm taught me Talmud," Gil recalls with gratitude, "and I was fortunate to be accepted into the Chabad Yeshiva in Lod."

This yeshiva experience was transformative for Gil. "It shaped my life," he says, "until I became a Chabad emissary myself, serving under the chief emissary in Netivot, Rabbi Yashar Edrei."

About five years ago, Gil began a journey that would lead to his innovative Lego

Temple project. He started organizing activities for children about the Holy Temple. "I saw how fascinated the children were," he explains, "and how engaging with the Temple strengthened their faith in the coming of the Moshiach."

This inspiration led him to develop a Lego model of the Temple, consisting of 1,590 pieces. "The idea was that every child could build the Temple with their own hands," he says. The project required precision in construction, with Gil investing extensive study to ensure accuracy. He also prepared a detailed album explaining each stage of construction and the function of every Temple detail.

Finding a Lego factory that met their requirements wasn't easy. "But thank G-d," Gil says, "we saw the fruits of our labor when the work was completed."

The final model was launched a few months ago, and the responses have been deeply moving. One mother, Noa, shared a touching story about her child's prayer: "We bought our son the Lego Temple kit as an Afikoman gift (a special gift given to children during the Passover Seder). It's the most amazing gift I've ever seen. When my son finished building the Temple, he said, 'Just as I prayed for the completion of the Lego Temple, we should pray for the real Temple.' It was simply touching."

Gil invested two and a half years in learning, development, and construction of this project. "I saw G-d's hand guiding us at every step," he reflects. "When I think about it, I'm confident the Moshiach will come in our time. Many people today are engaged with the Temple, each in their own way, and I have no doubt that G-d sees this and derives great satisfaction from it."

He concludes with a heartfelt prayer: "May we soon celebrate together the dedication of the Third Temple!"

*Adapted from Sichat Hashavua*



## With Chabad's Arrival, Andorra Gets Its First Rabbi

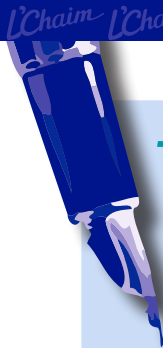
After more than a millennium without a rabbi, the tiny principality of Andorra is making Jewish history this month as Rabbi Kutty Kalmenson, his wife Rochel, and their five children arrive to establish the nation's first permanent rabbinic presence, establishing Chabad-Lubavitch of Andorra.

In addition to the historic Moroccan community, there are many newcomers who haven't found their place in the Jewish community," the rabbi says. With remote work opportunities and Andorra's favorable tax conditions, the Jewish population is growing, and the Kalmensons are reaching out to everyone they can.

They will establish children's educational programs, regular Torah education for adults and work on making kosher food locally available. Chabad will also cater to the needs of the many Jewish tourists who visit the nation.

## WHO'S WHO

Yehuda HaMaccabee (Judah) was the third son of Matitiyahu, a Kohen who lived in the village of Modiin. In 167 b.c.e. Matitiyahu and his sons started a revolt against the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes. After his father's death, Yehuda assumed leadership of the revolt in accordance with his father's wishes. The First Book of Maccabees praises Yehuda's military talent. The name Maccabee is an acronym for Yehuda's battle-cry, the verse (Ex. 15:11) "Mi kamokha ba'elim Hashem - Who among the gods is like You, O G-d?"



# The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

By the Grace of G-d  
 On the eve of Chanukah, 5741 [1980]  
 Brooklyn, NY

To all Participants in the Public Lighting of the Chanukah Menorah in the USA  
 Greeting and Blessing!

Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, recalls the victory—more than 2100 years ago—of a militarily weak but spiritually strong Jewish people over the mighty forces of a ruthless enemy that had overrun the Holy Land and threatened to engulf the land and its people in darkness.

The miraculous victory—culminating with the dedication of the Sanctuary in Jerusalem and the rekindling of the Menorah which had been desecrated and extinguished by the enemy—has been celebrated annually ever since during these eight days of Chanukah, especially by lighting the Chanukah Menorah, also as a symbol and message of the triumph of freedom over oppression, of spirit over matter, of light over darkness.

It is a timely and reassuring message, for the forces of darkness are ever present. Moreover, the danger does not come exclusively from outside; it often lurks close to home, in the form of insidious

erosion of time-honored values and principles that are at the foundation of any decent human society. Needless to say, darkness is not chased away by brooms and sticks, but by illumination. Our sages said, "A little light expels a lot of darkness."

The Chanukah Lights remind us in a most obvious way that illumination begins at home, within oneself and one's family, by increasing and intensifying the light of Torah and Mitzvos in the everyday experience, even as the Chanukah Lights are kindled in growing numbers from day to day. But though it begins at home, it does not stop there. Such is the nature of light that when one kindles a light for one's own benefit, it benefits also all who are in the vicinity. Indeed, the Chanukah Lights are expressly meant to illuminate the "outside," symbolically alluding to the duty to bring light also to those who, for one reason or another, still walk in darkness.

What is true of the individual is true of a nation, especially this great United States, united under G-d, and generously blessed by G-d with material as well as spiritual riches. It is surely the duty and privilege of this Nation to promote all the forces of light both at home and abroad, and in a steadily growing measure.

Let us pray that the message of the Chanukah Lights will illuminate the everyday life of everyone personally, and of the society at large, for a brighter life in every respect, both materially and spiritually.

With esteem and blessing in the spirit of Chanukah,

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

"I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Moshiach. Even if he delays, I will wait every day for him to come." This is the 12th of Maimonides' Thirteen Principles of Faith. This does not mean that every day we should

wait for Moshiach's ultimate arrival, but that every day we should wait expectantly for Moshiach to come on that very day. The Talmud teaches that "Thinking is potent." Accordingly, the very fact that Jews around the world are intensely and persistently focusing their hearts and minds on the world's urgent need for Moshiach, will in itself surely hasten his arrival.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

## 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

*As we all know, we light one candle (in addition to the shamash) on the first night, two on the second, three on the third, etc.*

*Although when we light one candle on the first night we have completely fulfilled the mitzva to the utmost perfection, lighting one candle on the second night is not sufficient. On the second night we must light two candles to fulfill the mitzva properly. On the third night, two candles are not adequate, though on the previous night they were, and so forth for each consecutive night of Chanuka.*

*The lesson that we can learn from the mitzva of Chanuka candles can serve us well not just during the eight-day festival, but during the entire year and our whole life as well.*

*The Chanuka candles teach us that our observance of mitzvot should be in an ever growing, steadily increasing measure. One day I do a mitzva—I put a penny in a tzedaka (charity) box. A few days later I am continuing to put a penny in the tzedaka box. But, in addition, when I awaken in the morning I thank G-d that I am alive. And so it continues, every few days adding a new mitzva, or being more exacting in the mitzvot I already perform. Like the Chanuka candles, we grow steadily stronger each day.*

*And when we do this, we will also be like the Chanuka lights in another way—we will be spreading light, like a true light among the nations, all over the world.*

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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# IT HAPPENED ONCE

Reb Leib Sarah's, one of the greatest of the Baal Shem Tov's disciples, had long desired to live in the Holy Land. After years of struggle, of wandering, of perfecting himself to the utmost of his ability, his deepest desire was to settle in the Holy Land, there to be able to attain spiritual achievements unreachable elsewhere.

Although he was himself a person of renown, he was also a chasid, and so, he went to his rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov, to ask his permission and blessing for the trip. "Rebbe," he asked, "I request your permission to settle in the Holy Land, which is my heart's desire." But, to his surprise, the Besht's reply was negative. The next year Leib Sarah's again went to his rebbe with the same petition. But, again, the Besht denied his request, without even an explanation. This scenario repeated itself year after year for several years, and Leib Sarah's was deeply disappointed.

One year he decided that he wouldn't go to his rebbe at all; he just wouldn't ask. The desire to travel and settle in the Holy Land had become so strong within him, that he could no longer deny it. So, Leib Sarah's sat down with his wife and then with his children and discussed the question of moving to the Holy Land, there to perfect his soul in the service of his Maker. His wife and children were all agreeable, and so it was decided to go. Wasting no time, he sold all of his worldly goods save the barest necessities, and gathering all of his money, he bought tickets for himself, his wife and children for the long journey to the Land of Israel.

When everything was in order, Reb Leib Sarah's packed up his belongings and set off with his family through Russia toward Turkey, whence he would travel to Israel. It was a slow and arduous journey overland with many stops in the small towns and villages through which they had to travel. One day they came to a small town and noticed some sort of excitement in the town. Leib Sarah's inquired of the villagers, and was shocked when he heard their reply. For none other than the famous Baal Shem Tov was unexpectedly visiting the town, and the people were overwhelmed by the great honor of receiving such a personage.

Leib Sarah's was even more overwhelmed by his own dilemma. He thought of the possibility of not going to greet his rebbe, thereby avoiding any embarrassment because of his disobedience, but how could he not acknowledge the presence of his great rebbe and teacher? He sat in his wagon deliberating, when suddenly he had no choice, for the Baal Shem Tov's carriage pulled up next to his own. Reb Leib Sarah's dismounted and approached the rebbe. The Besht appeared to be surprised and asked, "What are you doing here?"

"Rebbe, please forgive me for not heeding your words, but I am now on my way to settle in the Holy Land."

The Besht replied, "Well, if your wish to go is so strong, then go. But now, where are you going to spend the Shabbat?"

"I am just now searching for a place, but it's difficult since I spent all of my money on the tickets for the journey," replied Reb Leib. The Baal Shem Tov offered to host Reb Leib and his family for the whole Shabbat. When they were in their rooms preparing for the arrival of the holy day, the Besht knocked on Reb Leib's door, asking if he had immersed in the mikva yet. "No," he replied, "I have no money remaining, so I will forego the mikva this week." To this, the Baal Shem Tov replied that he would pay the entrance fee for him, and they should go together to the mikva. Reb Leib Sarah's joy was unbounded, for he understood the profound meaning of the immersion and was relieved not to miss his usual ritual.

Upon arriving at the mikva the Besht said, "Reb Leib, you go first." But, he refused, saying, "Please, Rebbe, you go; you are my teacher, after all." The Besht was adamant, and Reb Leib immersed first. After the proscribed immersions were completed, he rose from the water, turned to his rebbe and said, "I have changed my mind. I will not go to the Holy Land. I will return to Medzibozh, to you. Let

me tell you what I saw in the mikva during my immersions. As I entered the water I saw a continent. As I looked closely I saw Eretz Israel, and as I looked even more closely I saw Jerusalem. As I narrowed my focus still more, I could see all the parts of the Temple Mount, even the Holy Temple itself. Then I looked inside and saw the Holy of Holies, but though I strained my eyes as hard as I could, I couldn't see the Holy Ark, the Tablets of the Law, or the Divine Presence. In my anguish I cried out, "Where are the Tablets? Where is the Divine Presence? But a Heavenly Voice answered me, saying, 'They are found in Medzibozh.' Therefore, I am following you back to Medzibozh to fulfill my Divine Service. I now see that during the exile, the Divine Presence dwells with the leader of the generation."

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

*On the weekly Torah Portion*

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**And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years (Gen. 47:28)**

When the third Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel, was a child, he learned a commentary on this verse that these 17 years were the best years of Jacob's life. This surprised the boy, and he went to his grandfather, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, to find out how it was possible that the years spent in such a spiritually corrupt and abominable land could have been Jacob's best.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman replied: Before Jacob descended into Egypt, he sent an emissary to establish yeshivot and places of learning. Whenever and wherever a Jew learns Torah, he cleaves to G-d and achieves a true and meaningful life. Furthermore, precisely because Egypt was such an abominable place, the holiness and spirituality Jacob attained there shone that much brighter against the dark and evil background of his surroundings. *(Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

**With you shall Israel bless...May G-d make you as Ephraim and Menashe (48:20)**

In the previous verses Jacob had said, "Ephraim and Menashe shall be to me as Reuven and Shimon." Despite the fact that Ephraim and Menashe were born in exile and were educated in Egypt, a land not conducive to Torah learning and Judaism, they were still as righteous and pure as Reuven and Shimon, who grew up in more enclosed and insular surroundings in Jacob's household. *(Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

**And let my name be called on them, and the name of my fathers (48:16)**

Jacob blessed his grandsons, Menashe and Ephraim, by expressing his wish that they grow up to be a source of pride to the family.

When, G-d forbid, children do not follow in their parents' footsteps and stray from the proper path, the grandparents and parents are ashamed that the children bear their name. Jacob blessed his grandsons that they should be worthy of being called the descendants of Abraham and Isaac.

Dedicated in honor of a dear friend of the  
Lubavitch Youth Organization  
**Mr. Gary Stern**

### 4:18 Candle Lighting Time

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