



One Friday afternoon, the Baal Shem Tov came to a small town to spend the holy Shabbat there. On his usual visits there, it was his habit to stay in the home of a wealthy householder who prized the honor of hosting the tzadik (holy man). This time, to the consternation of all, the Baal Shem Tov announced that he would be spending the entire Shabbat in the synagogue.

When he arrived in the synagogue, the Baal Shem Tov prayed at great length, all the while weeping copious tears. The whole congregation joined him in the emotional prayers, and they wept too, although they didn't know the reason for their tears.

The Baal Shem Tov recited Psalms and enjoined the others to do the same. And when the services came to an end, he sent the congregants home to enjoy their Shabbat meal, instructing them to return and continue reciting Psalms.

The next morning, the Baal Shem Tov followed his usual custom and immersed himself before prayer. When he returned to the shul, he announced in a hearty voice that he would be joining his usual host for the Shabbat meal. The people were relieved, and a large crowd gathered at the wealthy man's home, hoping to understand the meaning of the day's events.

The Baal Shem Tov sat at the table in a happy mood, singing one Shabbat melody after another. Suddenly a gentile walked into the room. The Baal Shem Tov beckoned to the Russian to enter and join him at the table.

"Offer him some liquor," the Baal Shem Tov cried, and suddenly glasses and bottles appeared in front of them. The Russian was pleased to down one glass after another, and soon he was quite tipsy. Then the Baal shem tov asked him, "Well, now, tell me what happened over there."

"Last night, the poritz (wealthy non-Jewish landowner) called in all his local fellows. He was very angry at the Jews for not buying his grains, and ruining his income. He had to put all his merchandise into storage and he lost a fortune when it began to rot. So, he decided to get them back, those Jews. All the local fellows gathered at the poritz's manor and got good and drunk, while the poritz incited them against the Jews. They were told that tonight was the night to attack the Jews - not only in town, but wherever they could be found. Whatever they could grab would be theirs.

"All of a sudden a man walked into the house, and the poritz stood up to greet him. They embraced like long-lost brothers and went into another room where they stayed for a few hours, while the crowd of hooligans drank more and more. It turns out that the visitor was none other than the poritz's best school chum, whom he hadn't seen in a dozen years. They sat together talking and reminiscing, and in the course of their conversation, the poritz told his friend about his plan to punish the Jews for destroying his business. 'How can you think such a crazy thing?' asked the friend. 'Can't you see that you're being led around by the nose by the enemies of the Jews?'

"Listen to me: of all your local people, it's only the Jews you can really trust not to cheat you. Remember my old estate manager, Moshke? If not for him I would have been bankrupt more times than I care to count!' Their conversation continued in that vein, and when he came out of the room, the poritz had been completely convinced not to harm the Jews. In fact, he now felt that they were his best friends. Who could figure that one out? He paid off the drunken peasants and sent them on their way."

The Russian thanked the Baal Shem Tov for the fine liquor and left. Everyone in the room was perplexed and waited for an explanation.

The Baal Shem Tov was obviously pleased at what the gentile had told him, and he explained to the crowd, "I saw from Mezhibozh that there was a great danger hanging over this community and therefore I came to spend Shabbat here. As you know, the poritz had raised his grain prices to the point that no one wanted to buy from him. As a consequence, he suffered a tremendous loss, and the local priest and his cronies took the opportunity to slander the Jews.

The poritz was convinced that the Jews were conspiring against him, and he devised a plan to destroy them. I knew that there was only one person who could persuade him

otherwise, and that was his old friend. The only problem was that he had passed away some years ago. I was forced to bring him back into this world to avert this terrible tragedy. Thank G-d, I had success.

The people now understood the heartfelt prayer and the night of reciting Psalms. They were both shocked relieved at what the Baal Shem Tov had related to them. Then, one of them turned to the Baal Shem Tov and asked, "One thing I don't understand: Why did you have to come to our town to accomplish the miracle? Surely you could have done it from Mezhibozh and spared yourself the journey."

The Baal Shem Tov nodded in the affirmative. But then he went on to explain that if, G-d forbid, his intervention had not been successful, he had desired to be together with his fellow Jews in the time of their great ordeal. The people saw the depth of the love the Baal shem tov had for them and the extent of self-sacrifice that the tzadik of the generation has for every Jew.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

And Abraham was old, well on in days... (Gen. 24:1)
In Hebrew, the phrase "well on in days" is "ba bayamim" - literally, "he had come with his days." Abraham's life was full, and he used every day to the fullest not wasting even one day. A hint as to how we can achieve this ourselves is found in the word "bayamim" - "ba" and "yamim." "Ba" is the Hebrew letter beit which has the numerical value of two; "yamim" means "days." Abraham always had two days in his mind - the day of birth and the day of death. To utilize every day to its fullest we must keep in mind why we are born and that we will ultimately be accountable for our deeds after we die. (*Divrei Tzadikim*)

...G-d had blessed Abraham in all things. (Gen. 24:1)
There are those righteous people whose main goal in life is to be whole and one with G-d. But this is not the way of the true tzadik. Indeed, the way of Abraham was to concern himself with "all things." He did not worry just about himself, but about others as well. And so he was blessed in a like manner. (*Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev*)

And Isaac brought her into his mother Sara's tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife; and he loved her. (Gen. 24:67)

Rashi comments: "That is to say, 'He brought her into the tent and, behold, she was like Sara, his mother.' While Sara was alive her Shabbat lights miraculously burned from one Friday to the next..." This same phenomenon happened with Rebecca's Shabbat lights. Rebecca was a minor when she married Isaac. She was thus not obligated to light the candles, especially as Abraham had been doing it since Sara's death. However, Rebecca was not satisfied participating in the candle-lighting of Abraham. She herself lit the candles. This is a clear indication to us that before marriage, and even before bat mitzva - from the age of three - Jewish girls should light their own Shabbat candle. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)



4:20 PM Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
23 Cheshvan / Novemeber 14
Torah Portion *Chayei Sarah*
Shabbat ends **5:21 PM**

L'Chaim

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'Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth' (Psalms 124:8)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

This week's Torah portion, Chayei Sara, recounts the very first marriage match in the Torah.

Avraham sent Eliezer, his faithful servant, to his relatives in Mesopotamia, to meet Rivka, Yitzchak's intended.

Rashi, the great Torah commentator, explains that Eliezer's actual journey was miraculous. Eliezer reached his destination -- a journey of 17 days -- on the very day he embarked. And Eliezer announced to Betuel and Lavan, Rivka's father and brother, "I have arrived today!"

Why was it necessary for G-d to make a special miracle for Eliezer? And why did Eliezer mention this to her relatives?

Rivka, Matriarch of the Jewish people, is described in the Midrash as "a rose among the thorns." Righteous and pure, Rivka lived the first few years of her life surrounded by "thorns," the wicked Betuel and Lavan.

It is not easy to free a rose from its prickly surroundings. Indeed, it is because of the rose that the gardener cultivates and nurtures the entire plant, including the thorns.

Similarly, the holy Zohar describes the spiritual struggle exerted by the forces of evil against the pure and G-dly soul of the Jew. For, like the thorns, these forces derive their sustenance precisely in the presence of the greatest holiness.

Betuel and Lavan rightly understood that it was in Rivka's merit that their household had been blessed, and were reluctant to allow her to leave.

When Abraham sensed that the proper time had arrived to free the rose from its prickly environment, Eliezer was dispatched without delay, and a miracle was wrought so that Rivka would not have to spend even one extra moment in an improper atmosphere.

Eliezer's task was to convince Betuel and Lavan that G-d had destined Rivka to be Isaac's wife, and that they had no power to prevent her departure.

"I have come today!" he declared, knowing that they would try to delay her leaving. "Destiny cannot wait! Today I have come, for I must bring her back with me at once!"

"The deeds of the fathers provide instruction for their sons," our Sages teach.

From Eliezer's journey we learn that when the moment for Redemption arrives, it cannot be delayed for even one second.

If need be, miracles will be wrought to ensure that the Redemption occurs at exactly the proper time.

We must therefore not be disheartened by the length of our present Exile, for just as the Jewish people were redeemed from Egypt "on the selfsame day" when the exact moment for liberation arrived, the Final Redemption with Moshiach will likewise take place immediately and without delay at the proper time, speedily in our days.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. I

The Key You Already Hold

People often say that the more keys you carry, the more responsibility you have.

Think about it. If your only key is for your apartment, life might feel pretty simple. But as soon as you add a car key, a work key card, or maybe a key fob to the gym or office, your list of responsibilities grows. Each key opens a door — and each door comes with duties, trust, and care.

Now imagine someone like a building manager or tech systems admin who carries a whole ring of keys — or, in today's world, a digital pass full of passwords and access codes. That person holds serious responsibility.

Jewish teachings tell us that G-d gave humankind the “keys” to influence almost everything in the world. Through prayer, good deeds (mitzvot), and compassion, we can bring blessings — health, livelihood, harmony — not only to ourselves but to others who need them. Even natural challenges, like drought or environmental imbalance, have traditionally been met with collective prayer and moral awakening.

There's one very special key, though — one that every single person already holds, no matter their age or circumstance.

“The key to Redemption is in the hand of every individual,” the Rebbe taught, explaining that

even one sincere act of goodness or repentance has the power to transform the entire world.

Maimonides (Rambam) reinforces this idea:

“If a person fulfills even one mitzvah, they can tip the scales for themselves and for all humankind, bringing redemption and salvation.”

The Rebbe taught that we stand at the threshold of Redemption — all that's left is to open the door. This future, a time of peace and unity, isn't only about global harmony; it's about finding peace in our own families, communities, and hearts.

Each of us has a personal key to that door. Every Jewish man, woman, and child — from the most learned to the least experienced — plays a part. This mission transcends labels, affiliations, or traditions. It's a shared responsibility, a shared hope.

And the shape of your key? That's the mystery. It might be a candle lit on Friday before Shabbat. A small donation to charity. A visit to someone who feels forgotten. A smile offered when it's least expected. A few minutes of Torah study on your phone during a lunch break.

We never know which act will turn the lock. So we keep turning, keep trying, keep doing — until the right key opens the door to a world redeemed.

SLICE OF LIFE

Chabad Rebbetzin named ‘Cincinnati Enquirer’ Woman of the Year



Rabbi Yisroel and Chana Mangel

When Chana Mangel received a phone call informing her that she had been selected as one of the *Cincinnati Enquirer’s* top 10 Women of the Year for 2025, her first instinct was to dismiss it.

“I actually thought it was a hoax,” she recalls. “One of those things where you get a phone call like, ‘You won a trip to Hawaii for four days.’ I was going to politely cut it short and say thanks but no thanks.”

The Chabad rebbetzin soon realized that it was genuine. Still, accepting the award didn’t come naturally to someone who prefers to work behind the scenes.

It was her husband, Rabbi Yisroel Mangel—with whom she co-founded Chabad-Lubavitch of Blue Ash, in northern Cincinnati, 35 years ago—who convinced her that accepting the honor would serve a greater purpose. “It could inspire others,” admits Rebbetzin Mangel, “and that’s what my job is really, to try to inspire others, even if it’s just small little lights of inspiration.”

The Cincinnati Enquirer’s annual Women of the Year honors recognize women who have made significant contributions to their communities. According to Rachel Frankel, who nominated Mangel for the honor, she is “a lifeline for many and is the backbone of the center, greeting everyone who enters with a

smile and a kind word.”

THREE-AND-A-HALF DECADES OF SERVICE

The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, sent the Mangels to Cincinnati in 1990, where they established Chabad of Blue Ash, serving the northern part of Cincinnati and surrounding areas. Their firstborn son, Mendel, was just 10 days old when they arrived, and his pidyon haben ceremony at 30 days marked their first community event.

“Those were exciting times,” Mangel reflects. “Even though I grew up as a Chabad emissary, this was going to be different. This was coming with my own husband and opening our own Chabad center, and being able to run it and be part of the Rebbe’s army in our own way.”

From the beginning, the couple worked as a team, dividing responsibilities while maintaining a unified vision. Their approach mirrored the model of what she calls the first Chabad House.

“This week and next week’s Torah portions show how Avraham and Sarah, our first patriarch and matriarch, welcomed people into their home,” she says. “The men were influenced and taught by Avraham, and Sarah taught the women—that’s kind of how we set up our Chabad center.”

While Rabbi Mangel serves as the spiritual leader and guide for the community, Chana has focused on what she calls “the nurturing side of their mission,” inviting people to their home, preparing meal packages and providing special care for women in the community.

“I would say that my role would complement my husband’s role because naturally we’re each good at different things,” she explains. “While he excelled in one area, I was able to give the feminine touch.”

She emphasizes the importance of engaging women specifically: “When there is a woman’s connection to Judaism, then we have the whole home that comes along for the ride because she is the *akeret habayit*, ‘the foundation of the home.’”

Under her leadership, the Feminine Connection has become an umbrella organization offering multiple programs: weekly Zoom coffee talks that began during the pandemic, monthly Rosh Chodesh Society classes with elegant dinners,

mikvah education and coaching, Shabbat meals and their annual Mega Challah Bake that draws approximately 500 women.

“Women come out of the woodwork to connect and to participate,” she says of the challah bake. “Some of them have even said that they’ve never done anything Jewish in their life, but they show up for this. There’s magic in the air.”

One family’s transformation particularly stands out. Beginning with their children attending Hebrew school with little Jewish knowledge, the parents gradually became more involved. Eventually, they remarried in a kosher wedding in the Mangels’ backyard and celebrated a three-generation bar mitzvah at the Chabad center.

“They have really become partners in our work,” Mangel says proudly. “They are now fully Shabbat observant, keep kosher, and are very involved in the day-to-day Jewish life in our community.”

A BALANCING ACT

Raising nine children (six married, one recently engaged, and numerous grandchildren) while leading a community has required careful prioritization.

“I try to balance by making sure that ultimately, my family always comes first,” she says. “When we show the community that family is a priority, and we’re there for each and every single one of our children and grandchildren in a very present way, it sets an example.”

One of the greatest challenges has been sending children away for Jewish education, sometimes as young as 12 or 13. “From a mother’s perspective, from a parent’s perspective, it’s definitely the most difficult thing,” she acknowledges.

For her, the Woman of the Year award “is not about my personal self, but it is that even others, the world, the community, acknowledges the importance of the role of a *shlucha* [women emissary], who is simply doing what she does because that is her life calling and her life mission,” she reflects. “What is so beautiful about the award is that others are acknowledging the importance and seeing how every act truly does make the world a better place.”

By Yossi Reicher / Chabad.org

CUSTOMS

What is involved in the commandment of “visiting the sick”?

Visiting the sick, or “Bikur Cholim” in Hebrew, is one of the commandments for which the Talmud has set no limits. The Talmud states that by visiting a sick person one helps him to recover. One should cheer the sick person with pleasant conversation and good advice and help them in any way possible. For the performance of this mitzva a person is rewarded in this world as well as in the World to Come.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

THE JEWISH WAY OF LIFE

From letters of the Rebbe

3 Menachem Av, 5720 (1960)

I received your letter of July 20, in which you write about your acquaintance with a young lady of 17 who is not completely observant, and has no one to train her in that direction in as much as she lost her mother. You ask my opinion.

Generally speaking, the question of whether it would be adequate if you would give her instructions and guidance is complicated.

First of all, the training of a Jewish woman and her personal duties should come from her mother or by another person who is suitable, of her own sex.

Secondly, when such instructions must be given repeatedly by a husband or a fiancée, they would evoke a measure of resentment and a feeling of being tossed about, etc.

Furthermore, and this is of no less importance, it is difficult to acquire the Jewish way of life from instructions, without actually living in such an atmosphere and environment.

In view of the above, it is my opinion that the possibility should be considered if the young lady in question would spend one year at the Gateshead Seminary, or a similar environment.

After observing the Jewish way of life during this period, she could decide whether she wishes to live this way of life and undertake to fulfill all the aspects of requirements which she has seen, observed and learned in that environment.

Needless to say, one year is the bare minimum, and if she could spend more time, it would be all to the good.

In view of the fact that you do not believe in long engagements, as you write, and with which I fully agree, I think that you ought to take an interest in other

matrimonial proposals. May G-d, whose benevolent providence extends to everyone individually, lead you in the way that is best for you, spiritually and materially.

25 Av, 5720 (1960)

I received your letters in which you write about your arrival in the Holy Land, and also your previous two letters which you wrote in Holland.

My reply to your previous letters was sent to your address in Holland, and I hope that it was forwarded to you.

To begin on a happy note, in regard to your writing that your parents -- having learned that your sister was remembered in prayer -- were inspired to give *tzedaka* [charity] for good causes, it surely strengthens the hope that recognizing the effectiveness of prayer to G-d will strengthen their resolutions to make additional efforts to live up to the Jewish way of life. And may they do so in good health and without further outside inducement.

You ask how long you should stay in the Holy Land. On this question you should consult your friends there, explaining to them all the particulars and details which have a bearing on the subject.

You need not apologize for sending me the poem, especially as you wrote it under the impact of the feeling of G-d's presence everywhere, or, in the well-known words of the Zohar, "There is no place empty of Him."

At the same time, being aware of this feeling, there surely is no room for any of the apprehensions of which you write. As King David, the Sweet Singer of Israel, said, "G-d is with me I shall not fear."

This is especially in light of the Chasidic interpretation of the true aspects of Divine Providence, as taught by the Baal Shem Tov.

If at some future moment you will get a feeling which is not in harmony with the two basic teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, concerning G-d's benevolent Providence and the service of G-d with joy and gladness of heart, you should reflect on these basic principles, and you will find your faith and confidence restored and invigorated.

Every additional measure of such faith in G-d will bring you additional Divine blessings.

written eight times in the Torah. These eight times allude to the eight places where the Divine Presence was destined to rest among the Jewish people. The eighth place will be the Third Holy Temple that will be built in the days of Moshiach.

(Baal HaTurim)

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

In this week's Torah portion, *Chayei Sara*, we read of Sara's passing and Avraham's subsequent purchase of the Cave of Machpela as the place for her burial.

In addition to G-d's promise to Avraham that his descendants would eternally inherit the Land of Canaan (which included the land of the ten nations who lived there: Keini, Kenizi, Kadmoni, etc.) Avraham desired to actually purchase outright a portion of the land. The opportunity presented itself with Sara's passing when it was necessary to have a proper burial place for her.

Avraham knew that the Cave of Machpela, located in Hebron, was the place where Adam and Chava had been buried, and chose to purchase the field in which that cave was located for his family.

Avraham's purchase of the field containing the Cave of Machpelah represents the beginning of the general redemption of all Jews.

Our commentators explain that with the 400 silver shekels that Avraham paid, he purchased one square cubit of the Land of Israel for every one of the 600,000 root-souls of the Jewish people.

May we very soon merit not only the beginning of the Redemption of the Jewish people but the complete Redemption, when the entire Land of Israel will be in the possession of its rightful heirs - according to G-d and the Torah - in the Messianic Era.

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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