



Moshe Shlomo never understood why, when he asked the Baal Shem Tov (the Besht) for a blessing for children, he was instead blessed with wealth. "When the Besht blesses me with riches," he would tell his wife Rivka, "it always comes true. Why, then, will he not bless us with children?"

One day, the Besht called them and said, "Why are you so sad? G-d has blessed you with much. There are many good deeds you can do with your wealth." He then invited them to accompany him on a journey, and they agreed.

They arrived in a small town near Brody and walked through the streets. The Besht approached a group of children and asked one boy his name. "Baruch Moshe," he replied. The next child gave the same name, and so did the next. Every boy was called Baruch Moshe. A girl said her name was Bracha Leah, and all the other girls shared that name as well.

Moshe Shlomo and Rivka were astonished, but the Besht showed no surprise. They continued asking children, always receiving the same answers. Finally, the Besht approached an elderly man and asked for an explanation.

The old man smiled and began: "About 100 years ago, there lived here a butcher named Yitzchak, a righteous man with one son, Baruch Moshe. The boy struggled greatly in his studies and could not retain what he learned. Eventually, he left school and worked in his father's butcher shop, where he succeeded.

"Baruch Moshe married Bracha Leah, and they lived a respectable life. After his parents passed away, he wanted to study Mishna in their memory, but he could not. Instead, he sat in the synagogue listening to lessons he barely understood.

"One day, he heard the rabbi say that one who teaches another's child Torah is considered as if he had borne that child. This pained him deeply, as he had no children and felt incapable of teaching others. When he expressed his sorrow, the rabbi comforted him, explaining that supporting Torah education—hiring teachers and funding schools—also counts as raising children spiritually.

"Baruch Moshe was inspired. He gathered poor children whose families could not afford schooling, hired teachers for them, and supported local schools generously. Over time, he and Bracha Leah devoted themselves to helping children learn Torah.

"I myself, along with my entire generation, was educated through their efforts. Though they had no biological children, they left behind

hundreds of students who viewed them as spiritual parents. To honor them, we name our children after them and gather yearly to say Kaddish in their memory."

After hearing this, Moshe Shlomo and Rivka understood their purpose. They, too, would support Jewish education, knowing they were helping raise countless children. Inspired by Baruch Moshe and Bracha Leah, they devoted themselves to this mission.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the weekly Torah portion

For in the cloud I will appear upon the ark-cover (Lev. 16:2)

This teaches that we must never despair even in the worst of the times, for G-d's Presence rested upon Israel precisely "in the cloud." No matter how dark or hopeless a situation appears we must never give up or become dejected. (Rabbi Meir Shapira of Lublin)

With this (b'zot) shall Aaron come into the holy place (Lev. 16:3)

There are three ways to avert an evil decree: tzom ("fasting," repenting of one's sins); kol ("voice," through prayer); and mamon, ("money," i.e., giving to charity). The numerical equivalent of each one of these is 136.

The numerical value of the Hebrew word zot is 408, the sum total of all the above. In other words, with "this," by using these three methods, G-d permits us to "come into the holy place." (Nachal Kadumim)

You shall not curse the deaf (cheresh) (Lev. 19:14)

The word cheresh is an acronym standing for "chaim ra'im shelcha - your unfortunate life." The Torah warns us against cursing or imprecating ourselves when faced with a difficult situation. For as the Zohar explains, "There are three ways a person brings about his own adversity, one of which is by cursing himself." (Siftei Kohan)

And you shall love your fellow as yourself, I am the L-rd (Lev. 19:18)

Commenting on the mitzva to love one's fellow Jew, Rabbi Aaron of Karlin said: "I would hope that I could love the most righteous tzadikim in Israel as much as G-d loves the biggest Jewish sinner..."

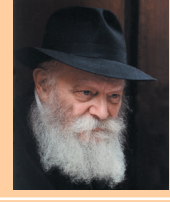
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7 Iyar // April 24
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L'Chaim

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נוסד תוך ימי השלושים
Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"Jerusalem has mountains around it, and the L-rd is around His people from now and to eternity" (Psalms 125:2)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

The two Torah portions that are read this week, Acharei and Kedoshim, share a common theme: holiness.

Acharei begins with a description of the most sacred service performed throughout the year: the Yom Kippur service, rendered by the High Priest in the Holy of Holies.

Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year, the Holy of Holies the most sacred place on earth, and the High Priest the embodiment of the highest spiritual level a Jew can attain.

Similarly, the second Torah portion, Kedoshim, begins with the commandment, "You shall be holy because I am holy."

How are we supposed to attain such elevated levels of holiness?

The answer lies in the above-quoted words: "Because I am holy." Because G-d is holy, and because every Jew possesses a Jewish soul, a "veritable part of G-d above," not only is holiness within our reach, but making sure that holiness is manifested in our daily lives is the obligation of every Jew.

The literal meaning of the word "acharei" is "after."

"And G-d spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they came near before G-d and died." Aaron's sons Nadav and Avihu were so desirous of cleaving to G-d that their physical bodies became superfluous; consequently, their souls left their bodies.

However, lest we conclude that attaining such an elevated state of holiness is the ultimate objective, after which there is nothing left to do, the word "acharei" comes to remind us that there is much work for the Jew even after he has reached the highest of spiritual levels.

A Jew is never static; he must always strive upward, no matter how much he has already attained. There's always a higher rung on the ladder, another way of introducing sanctity into his daily existence.

From where do we get this power?

From G-d's command: "You shall be holy because I am holy." G-d's holiness is unlimited and boundless; no matter how sanctified a human being may be, there's always a higher level he can aim for.

This, then, is the lesson to be derived from this week's Torah reading: We must never be satisfied with our present spiritual attainments, but must always endeavor to attain ever-increasing levels of G-dliness and sanctity.

Adapted from *Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe*, Vol. 12

Whom Can We Trust?

By Rabbi Simon Jacobson

Trust is the central narrative of our modern era—or rather, the lack of it. We find ourselves questioning everything: political parties, media, financial institutions, and insurance giants. We even doubt the "holy grail" of our economic structure: Capitalism.

The uncomfortable truth is that money often corrupts. It is the ultimate expression of self-interest, a force to which no human is entirely immune. If personal gain is the primary engine of capitalism, how narrow is the bridge between healthy profit and destructive greed? While laws and regulations are meant to keep us honest, we have seen regulators fail and lawmakers rewarded by the very corporations they oversee. This leads to a daunting question: Can we trust people? Can we even trust ourselves?

The human cost of broken trust is devastating. When bonds are betrayed, the soul retreats into a cynicism that is difficult to heal. However, the Torah offers a "royal dose" of trust in its description of the Divine Sanctuary. Here, G-d entrusts humans to use gold, silver, and copper—the very materials associated with greed—to build a Temple for the Divine.

This presents a profound paradox. Many believe holiness requires detaching from the corrupting material world through isolated meditation. Yet, the Temple was

intentionally built from physical matter. The ultimate triumph is not building a sanctuary in a sterile heaven, but creating a sacred space "amongst you"—within a world of selfish materialism. G-d took a calculated risk, entrusting corruptible beings to rise above temptation and fulfill a higher calling.

This realization reveals a difficult truth: our distrust of others is often a projection of our distrust of ourselves. If you know you might compromise your integrity for self-interest, you will fear others will do the same. We break this cycle by looking at the words etched onto our currency: "In God We Trust."

Because humans are inherently biased, we cannot be the ultimate foundation of trust. Lasting trust can only be infused into man-made structures by introducing something that is not man-made. Trusting a Higher Power to whom we are all accountable provides the foundation for a just society. When an individual realizes they are here to serve a higher cause rather than their own ego, they become someone we can actually trust.

Our current crisis of trust is a reminder that when we trust only in man, we build on sand. The answer is literally in our pockets. The foundation of all trust—economic, political, and personal—is found in our willingness to answer to something higher.

SLICE OF LIFE

When Torah Becomes the Song of Your Life



Rabbi Eitan Henna

Rabbi Eitan Henna is seventy-five years old. He grew up in the HaShomer HaTzair movement, fought as a paratrooper in the War of Attrition, studied music in Amsterdam, and later returned to Judaism together with his wife, a righteous convert. Today he lives in Ganai Modi'in and is a grandfather to sixty grandchildren. In recent years, after decades devoted entirely to Torah study, he made an unexpected return to the world of music he once left behind.

"I was born in Ramat Aviv, in a completely non-religious home," he says. "The only Jewish observance we had was Kiddush on Friday night. My religious grandfather was almost my only connection to tradition." As a teenager, he joined HaShomer HaTzair, the secular socialist youth movement, first as a member and later as a counselor.

During his military service, Henna completed paratrooper and demolitions training and became a commander. He fought in the War of Attrition in intense battles. "I saw death up close and experienced many miracles," he recalls. "The army gave me discipline,

but it did not fill the emptiness inside me. I was searching for meaning and for answers to questions I could not yet put into words."

After his discharge, he traveled through Europe with a childhood friend, eventually settling in Amsterdam at the height of the hippie era. "I wandered through Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam," he says. "I didn't know exactly what I was looking for, but I knew I was searching." He enrolled in university to study music and played double bass in a philharmonic orchestra.

It was in Amsterdam that he encountered Rabbi Peter Rosenzweig, the rabbi for Jewish students. "I visited him once a week," Henna recalls. "We became close, and he opened for me the world of Torah and mitzvot." At the same time, the woman who would become his wife, a young woman from a wealthy Dutch family, was also searching. She chose to convert to Judaism, and together they began discovering what it meant to live as Jews.

Henna studied Chassidic thought with Chabad emissaries in Holland and even wrote letters to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, receiving responses. "Those connections left a deep impression on me," he says.

Around the age of thirty, Henna returned to Israel, seeking a structured framework for serious Torah study. He and his wife connected with Rabbi Avraham Hafuta, head of the Rambam Yeshiva. "At that point, I left music behind," he says. "It had been an inseparable part of my life, but Torah became my focus."

For thirty years, he immersed himself fully in learning. Then, gradually, music found its way back. "My children kept asking me to play," he says with a smile. "They saw instruments sitting untouched in the house." Eventually, he picked up a guitar, and the songs began to flow. About a decade ago, he released his first album together with musician Gilad Potolsky.

A few years later, a chance meeting opened a new chapter. He visited the home of Yonatan Amar, a musician whose living room doubled as a studio. "There were guitars, drums, harmonicas everywhere," Henna recalls. "I picked up a guitar and started playing. Yonatan looked at me and said, 'We've been waiting for you for years.'"

Together with Yonatan Amar, Eitan Shimoni, and Meir Cohen, Henna formed the band Ey Sham. The name is both a phrase and an acronym of their first names. "We play from our life stories," he says. "There is a deep connection between us. We understand each other without words."

The band performs for diverse audiences: soldiers on bases, inmates in prisons, and communities across the country. "A few months ago, I performed for nearly one hundred Holocaust survivors," Henna recalls. "It was deeply moving. I felt as though I was touching my own youth again."

Henna also finds meaning in small, personal moments. He often offers rides to strangers. "For me, that is the truest expression of hospitality," he says. Once, a yeshiva student entered his car and confided that he was thinking of leaving Yeshiva. "I sensed his emptiness," Henna says. "I played him one of my songs, 'Hello My Son.' When the ride ended, he told me he was returning to Yeshiva. That moment reminded me of the power music holds."

For Henna, Torah and music are inseparable. "Torah is the song of our lives," he says. "When a person is deeply connected to Torah, it sings within him and bursts outward like music. It is no coincidence that King David concludes the Book of Psalms with instruments and song. When Torah resonates within you like rich, flowing music, it is a sign that Torah has truly become the song of your life."

Adapted from *Sichat Shavua Magazine*

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

The first two paragraphs were written in Hebrew. The rest of the letter is in the Rebbe's original English.

10 Kislev, 5740-1980

Concerning the notification that you will soon be entering the age of mitzvot, it should be G-d's will that from 13 years of age you will grow to 15, etc. as it says in the Mishna (Avot Chapter 5), and you will increase in studiousness and diligence in the study of Torah, the revealed Torah and Chasidut, and you will be careful in the performance of mitzvot, and G-d will make you successful to be a Chasid, a fearer of Heaven, and a scholar.

P.S. The following is written in the "language of the land" so that he will be able, if he wants, to show it to his friends, in the spirit of the commandment of "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself," that if in all matters one must look for the good of others, how much more so in matters of Judaism, Torah and its mitzvot.

At first glance, it is strange that the day of Bar Mitzva, which is so important that the Zohar declares that for the Bar Mitzva boy it is almost like the day of Matan Torah (when Jews first received the Torah and mitzvot), yet, insofar as Tachnun [a special penitential prayer] is concerned, which is omitted even on the so-called "Minor Holidays," if it does not occur on Shabbat or Yom Tov (or another day that Tachnun is not said) -- Tachnun is said by the Bar Mitzva boy, as on any ordinary weekday.

One of the explanations is as follows:

When one considers that human capacities are limited in general, especially the capacities of a boy at the start of his fourteenth year, yet he must assume all the duties and responsibilities of a full-fledged Jew; and, moreover, fulfill them with joy, in keeping with the rule: Serve G-d with joy -- the question begs itself: How is he going to carry out all that is expected of him, especially

being a member of a people which is a small minority among the nations of the world; and even in this country, where one has every opportunity to carry out all religious duties, but most are more interested and engaged in the material aspects of life?

The answer is that the Torah and mitzvot have been given by G-d, the Creator of the world, and of man, and He knows all the difficulties that a Jew may encounter. G-d has surely provided every Jew with the necessary strength to overcome any and all difficulties to live up to G-d's Will, for G-d would not expect someone to do something which is beyond his capacity.

If, however, there should be a moment of weakness, when carrying out G-d's Will is not in the fullest measure of perfection, G-d in His infinite goodness makes it possible to "say Tachnun" -- to do Teshuva. Indeed, as the Alter Rebbe explains, teshuva is basically for the lack of perfection in Avodat Hashem [G-dly service].

Therefore, on the first day of becoming a full-fledged Jew, and after fulfilling the very first mitzva, namely, the saying of the Shema, by which a Jew declares his total commitment to G-d and obedience to all His commandments, the Bar Mitzva boy does say Tachnun the following morning and afternoon (provided it is not Shabbat or Yom Tov, etc.), for the essence of Tachnun is teshuva, and there is the assurance that "Nothing stands in the way of teshuva."

This knowledge will, moreover, also stand him in good stead when he will involve himself in the great mitzva of v'havta l're'acho kamocho [loving one's fellow Jew as oneself], to bring the alienated closer to Judaism. For remembering the rule that "Nothing stands in the way of teshuva," he will eagerly and compassionately apply it to them, especially when in most cases, the failure to observe fully the Torah and mitzvot is due to extenuating circumstances.

With all the above in mind, and being fortunate in growing up in a family where Yiddishkeit is a living experience in your everyday life, you will start out on your way of life as a full-fledged Jew with confidence, and will proceed from strength to strength, and be a source of true pride and joy to your dear parents and family, and to all our Jewish people.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

"You shall not profane My holy name, so that I may be sanctified among the Children of Israel." (Lev. 22:32) When a Jew gives up his life rather than commits certain transgressions, G-d's name is publicly sanctified. The

desecration of G-d's name is taken just as seriously. The Prophet Ezekiel refers to the exile of the Jewish people as a desecration of G-d's name. The ultimate sanctification of G-d's name, however, will take place when Moshiach comes and the entire world is redeemed, at which time "My great name will be sanctified...and all the nations will know that I am G-d." (*Likutei Sichot Vol. 27*)

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

Rabbi Shmuel, known as the Rebbe Maharash, was the fourth Rebbe of Lubavitch. His birthday falls on the Hebrew date of 2 Iyar, which this year corresponds to Sunday, April 19. He is especially associated with the saying "L'chat'chila Ariber," teaching that when one encounters obstacles, the proper approach is to rise above them from the outset.

He explained, "The world says that when you cannot go under it, you should rise above it. I say, 'L'chat'chila Ariber'—the first approach should be to go above it." In other words, no obstacle should be considered too great. Whatever one does should be approached with confidence and strength. This idea defined his approach to life and leadership.

The Rebbe Maharash was known for his expansive and opulent style. However, this was not for personal pleasure, but to serve Hashem in a way that would impress the oppressive Russian government and encourage them to treat Jews with respect.

His unique approach was also evident in his dealings with the government. He was outspoken and bold, insisting that the government help the Jews not out of pity, but because it was in their own best interest.

In his final years, when pogroms broke out in Russia, he spoke out strongly against the violence. Despite threats of imprisonment for involving other governments, the pogroms ceased after his intervention.

His boldness affected his health. When his doctor warned him, he responded that the essence of the Lubavitcher Rebbes is to endure any consequence to help the Jewish people.

This approach of "L'chat'chila Ariber" reinforces the belief that no matter how hopeless a situation may seem, we must never give up hope. With Hashem's help, all obstacles can be overcome.

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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The New Flavor of Jewish Life at Indiana University



Rabbi Levi Cunin greeting guests

The lunchtime line at Yalla moves fast — shawarma sizzling, pitas flying, students lingering long after their plates are empty. On a campus that never had kosher dining before, this storefront at Indiana University has quickly become the hub for Jewish life between classes. Located in the Kelley School of Business and just a five-minute walk from the Chabad House, it's an exciting development for many of IU's 4500 Jewish students.

The initiative took shape through a post-October 7 partnership between Chabad at IU and university leadership. "The goal was simple," said Rabbi Levi Cunin, who leads Chabad on campus there along with his wife Sheina. "There are so many Jewish students here," he said. "They deserve kosher on campus." Yalla draws around 450 customers a day who come for the fresh, quality kosher fare and a place to meet between classes.

Ethics Chapter Three

Akavia the son of Mahalalel would say: Reflect upon three things and you will not come to the hands of transgression. Know from where you came, where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give a judgement and accounting. From where you came—from a putrid drop; where you are going—to a place of dust, maggots and worms; and before whom you are destined to give a judgement and accounting—before the supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.