

# L'Chaim

The Weekly Publication  
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson  
"... I have called out to the L-rd and He answered me" (Psalm 120:1)



## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe  
on the Torah portion

This week we read the Torah portion of *Tazria*. In *Tazria* we learn about the *Metzora*, one afflicted by a spiritual ailment called *tzara'at*, in which a patch of his skin, hair, etc., takes on different colors, textures, etc.

The *Talmud* asks a question: "What is Moshiach's name? The Rabbis (the majority opinion) say, he is called the Metzora of the house of Rebbe. The *Midrash* explains, 'Metzora, this is the Holy Temple.'"

Usually we see a Metzora as an outcast, afflicted because of some wrongdoing. However, it seems from here, that a Metzora is a good thing. The holiest man, Moshiach, and the holiest place, the Holy Temple, are called Metzora.

Why then are Moshiach and the Holy Temple called Metzora? To understand this, first we have to understand why there hasn't been a Metzora since the time of the Temple.

During the Temple era, when people went up to the Temple they beheld the Divine presence, they witnessed miracles regularly. The people were of a different caliber as well, they were able to reach spiritual heights that are unattainable now in exile.

The Metzora was a person who was at the highest level. He worked on refining himself until he had absolutely no trace of evil left in him, neither in his inner spiritual makeup nor in his outer physical makeup. The only thing that was left was the remnants of impurities he once had. These remnants come out as *tzara'at*.

Today, there are no longer people at these spiritual heights, hence there are no Metzoras.

Now we can understand why Moshiach and the Holy Temple are called "Metzora." Because a Metzora is a spiritual giant and because they are both connected to our redemption from this dark exile. In this exile we suffered unimaginable pain, this suffering also acts as a purifier, and cleanses us. Now at the end of the exile, all that is left is mere remnants. Moshiach and the Holy Temple come to redeem us from these remnants.

All of us have pain in our lives, this is the condition of our exile. It helps, albeit a little, that the pangs of the exile have meaning, as they bring the redemption.

Laying in my bed, immobilized by ALS, many have shared their pain with me, but at the same time, most found that as a result of their pain, they have attained some positive outcome, they never would have imagined they could have attained, had they not gone through their struggle. I have experienced this first hand. My and my family's struggle has brought out love, talents, strength and inspiration we never knew we had.

But we have suffered enough. It is time for Moshiach to come and redeem us from this exile. May it happen now!

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.

## Grab and Eat

Long before supermarket shelves offered fresh, packaged pre-cut fruits and vegetables ready to eat. Long before fast-food emporiums dotted the landscape like slugs on the sidewalk after a rain, our Sages suggested we implement the fast-food mentality into our lives, though with a Jewish twist, of course. "Grab and eat, grab and drink," Rabbi Shmuel told his student Rabbi Yehuda Shenina (as recorded in the *Talmud*). "For life is like a party which will soon be over."

Far from being a fatalistic outlook, or one that places the emphasis on physicality, Rabbi Shmuel's words teach us how to define our goals and motivate ourselves Jewishly.

*Mitzvot* (commandments) are likened to food and the Torah is likened to water, in Chasidic philosophy. "Do mitzvot, study Torah," Rabbi Shmuel taught. "For life – in this world – will soon be over and in the World to Come those same opportunities to do mitzvot and study Torah will no longer be available."

Picture yourself in a fast-food line. Are you going to stand there leisurely contemplating the menu as you would in a fine restaurant, discussing it with the people joining you, maybe even asking what the restaurant suggests? Or would you order quickly from the list on the wall and hungrily gobble it down? Most likely you would do the latter, since expedience and swiftness are major reasons for your choice of restaurant styles.

Similarly, Chasidut explains that since we are getting closer every day to Moshiach, we shouldn't spend time contemplating a menu of mitzvot. We don't have time any longer to sit and relax at a fine restaurant, dillydallying until we make our choice. Action is the main thing. Grab and eat, grab and drink. Whatever mitzva comes your way, do it. Whichever Jewish learning opportunity is available, benefit from it. We're living life in the fast-lane, traveling on the express train.



A Jewish fast-food mentality means taking hold of our every opportunity to do a mitzva, regardless of whether or not we think it should be the next one in our repertoire. There's no time for, "How can I light Shabbat candles if on Saturday I ...?" Or, "Why put on tefillin if I don't..." Or, "How can I attend a Jewish mysticism/Chasidic philosophy class if I don't even know the Hebrew alphabet?"

Grab and eat, grab and drink means that these last few moments before the Messianic Era need to be filled with action not contemplation, deeds not meditations. Soon the party will be over, or will it just be beginning?

# SLICE OF LIFE

## Where Do You Need to Go?

by Malka Goldstein



Kenny H was kind, caring and calm. He was a loner by nature, and he had no family that we knew of. He was an only child and had never married.

Kenny had been an accountant, and also a projectionist in a movie theater. He was a Vietnam army veteran who had served some of his time Alaska. But when I got to know him, Kenny was a car driver. The passengers in Kenny's car were considered his friends. Many of us were his clients for over 20 years or more. No place was too far, no matter snow or sleet, Kenny was always available to us. And his fees were based on 1950s rates.

When the opportunity presented itself, I encouraged Kenny to put on *teffilin* with one of our Chabad rabbis, Rabbi Levi Shapiro. He also readily agreed to affix a mezuzah to his door. He shared with us that as a young man he had the privilege to meet the Rebbe at Lubavitch World Headquarters, 770 Eastern Parkway, and received dollars from the Rebbe. He also worked on a documentary of the Rebbe.

Kenny's sense of humor was very unusual. For example: When a sales person for funeral

arrangements that can be paid monthly called one time while I was a passenger in Ken's car, I heard him respond, "Actually I'm not feeling that well today, can I have my funeral tomorrow?"

Sadly, much too soon after that humorous reply, Ken passed away.

Ken had recently had some serious medical issues. Two friends and I had offered to help him with whatever he wanted or needed. Due to his desire for privacy, Ken would always politely refuse any help. So amongst ourselves, Ken's clients and friends, we used to check up on Ken via phone. When I didn't hear from him for several days and couldn't reach him on the phone, I called the police and asked them to check on him. The police reported that he was ok at that time, thank G-d.

The second time I called the police and asked them to check up on him, sadly it was already too late.

I immediately called our Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Boruch Chazanow. I was obviously very upset, in fact, nearly hysterical. What would become of Kenny? How could we provide him with a proper Jewish burial? And in a timely fashion as Jewish law requires?

All night I prayed to Hashem (G-d) to help us be successful in releasing Ken's body from the medical examiner. Then we could arrange for Ken to be laid to rest according to Jewish law.

Rabbi Chazanow moved mountains to achieve this. And just two days after I had called the police to check on Ken and we had found out that he had passed away, we were able to make Ken's funeral.

To have the body released so quickly in this kind of situation and be able to make all of the necessary burial and funeral plans was nothing less than a miracle. To me, this was a "*Mait Mitzva* miracle."

What is a "mait mitzva"? A "mait mitzva" is a deceased person who has no one to provide a

proper Jewish burial.

We knew Ken's first and last name. We also knew his mother's Jewish name as we, his client/friends, had been praying for his return to good health. With this information and the help of the internet, Rabbi Chazanow was able to locate the cemetery that Ken's parents were buried in. We were pleasantly surprised when we found out that his parents had had the foresight to obtain a plot for Ken right next to their own plot.

The remainder of the funeral and burial costs were donated by our congregation and other generous-hearted people.

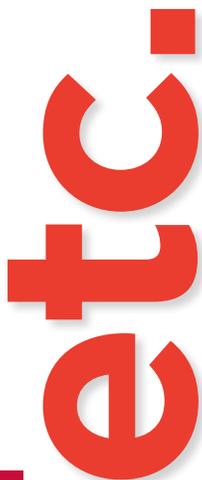
The funeral took place on a freezing cold day in January. Snow and thick mud was on the ground. Yet men came from near and far to honor Ken with a minyan so the appropriate grave side prayers could be said. Many of these people didn't even know Ken. But they came to participate in this mitzva known as "*chesed shel emet* – true kindness" since the recipient of the mitzva can't possibly reciprocate.

We shared stories with the minyan about how thoughtful and generous Ken was. For instance, after completing a ride, Ken would ask his passenger, "Do you need to go anywhere else? Do you need food? Milk or juice or anything else?"

G-d was so merciful and truly guided us, our Chabad rabbis and rebbetzins are so devoted, our community and extended community so generous of heart, the police were so helpful and courteous – everything coalesced to allow Ken to be laid to rest in a respectful and gracious manner.

About two weeks after Ken's funeral, I had a dream about him. I saw Ken with a serene face. This comforted me to know that he is at peace with G-d and his parents. He now knows that his friends are also his family. And we cared very much for him. Just like he took us to our destinations in all types of weather, we accompanied him to his final destination on that wintery cold day.

May Ken's soul go higher and higher.



## Expansion & New Facilities

A new home for the Chabad Girls Seminary in Paris was inaugurated. The new home is located in the 19th District of **Paris, France**, and is the second location for the seminary girls. The new venue includes a classroom and Study Hall.

A new wing has been dedicated at the Yeshiva Gedola **Melbourne, Australia**. The new wing contains an extension to the Study Hall, staff offices, classrooms, and five bedrooms to accommodate 15 students.

Lubavitch Chabad of Illinois has announced the groundbreaking of a new headquarters in **Chicago, Illinois**. The building will have a facade that is a replica of "770" Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn - Lubavitch World Headquarters. The headquarters will incorporate a Museum of Jewish Life, a Research Institute and a wide range of services and resource offices for the Chabad emissaries throughout the state of Illinois.

## TODAY IS...

### 29 Adar II

G-d created the universe and all physical objects something from nothing. Jews must transform the "something" into "nothing," transform the material into spiritual. The work of turning the physical into spiritual and making the physical into an instrument for the spiritual, is a personal obligation. Every single person, individually, is required to do this.



# The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

28 Adar, 5721 (1961)

The principle of unity is the essence of Judaism, since Abraham first proclaimed monotheism in a world of idolatry, which came to full fruition at the revelation at Mount Sinai.

For true monotheism, as professed by us, and as explained in the Jewish religion, is not only the truth that there is only one G-d and none with Him, but that there is "nothing besides" Him (ein od milvado), that is the denial of the existence of any reality but G-d's, the denial of pluralism and dualism even the separation between the material and spiritual.

It is interesting to note that the more the physical sciences advance, the closer one approaches the principle of unity even in the world of matter.

For, whereas formerly it was the accepted opinion that the plurality and compositeness in the material world can be reduced to some 100 odd basic elements and entities, and physical forces and laws were regarded as being separate and independent, not to mention the dichotomy between matter and energy.

But in recent years, with the advancement of science, the basic elements themselves were reduced to several more elementary components of the atom, viz. electrons, protons and neutrons, and even these were immediately qualified as not the ultimate "blocks" of matter, until the discovery was made that matter and energy are reducible and convertible one into the other.

It is well known that the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of general Chasidus, taught, and Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad Chasidus, explained and amplified, that every detail in human experience is an instruction in a person's service to his Maker.

Thus, what has been said above about the

advancement of science, exemplified also the progress of human advancement in the service of G-d.

Man possesses two apparently contradictory elements, no less incompatible than the incompatibility of matter and spirit, the counterpart of which in the physical world is matter and energy.

I refer to the Divine soul and animal soul, or, on a lower level, the Yetzer Tov and the Yetzer Hora (the inclination toward good and the inclination toward evil). But this incompatibility is evident only in the infantile stage of progress in Divine service, comparable to the plurality of elements and forces which were presumed to exist in physical nature.

But, just as the appreciation of the underlying unity of nature grew with the advancement of science, so does perfection in the Divine service lead to the realization of the essential unity in human nature, to the point where the Yetzer Tov and the Yetzer Hora become one, through the transformation of the Yetzer Hora by and into the Yetzer Tov, for otherwise, of course, there can be no unity and harmony, since all that is holy and positive and creative could never make peace and be subservient to the unholy, negative and destructive.

And in this attained unity the Jew proclaims, [Shema Yisroel] "Hear O Israel, G-d our G-d, G-d is one."

This is also what our Sages meant, when they succinctly said - as they often compress far-reaching ideas into a few concise words - that the words, "And you shall love G-d, your G-d, with all your heart (lev-ovecho)," which immediately follow Shema Yisroel, mean: with both your Yetzers, with the Yetzer Hora, as with the Yetzer Tov.

## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

*This Shabbat is Rosh Chodesh Nissan. Noted as the "month of redemption," Nissan is the month in which the Jewish people left Egypt. The name "Nisan" is related to the word "nes," meaning miracle.*

*As related in the Torah, two significant events transpired on the first of Nissan.*

*The first occurred when the Jewish people were still enslaved in Egypt. They received the commandment to sanctify the new moon and the laws associated with the Passover offering, which they were commanded to bring two weeks later on the 15th of the month.*

*The second event occurred exactly one year later, when the Jewish people had already been liberated, received the Torah at Mount Sinai, and were utterly free. On that day, the Sanctuary in the desert was erected, signifying the indwelling of the Divine Presence in a physical "house."*

*Nothing in the Torah is coincidental. Although the two events took place a year apart, the fact that they occurred on the same date indicates that they share a common theme.*

*Every Jew, in every age and circumstance, is simultaneously "enslaved" and "liberated." From the perspective of the Jewish soul, a "veritable part of G-d Above," he is always free. Yet he is still "enslaved" to the physical body, which requires daily upkeep and maintenance.*

*However, the body and the soul are not two separate worlds, completely disconnected and dissociated from each other. The Jew's objective is to integrate the two into a single, well-adjusted entity. As the Tanya teaches, the key to a well-balanced life lies in giving precedence to the spiritual over the physical, "raising and exalting the soul high above the body."*

*"A mitzva is a candle, and the Torah is light." When a Jew illuminates his body with the sanctity of Torah, his animal soul willingly subjugates itself to his G-dly soul, and the two work successfully in tandem.*

*Our Sages tell us that the Final Redemption will take place in the month of Nissan. May we merit to greet our righteous Moshiach, sound in body and soul, in the immediate future.*

*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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# MOSHIACH MATTERS

In this week's Torah portion Moses asked to see G-d's full glory. G-d answered, "No human can see Me and still live!" But in Psalms (17:15) King David said he will be able to see G-d

- "I will see Your face with righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your image upon the awakening." How could this be? The answer is that until the Redemption comes, people can not see G-d and still live. But later, when the dead come back to life, we will see G-d, so to speak. We will see G-d with our eyes and we will say, "This is our G-d" (Isaiah 52:8. 25.9). (Midrash Tehilim 17:13)



# IT HAPPENED ONCE

Reb Zusha of Hanipoli sat in his home immersed in his Torah learning, when the sounds wafting caused him to glance out the open window. Passing in front of his house was a wedding procession leading the bride and groom on their way. Reb Zusha immediately stood up and went out into the street where abandoning constraint he danced with unbounded joy. He circled the young couple and the other celebrants for a few minutes of great simcha and then returned to his home and his study.

His family members watched his actions with great interest. They suggested to him that his dancing before a wedding procession was unbefitting a person of his stature in the community.

To their comment he replied, "Let me tell you a story. When I was young I studied under the famous Maggid of Zlotchov, Reb Yechiel Michel. One day I did something against his wishes and he rebuked me severely. I was terribly hurt by his reaction, and he, sensing anguish, soon came over to me and apologized for the harshness of his response, saying, 'Reb Zusha, please forgive me for my angry words.'

"I was very comforted by his apology and replied, 'Of course, I forgive you, Rebbe.'"

"The same night before I went to sleep, he again came to me and asked my forgiveness. I was surprised, and repeated that I forgave him totally.

"I lay in bed for a while thinking about the incident, when the father of my Rebbe, Reb Yitzchak of Drohovitch, appeared to me from the Next World. He said to me, 'I had the merit to leave behind me in the world below my only son, and you want to destroy him because he insulted you?'

"Please, Rebbe, don't say such a thing! I don't want to hurt him and I have certainly forgiven him completely and wholeheartedly! What more can I do than I have already done?"

"What you have done is still not complete forgiveness. Follow me and I will show you the real meaning of complete forgiveness."

"So, I got out of my bed and followed him until we reached the local mikva. Reb Yitzchak told me to immerse myself 3 times, each time saying and feeling that I forgave his son. I obeyed his wishes and immersed 3 times, each time with the intention of forgiving my Rebbe.

"When I emerged from the mikva I looked at Reb Yitzchak and saw that his face was so radiant that I was unable to gaze upon it. I asked him where that light came from and he replied: 'All my life I have carefully observed three things to which the Sage Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKana attributed his long life: he never sought honor at the expense of the degradation of his fellow; he never went to sleep without forgiving anyone who might have offended or injured him that day; he was always generous with his money. Reb Yitzchak then told me that the very same level which can be achieved through these things can also be reached through joy.

"And that is why when I saw the wedding procession passing in front of our house, I ran outside to partake of the festivities and to add to the simcha of the bride and groom."

Once Rabbi Shmelke of Nikolsburg came to his Rebbe, Reb Dov Ber of Mezerich, with an inquiry: "How is it possible to fulfill the teaching of our rabbis that one is obligated to say a blessing on bad news just as one would on good news?"

The Maggid answered him by instructing him to go to the shul. "When you get there ask for Reb Zusha of Hanipoli and ask him to explain that dictum to you."

Reb Shmelke did as his Rebbe told him, and when he found Reb Zusha he asked him the question. Reb Zusha was a man who had endured great hardship throughout his entire life. He replied to Reb Shmelke as follows: "I am very surprised that my rebbe sent you to me, of all people. A question like yours should be addressed to a

person who has, G-d forbid actually experienced something terrible in life. Whereas I, thank G-d, know nothing about those frightful things. You see, I have experienced nothing but good all my life. I'm sorry, but I cannot answer your question since I know nothing about evil occurrences."

Reb Shmelke returned to the Maggid with his question answered. He now understood the meaning of the teaching that one is obliged to bless the evil that occurs in life as well as the good, for when man accepts a Divine edict with complete faith and trust, there is no longer a perception of evil inherent in the experiences.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

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**When a woman conceives and gives birth [lit. conceived seed]... (Lev. 12:2)**

The potential contained within a seed is virtually limitless. When properly nurtured, a seed will develop into a mature tree, which, in turn, will yield more seeds with the potential for growth and regeneration. Our service of G-d must be performed in a similar manner. A good deed must not be self-limiting; a Jew must always strive to ensure that his actions have far-reaching effects, bearing fruit in the next generation as well. (*Likrat Shabbat*)

Giving birth to a child is compared by the Prophet Isaiah to the Redemption. Just as birth takes place in a day, the Redemption can come and the Jewish nation be "reborn" in a moment.

**He shall be brought to Aaron the kohen or to one of his sons the kohanim (Lev. 13:2)**

Only a kohen was allowed to determine whether or not a plague was leprosy, a severe affliction necessitating that the sufferer to be sent outside the camp for seven days. Only a kohen, whose job is to bless the Jewish people with the priestly blessing, could fully appreciate the magnitude of being sent outside the warm and loving Jewish camp. He could therefore, be relied upon to try all possible means to pronounce the individual clean. (*The Rebbe*)

**When the priest will see him... (Lev. 13:3)**

The Shpoler Zaide was known as one of the most enthusiastic and spirited disciples of the Maggid of Mezeritch. During a visit to the Rabbi Shneur Zalman, he related that he had merited to see the Baal Shem Tov when he was three years old. "The Baal Shem Tov placed his holy hand over my heart, and ever since I've been warm," he explained. From this we learn that the gaze of a tzadik ("the priest shall see him"), the sound of his voice, or in fact any gesture he makes, has far-reaching influence and effect on an individual. (*Otzar HaChasidut*)

**Dedicated to the entire L'Chaim staff**  
*a sheynem dank for all you do!*  
**by Scott Levine**



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