

L'Chaim

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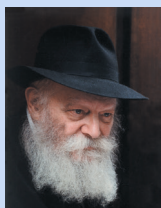
March 6, 2026

The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

גוסד תורה ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"Our help is in the name of the L-rd, Who made heaven and earth" (Psalms 124:8)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Ki Tisa, Moses descends from Mount Sinai holding the Tablets containing the Ten Commandments he received from G-d.

"The Tablets were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d, inscribed on both their sides."

Engraved on two magnificent stones of sapphire, the Ten Commandments were miraculously visible from both sides. Yet they were not to last for long:

"And Moses became angry...and he broke them at the foot of the mountain... And G-d said to Moses, 'Hew yourself tablets of stone like the first.'"

In connection to the Tablets, the Torah speaks of three distinct stages:

The original Tablets: Moses descends from Mount Sinai, where he had spent the previous forty days and forty nights, with the Tablets in hand;

The breaking of the Tablets: Moses witnesses the sin of the Children of Israel with the Golden Calf and breaks the Tablets in anger;

The second Tablets: The Jews repent of their sin. Moses goes back up the mountain for an additional forty days and nights, to return with a second set of Tablets.

The first and second sets of Tablets were not identical. The first set was written by G-d; the second set was inscribed by Moses under G-d's direction. Yet curiously, the second set of Tablets was superior to the first in one important respect, as explained in Chasidic philosophy.

The breaking of the Tablets and their subsequent replacement is an example of "a descent for the sake of an ascent."

Every descent, every failure, can lead the individual to an even higher spiritual level. According to this principle, the second set of Tablets was clearly superior to the first, for it came after the Jews' descent into idolatry and their ensuing return to G-d. Symbolically, the three stages of the Tablets parallel the annals of the Jewish people and their progression throughout history:

The first stage (the original Tablets) spans the years between the Revelation on Mount Sinai until the destruction of the Second Holy Temple.

The second stage (the breaking of the Tablets) refers to the forced exile of the Jews from their land and the spiritual degradation endured for almost 2,000 years.

The third and final stage, the era on whose threshold we now stand, is the Messianic Era, at which time the spirituality of the entire world will be elevated to unprecedented heights, an ascent made possible only by the bitter darkness of the exile.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Success: It's a Numbers Game

THE BRUTAL MATH OF SUCCESS

Every modern entrepreneur knows the "numbers game." In the world of high-stakes sales and startups, we call it The 10% Solution. It's the law of averages that dictates your career, and it works with cold, clinical precision.

The formula is simple: To close one deal, you need ten pitches. To land one pitch, you need ten high-quality connections. A "connection" isn't a mass-blast email or a LinkedIn bot; it's a real, human moment where you have the permission to ask for someone's time.

If you factor in the sheer volume of "ghosting," unreturned DMs, and gatekeepers you have to navigate just to reach that first human connection, the math gets daunting. We're looking at an exponential climb: 10,000 attempts to 1,000 contacts leads to 100 meetings to 10 closes all for one significant win.

THE PHYSICS OF PERSISTENCE

Looking at a \$0.01% success rate can be paralyzing. It's exactly why most people quit before they hit their stride. Some get lucky and beat the odds early; others get crushed by a streak of bad timing.

But for the pros, the math isn't a deterrent—it's a roadmap. In an era of instant gratification, sales remains the ultimate test of "internal fortitude." It's the art of reframing a "no" not as a personal rejection, but as a data point moving you closer to a "yes." Whether you're a junior rep or a Fortune 500 CEO, you are, at your core, a storyteller navigating a sea

of silence to find the one person who listens.

FROM PROFIT TO PURPOSE

This 10% rule isn't just for the boardroom; it's a mirror for how we live our spiritual lives. In Jewish tradition, we see this reflected in the concept of a Mitzvah (a commandment or good deed).

The most literal example is Tzedakah, the practice of giving 10% of our earnings to those in need. But the ratio applies to almost everything meaningful. Great moments don't just happen; they are the "commission" on thousands of invisible attempts at being a better person.

THE 8,640-MINUTE INVESTMENT

Consider the ritual of lighting Shabbat candles. The actual act—striking the match, the blessing, the moment of reflection—takes maybe sixty seconds.

However, that one minute of peace is the result of an entire week of preparation. If you do the math, six days of work (6 times 24 times 60) equals 8,640 minutes of "attempts" just to reach that one minute of spiritual connection.

Statistically, that puts our spiritual success rate right around that same 10,000-to-1 ratio we see in the business world.

Whether you are chasing a commission or a moment of transcendence, the "Solution" is the same. The effort is massive, and the "yield" might seem small on paper—but that one percent is where the magic lives.

The grind isn't the obstacle; it's the investment.

SLICE OF LIFE

Concentration Camp Promises Kept



Mrs. Esther Roth

I was born in the Carpathian mountain region – which was a part of the Soviet-controlled Czechoslovakia and is now part of Ukraine – to a religious Jewish family that had managed to survive the Holocaust. Although my parents could have emigrated right after the war because they had relatives in America, they stayed out of loyalty to an ailing aunt, and they missed their chance to leave. After that, the border was closed and getting out became impossible. Only in 1972, after my uncle pressed officials he knew to lobby the Nixon administration, were we finally able to emigrate. By then, I had already graduated college.

When we arrived in America – in Los Angeles – my father saw that his relatives here were not Torah observant, and he was very concerned. Despite great obstacles, our family had kept Shabbat and kosher in Czechoslovakia. “I didn’t come here for this,” he said. “I want my kids to grow up religious.” This was especially important to him because, while he was incarcerated in a Nazi concentration camp, he made a promise to G-d that if He got him out alive, he would always keep the Torah and would make sure his children did as well. He was not about to renege on that promise, not after G-d also liberated him from what he

called “Soviet hell.”

He confided his concerns in Rabbi Naftali Estulin, the Chabad emissary to the Russian community in LA, who promised him that he would arrange for me and my siblings to be sent to New York to spend time in a religious environment there.

True to his word, Rabbi Estulin put us all – me, my siblings and my cousins – on a bus, which belonged to the Chabad House, for the cross-country trek from Los Angeles to New York. But in Arizona the bus broke down. Dismayed, some of my cousins weren’t willing to continue; they just wanted to turn around and go back home. Unsure what to do, Rabbi Estulin called the Rebbe who told him to send us on a plane; Chabad would pay for the tickets.

That is how I came to attend Chabad’s Camp Emunah – not as a camper, but as a helper – and, after the summer was over, I enrolled in the Chabad school, Bais Rivka in Crown Heights.

When I first applied to Bais Rivka, I was brought to meet the Rebbe. I didn’t understand who he was – I thought he was just another rabbi. Even when I first spoke with him, I saw him as a grandfather figure, because I never knew any of my grandparents, all of whom had perished in the war. In fact, none of my friends had grandparents; they were all gone. And so that is who he seemed to me – the grandfather I never had.

It was only when I got older that I realized that the Rebbe was much more than a grandfather – he was a holy soul – and then I was in awe of him. But not so when I first met him.

At that meeting, the Rebbe asked me about my plans. I didn’t yet have my green card which would have enabled me to work in the United States, but this did not matter to me because I preferred to continue studying and I told him that. “Do you truly want to learn,” he asked, “or do you want to stay in school because you have nothing better to do?”

“I truly want to learn,” I replied. He was pleased with that and wished me much success. I then mentioned my concern about the cost of room and board, but he just said “Don’t worry.” And that’s how I went off to study at Bais Rivka.

While studying there, I met my darling husband, Zalman, and before the wedding – which took place in 1973 – we were able to get a blessing from the Rebbe.

Zalman and I were a perfect match. We shared a similar background and outlook. Although he was born in California, his parents were Czech Jews who had survived the Holocaust and who had settled in the same neighborhood as we did in Los Angeles. While we both gravitated toward Yiddishkeit and gained a great deal by learning in Chabad schools in New York, neither of us liked the city much.

But before either of us mentioned a word about that, the Rebbe told us, “You should know that Chabad is expanding on the West Coast, and it would be good for you to be there.” Zalman was particularly thrilled about that, and it turned out well for us – we were able to be quite successful in Jewish outreach in LA.

Then the Rebbe started talking with me in Russian about my younger sister Luba. Before the audience, I had written him a note telling him that, before we emigrated, Luba had received a marriage proposal from a young man – Eliya Kleiman – who also planned to emigrate, but so far had been unable to get permission. She really wanted to marry him, but feared he might never be allowed to leave, so she didn’t know what to do – should she wait for him or end the relationship?

The Rebbe replied that Luba should wait because this young man would come out soon – he’d be able to immigrate to Israel, and they would be able to get married.

I wanted to make sure that I heard correctly, so the Rebbe repeated himself, speaking Russian: “Da, Da. He is going to be let out soon. Don’t worry, and everything will be okay.”

When I told my sister what the Rebbe had said, she got very excited. And after just a few months, he made it out. Exactly a year after Zalman and I got married – on the very same day, twelve months later – Luba and Elya got married in Israel. It all happened just like the Rebbe said it would.

Mrs. Esther Roth is a mother of fifteen children, as well as a grandmother and a great-grandmother. She was interviewed together with her husband Mr. Zalman Roth in January 2025.



Jewish Service Members Find Strength Together at Aleph Symposium

From February 11-15, at the Shul of Bal Harbour, FL over 200 Jewish military chaplains, service members, and service academy cadets convened for the 19th Annual Aleph Institute Military Symposium, the largest professional gathering of Jews in the U.S. armed forces.

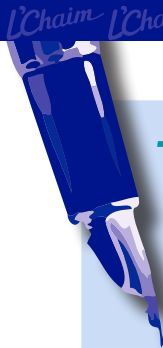
The five-day conference drew participants from across the globe. U.S. military personnel flew in from bases across the country. Among the attendees were twenty-five West Point cadets, representing nearly 20% of the academy’s 125 Jewish students, as well as cadets and personnel from the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, and Coast Guard Academy. “Military life asks a tremendous amount of service members and their families,” said Aleph’s CEO, Rabbi Aaron Lipskar. “Our annual symposium reflects our commitment to caring for the whole person behind the uniform.”

FROM THE TALMUD

A myrtle among thorns is still called a myrtle. Even if a person sins, surrounding his soul with thorns and bramble, the essence of the soul remains pure and untainted.

A thief standing at the entrance of the tunnel calls out to G-d. A precursor to “there are no atheists in foxholes,” this adage tells us that everyone, even a thief, calls out to G-d in his or her time of need.

A single coin in an empty flask makes the most noise. When a person rises above a family history of ignorance and apathy toward study Torah, the contrast is immediately apparent.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Greetings and Blessings!
Just now I received your letter in which you write of your present condition.

You have no doubt heard the teaching of the Rebbe Maharash [Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch], the grandfather of my revered father-in-law, the [Previous] Rebbe: "People say that if you can't make your way from below, you should climb over the top - but I hold that right from the outset you should leap over the top."

Now, this approach applies to the present subject. At first sight it would appear that manifest joy should wait until one's health improves in actual fact. However, in the spirit of the above teaching, it could be suggested that rejoicing over this improvement should be advanced ahead of time, even though the improvement is not yet manifest.

Indeed, this itself will hasten the process. As has been repeatedly cited in the name of the [earlier] Rebbes of Chabad, "Think positively, and things will be positive." And how much more does this assurance apply when one translates positive thoughts into joyful words and joyful actions. This is especially relevant to yourself, whose literary skills equip you to influence many people in this direction - and the reward of those who gladden people's hearts is well known (Taanis 22a).

[...] With blessings for good news,



3 Menachem Av, 5714 [1954]

Greetings and Blessings!
This letter is a response to the undated letter in which you write that though you are pleased that you moved to [...], at the moment your salary does not quite suffice to meet your needs, and this is affecting your mood.

This is most surprising. After having palpably witnessed G-d's kindness toward

you, do you really not have enough faith in His absolutely certain ability to guide you with His acts of loving-kindness in the future, too, and to free you from your straits? And even if, for reasons not understood by us, this is delayed, it is only the Creator of the universe, Who knows the future and Who knows what is truly good, that is able to decide in what manner - the manner that is best for a man and his household - He should bring them to their true happiness both materially and spiritually.

If the above applies even with regard to people whose present situation is less positive than it was previously, and also less positive by comparison with their environment and their acquaintances, how much more obviously does it apply with regard to people whose situation has improved from what it was. And in these difficult months, your situation is certainly better than that of quite a number of people around you, who nevertheless are not despairing, G-d forbid. Most certainly, therefore, neither you nor your wife ought to be dispirited or saddened, G-d forbid. We have seen it proved in practice that the greater a man's trust, and the more he looks toward his future with joy, the faster do these things materialize on a practical level.

I hope that you will soon gladden me with good news concerning all of the above, both in relation to yourself and in relation to your wife.



3 Kislev, 5720 [1959]

Greetings and Blessings!
After a long break your letter of 2 Kislev arrived, in which you write of your financial straits.

As I have written in the past to a number of people, if they had made a habit of sharing [their] good news and writing about it frequently, they would have had less - or no - need to set up bonds of communication by writing about things that are the opposite of good news. This is self-evident...

With blessings for good news in all the above,

From *In Good Hands*, translated by Rabbi Uri Kaploun, published by *Sichos In English*

glory of G-d then be throughout the entire world, that a mere fig will cry out in protest if it is about to be picked on Shabbos. It is thus clear that it will be impossible to sin in such circumstances, even unwittingly - just as a small child never puts his hand into the fire, nor does an animal jump into a fire.

(Likkutei Sichot, Vol. XXV, p. 263)

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

According to Jewish law, we begin studying the laws of an upcoming holiday 30 days before that holiday begins. We recently celebrated the holiday of Purim, which precedes Passover by 30 days. Thus, in a very practical sense, Purim and Passover, and all of the days in between, are connected.

In addition to Purim and Passover being connected, they also have something very important in common. Jewish children had a great influence on what happened to the entire Jewish people at both of those times in Jewish history.

Concerning Purim, the Midrash tells us that Haman's wicked decree was abolished in the merit of the Torah study and prayers of the Jewish children. G-d accepted their pure and heartfelt prayers and brought about the Purim redemption. Regarding Passover, the Talmud tells us that despite the bitter slavery they endured, the Jewish people raised a very special generation of children. This is best illustrated by what happened at the splitting of the Sea. Our Sages teach that the children recognized G-d first - even before the adults.

What significance does this have for us today? Since Passover is the time of freedom and redemption, Jewish children and the Jewish child within each one of us must use these days between Purim and Passover to prepare for Passover in a manner that shows true "freedom." This can be accomplished by freeing ourselves of our limitations (the Hebrew word for "limitation" - "maytzarim," is etymologically related to "Mitzrayim" - "Egypt"). We will then be able to fulfill mitzvot with joy and tranquility.

The Talmud states that in the month of Nisan we were redeemed (from Egypt) and in the month of Nisan we will be redeemed once again.

Let us not have to wait another 11 days until Nisan, but rather, may we be redeemed immediately through Moshiach, NOW!

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 time to come the Evil Inclination will cease to exist; as it is written (Zecharia 13:2), "I shall remove the spirit of impurity from the earth." Indeed, so manifest will the



IT HAPPENED ONCE

In the Tunisia of old, it was customary for the "Bey," the supreme ruler of the country, to personally appoint all nominees to public positions. This included all posts within the Jewish community.

One time the Chief Rabbi of Tunisia passed away, and the vacancy needed to be filled. The Chief Rabbi held an extremely crucial position, as many important powers were invested in him. As the official head of the Jewish community, he represented all of Tunisia's Jews in the secular courts, and his word carried much weight.

At the time of the Chief Rabbi's passing, Rabbi Nehorai Germon was serving as his assistant. In most cases it was only a matter of form for the assistant to be promoted. This time, however, there were forces within the Jewish community who opposed Rabbi Nehorai's promotion.

On the one hand, Rabbi Nehorai was easy to get along with, modest and unassuming. Yet when it came to upholding the Torah's laws and Jewish customs, he was absolutely rigid and fearlessly unbending. To some people, this was untenable. What they sought was a Chief Rabbi who wouldn't be a stickler for detail, someone who would know when to look away...

And so, a delegation of protesters went to the Bey. "He's much too fanatical," they told him. "Under no circumstances should Rabbi Nehorai become the next Chief Rabbi." The Bey was very receptive to their message. Soon rumors were flying that Rabbi Nehorai was no longer in the running.

It was precisely then that Rabbi Nehorai's inner strength and fortitude was revealed. As our Sages put it, "Wherever there is humility, there is also greatness." Overcoming his natural aversion to self-promotion, the Rabbi realized that he could not in good conscience simply withdraw from the fray. The dignity and reputation of the Chief Rabbinate demanded more of him.

Rabbi Nehorai went to the royal palace, where he was astounded by the throngs of people milling about. He asked the palace guards to be admitted but was informed that he would have to wait his turn. Stubbornly, Rabbi Nehorai refused to budge, demanding an immediate audience with the Bey. A commotion ensued, the angry sounds of which reached the ears of the Bey himself.

The Bey sent an aide outside to see what was going on. Quickly sizing up the situation, he returned to the Bey and explained that the assistant to the former Chief Rabbi was insisting on speaking to him. The Bey was surprised by the Jew's aggressive behavior, but instructed that he be brought in.

"Why was it so urgent to meet with me that you defied all social conventions?" the Bey asked Rabbi Nehorai, an artificial smile on his face.

Rabbi Nehorai was not intimidated. "If all the conventions were being adhered to," he replied seriously, "I would not have had to come here."

"What do you mean?" the Bey asked, his curiosity aroused.

"When affairs of state are attended to fairly, the assistant to the Chief Rabbi is automatically promoted to the office upon his death..."

The Bey stopped smiling. "From all the information I have received about you," he said, "it appears that you are too inflexible for the job, wedded to what you perceive as inviolate principles. It is said that you are unwilling to compromise for the sake of peace. In my opinion, a successful Chief Rabbi must know when to keep his eyes open and when to shut them..."

Rabbi Nehorai did not react, seemingly ignoring the Bey's words. "What a beautiful garden you have," he said suddenly, looking out the window at the magnificently manicured grounds. "I've never seen one more beautiful."

"It is unparalleled in all of Tunisia," the Bey responded, unable to resist the compliment.

"If I may be so bold," the Rabbi said, "it seems to me that if a lush garden like this will grow only here, of all places in the entire kingdom, surely it is a sign that G-d smiles favorably on your kingship."

The Bey almost laughed. "If everyone in the kingdom employed as many skilled horticulturists as I do, their land would also yield the same results. My gardeners are extremely vigilant, busy from dawn till dusk, planting, digging, trimming and plucking out stray weeds. But tell me, what does all this have to do with the subject we were discussing?"

"Well, I was wondering," Rabbi Nehorai replied. "Why do you insist on employing such skilled horticulturists? Why don't you hire a gardener who sometimes keep his eyes open, and other times keeps them closed..."

"Are you telling me that the Jewish community is the same as a garden?" the Bey smiled.

"In certain respects, yes," the Rabbi explained. "Our holy Torah contains 248 positive commandments, lovely seedlings in G-d's garden that must be nurtured and cared for. Then there are the Torah's 365 negative commandments. Like weeds, they must be carefully plucked out and uprooted. The Chief Rabbi is entrusted with caring for this garden, and must carry out his responsibilities faithfully."

The Bey was convinced, and a few days later Rabbi Nehorai was officially appointed Chief Rabbi of Tunisia.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the Weekly Torah Portion

See, I have called by name Betzalel the son of Uri (Ex. 31:2)
 When Moses ascended on high to receive the Torah, G-d showed him all the Sanctuary's vessels and explained how to make them. Moses thus assumed that he would be the one to make them, until G-d took out the Book of Adam and showed him the names of all the people who would live from Creation until the Resurrection of the Dead, "each generation and its kings, its generation and its leaders and prophets." Pointing to Betzalel's name He declared, "See, I have called by name Betzalel," i.e., ever since the creation of the world, Betzalel was intended to be the Sanctuary's artisan. (*Midrash Rabba*)

And the Tablets were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d (Ex. 32:16)
 What was so remarkable about the Tablets, considering that the Jewish people had already heard the Ten Commandments? Rather, when the Ten Commandments were inscribed in stone, they were simultaneously engraved upon the heart of every Jew forever and ever, as it states, "Write them on the tablet of your heart." This, indeed, was truly "a work of G-d." (*Sefat Emet*)

And you shall see My back (literally "end"); but My face shall not be seen (Ex. 33:23)
 The significance of most events is not readily apparent when they first occur; it is only with the passage of time that we are able to discern the guiding hand of Divine Providence throughout history. That is what is meant by "And you shall see My end" - only in the end will you understand; "but My face shall not be seen" - whereas in the beginning, a true understanding of the overall picture is impossible. (*Torat Moshe*)

**In honor of a dear friend of the
Lubavitch Youth Organization
Mr. Victor Braha**

5:35 PM Candle Lighting Time
 NY Metro Area
17 Adar / March 6
 Torah Portion *Ki Tisa*
Parshas Parah
 Shabbat ends 6:34 PM

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