

# L'Chaim



## LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe  
on the Torah portion

The name of our Torah portion, "Shelach," means "to send." It is the beginning of the story of how spies were sent by Moses to the land of Israel. But the portion ends with the commandment of tzitzit (ritual fringes), symbolic of and a reminder of all of G-d's commandments. What does the story of the spies have to do with the all-encompassing commandment of tzitzit?

Another question. The story of the spies begins, "G-d spoke to Moses, to say: Send for yourself..." Rashi explains that G-d was letting Moses make his own decision if he wanted to send spies to tour the Land of Israel. So "Send for yourself," was only to Moses. Yet, when a verse says "to say," it usually means that Moses should share it with the entire Jewish people. What is the message here for all of the Jewish people?

To understand this, first we have to appreciate what was the grave error of the spies. Moses told them to inspect the land. When they returned, they reported on what they had seen. So what did they do wrong?

Moses sent them to figure out which would be the best way to conquer the land. Moses didn't have a question whether or not they would conquer it. G-d had said that He would give us the land, so it was a sure thing. But we are not supposed to rely on miracles; we are supposed to do things in the most natural way possible. The spies were to scout out the best route to capture the land, with the least amount of miracles necessary. However, when they gave their report, they came to the conclusion, "We can't go up against the nation, because it is stronger than us." That was the sin! They came to their own conclusion that they can't conquer the land.

This is the first lesson from Shelach, with regard to every mitzva (commandment). We have to realize that it is G-d Who gave us the mitzvot. This means that there isn't a question if we can do them, we only have to "spy out" or figure out the best way to do them.

The second lesson here that applies to every mitzva is that we should have in mind when we perform it that we are doing it because it's what G-d wants, period. The spies were supposed to tour the land and find the best way to conquer the land, period.

Now we can understand why the portion that has the mitzva of tzitzit, symbolic of all of the mitzvot, is called Shelach. Because these messages of Shelach, pertain to and are a prerequisite for every mitzva.

This is perhaps what "to say" means here. The message of Shelach pertains to each and every one of us, therefore, it should be conveyed to the Jewish people. And it is this message of Shelach, that is the theme of our portion.

May we merit to be the partners G-d wants, and affect the world to the point that it becomes a true home for Him. This will usher in the coming of Moshiach. May He come now.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzchak Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, [yitzchurwitz.blogspot.com](http://yitzchurwitz.blogspot.com). Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

## Dive In!

Ah, summer! The weather's nice, the days are long and the body says, Let's play. Let's run and jump and throw and stretch and exult in movement. Summer, when exercise is automatically fun. Summer, when one of the best exercises, one of the most fun activities, becomes routine. Swimming.

Every kid – and many an adult, for that matter – loves to jump off the diving board. Whether a straight dive or cannonball, diving is fun. Part flying, part showing off, part exuberance, diving differs from plain swimming because it's faster and riskier.

Let's face it, swimming laps can be boring. It's like walking on a treadmill or jogging in place, but in water. You can't even put on headphones to distract yourself.

But diving! Even in the shallow end, the jump, the momentary suspension, the free fall – even if momentary and even to an experienced diver – is scary and exhilarating at the same time.

Of course, the more we dive, the more routine it becomes. After a while, it's just something to do. A way to get into the water. A way to break the monotony or start the routine of laps.

Yet take someone comfortable on the low board, and put him on a higher board – or on the high board. Suddenly, the anxiety and anticipation is back. The self-checking begins. The mental rehearsal of the techniques. Simply put, jumping off the high board is scary; even the pros have a twinge, a moment of hesitation before diving in.

Remember that feeling when you first learned to dive – that fear of letting go, of taking the plunge, of leaping forth from where you are, from the comfort zone (even if that comfort zone is as shaky as a diving board)? Remember not knowing how you'd get there, that momentary panic of "free fall," suspended (for a nanosecond) between heaven and earth? You crashed through

the cushion; The water stung as you hit and as you sank – what if you smashed into the bottom and went too far to swim back up before your lungs burst?

And yet – you did it again, because having done it once, the thrill and the accomplishment were worth the risk, the preparation. In fact, anticipation of the sensations heightened them.

When it comes to Judaism, sometimes we have to just "dive in." We have to take the leap, let go of the fear even as we fear to let go, and jump off the diving board.

No one says we have to start with the high board. Diving into Judaism can produce enough stress that the low board can seem like the high board. And indeed, for the child – the child-level of our Judaism – it not only appears to be a high board, it actually is. But still we have to take the plunge. Still we have to dive in and sink below the surface (disappear from our mundane pursuits). And when we get good at diving from one height, with one type of dive, we have to move. It's the only way to keep the thrill and the technique fresh, sharp and meaningful.

Perhaps nowhere do we need to dive in more than when we pray. Going to services can fill us with dread. We all know the litany. Whether it's too routine or too new, whether we're too afraid or not anxious enough, we can lose the sense of leaping forth, soaring up on faith alone, of being suspended between heaven and earth, of plunging head-first into the words and sensations of the G-dliness that surrounds us.

We don't have to start on the high board. We can start on the low board – working on our Hebrew, perfecting the pronunciation of a few lines, understanding the poetry of a particular prayer – increasing our attendance and attention.

But we can't just stand on that shaky board forever. We have to dive in.

# SLICE OF LIFE

## Western Wall Vignettes by Gutman Locks



### A Local Call

“Okay...go ahead, you can talk!”

He came to the *Kotel* (Western Wall) to pray. Apparently, someone he knows couldn't get here... and he or she wanted to talk to *Hashem* (G-d) from right here at the *Kotel*. *Hashem* is everywhere, but He seems to listen better here than anywhere else.

He put his cell phone flat up against the *Kotel* so his friend could talk to *Hashem* from here where it's a “local call.”

### What Did the Rebbe Say?

I helped an American visitor with *tefillin*. He had a very good time. When he finished, he told me that he was beginning to go to his local Chabad House and he had a question. He asked, “I would really like to know, what is the most significant teaching of all of the Rebbe's teachings?”

It was as if he was going to sum up and evaluate the entire Chabad movement by my answer. Chabad has done more for the Jewish people than any other movement in the world today, millions upon millions of *mitzvot*

(commandments)... What could I tell him that the Rebbe said that would teach him what he wanted to know?

I told him, “I have your answer,” He leaned over putting his ear closer to my mouth. He really wanted to hear the answer.

I told him, “The Rebbe said, ‘It is better to be kind than to be right.’”

He was startled. He started to move his head right and left as if he was saying ‘unbelievable,’ and he walked away waving his head, amazed at the depth and wisdom of what the Rebbe said.

If you live by this teaching, you will be respected and loved by your fellow man, and he who is respected and loved by his fellow man is respected and loved by G-d.

### Accepted

When I called for him to put on *tefillin* he just kept on walking out. He took some 15 steps and then for some reason, he stopped, turned around, and then came back to me.

He said, “I have never put on *tefillin* before. Am I allowed to do it?”

“Is your mother Jewish?”

“Yes.”

“Then, certainly you can put on *tefillin*.”

He is from Romania and has been living in Israel for four years. His fortieth birthday was in a few days.

I put *tefillin* on him. He read the *Shema*, and I explained how important that time was for him... being at the *Kotel*, and it being the first time he ever put on *tefillin*. I told him that *Hashem* would listen to whatever he said, and I sent him to the *Kotel* to open his heart to *Hashem*.

He stood there for well over five minutes talking to *Hashem*.

When he came back, he looked totally different... his face was shining. I asked him, “What happened that made you turn around and come back to put on *tefillin*? What were

you thinking?”

He said, “I thought, I'll try it. Maybe I'll be accepted.”

I said, “You're a Jew. Of course, you're accepted.”

He smiled so happily. He warmly grabbed my arms with both his hands and said, “Thank you.” I thought he was going to cry.

Every Jew is accepted. If your mother is Jewish, you are a Jew. You are counted among the Jewish People, and you have a share in the World to Come.

### Helping

He came up to me at the *Kotel*, shook my hand, and said, “Thank you. You strengthened me a lot.”

I asked him what he meant.

He said, “Years ago, I used to come by you, and you said things that really changed me.”

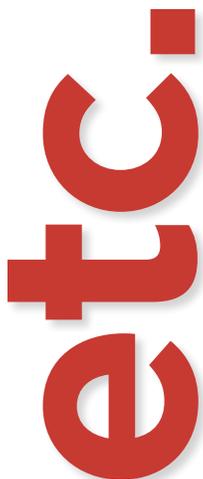
I asked, “Like what?”

He said, “Oh, you would ask questions like, ‘Where do you see that wall?’ and you would point at the wall.”

To help people think deeper I ask them questions that show them that the world is not like they think. For instance, point to where you see these words you are reading. Go ahead, point. Did you point to the computer screen, or cellphone in your hand? Sure, you did. But that's not right, not at all. You should have pointed in the opposite direction. You should have pointed toward your eyes. Light from the sun bounces off the objects we are looking at and comes over to our eyes with an image of what it bounces off. It enters our eyes, transfers the information to our brain, and it is in our brain where we see the images. We never see anything outside of our heads.

He went on to become a Chabad rabbi, a *shaliach* (emissary) of the Rebbe at Queens College.

*Gutman Locks is well-known at the Western Wall for over two decades. He is the author of several books, musical tapes and many educational videos. See more of his writings at [www.thereisone.com](http://www.thereisone.com)*



## New Facilities

**Chabad of Lake Tahoe**, in the Sierra Nevada mountains straddling the **California/Nevada** state line, has a new home. The new property in Stateline, Nevada, will be the first-ever synagogue in Douglas County. Chabad of Lake Tahoe, originally located in South Lake Tahoe on the California side, is directed by **Rabbi Mordy and Shaina Richler**.



**Chabad of Almaden**, serving the **San Jose, California** Jewish community, recently purchased an 8,748-square-foot building. The new facility, purchased after their previous center went up in flames, is on the corner of Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road. Chabad of Almaden is directed by **Rabbi Mendel and Mussie Weinfeld**.

## Today Is...

### 25 Sivan

“A care in a person's heart, *yash' chena*.” (Prov. 12:25) Our sages offer two interpretations of that last word: “Remove the care from the mind” – reading *yasichena*, from the expression *yasiach da'at* “turn one's mind away”; or “discuss it with others” – reading *yesichena*, “talk,” “discuss.” The Tzemach Tzedek commented: “...with others” who are “others” only in the bodily sense, but are completely united with him, for they empathize with him.



# The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Shavuot eve, 5734 (1974)  
To All Boy Students and To All Girl Students

Summer vacation is approaching, and no doubt you are all looking forward to making the most of it. I would like to make a suggestion to you in this connection.

The summer recess is meant to give you an opportunity to strengthen your health of body and soul, which, of course, go hand in hand together. For Jewish boys and girls to be truly healthy means, first of all, to have a healthy neshama (soul). And a Jewish soul derives its health from the Torah and mitzvot, which are "our life and the length of our days," as we say in our prayers.

Needless to say, life and health must be continuous, and one cannot take a "vacation" from them.

The Torah and mitzvot are to the Jewish soul what breathing and nourishment are to the body. A healthy person seldom thinks about the vital necessity of breathing and food. However, on certain occasions one becomes acutely aware of these things. For example, when one swims under water and holds his breath, then comes up and feels the urge to fill his lungs with fresh air. Or, after a fast-day, when the body has been temporarily weakened from lack of food and drink – one immediately feels the invigorating effect of food and drink.

Now, during the school year, when a great deal of time that could be spent in studying the Torah and doing mitzvot is taken up with other unavoidable occupations, such as the study of English and arithmetic, etc., the soul gets somewhat undernourished. At such times, your soul "holds its breath," so to speak, which makes it more eager to get back to Torah and mitzvot whenever time is available.

Comes the summer recess, and your soul can now breathe more freely and more fully, for you are then released from those other unavoidable studies and occupations.

Thus, the summer vacation gives you an opportunity to apply yourselves to Torah study and Torah activities with the utmost eagerness and enthusiasm – not only to make good use of your free time, but also to make up for lost

time during the past school period, and, what is not less important, to give your soul a chance to fortify herself and "take a deep breath" for the school period ahead.

As a matter of fact, the summer vacation seems to be so well planned for this purpose, for it is a time when you can devote yourselves to Torah study and Torah activities in particularly agreeable circumstances: in a relaxed frame of mind and in pleasant natural surrounding of sunshine and fresh air....

I urge you, dear children, to make the most of your summer vacation in light of all that has been said above. Think about it, and put it into effect – in the fullest measure, and G-d will surely bless you with a happy and healthy summer, happy and healthy both spiritually and physically.

28 Iyar, 5734 (1974)

To the Students of Grade 2

Your teacher sent me your notebooks in connection with your assignment, "My Plans for the Summer," which I looked through with much interest.

I wish you a happy and healthy summer, and since every person has a body and a soul, a healthy person is one who is healthy both in body and in soul.

As a matter of fact, the soul is the more important part of a person, and when the soul is healthy it helps the body to keep in good shape.

Since you are fortunate to be students of the Oholei Torah Day School, you surely know that the soul, like the body, needs constant nourishment, and the nourishment of the soul is the Torah and mitzvot.

During the school year you spend time partly in the study of Torah and partly in the study of other things, such as English and arithmetic, etc. However useful these other things are, they do not make the soul healthier, for, as mentioned above, the soul receives health and strength only from Torah and mitzvot.

But during the summer vacation, when you are free from other things, you have an opportunity to learn more Torah and do more mitzvot, and in this way to give your soul a chance to become really strong and healthy, and to also gather strength for the coming school year.

I have written more on this important subject in a special message to all students, which your teacher will surely read and explain to you.

So I will conclude with the prayerful wish that you should, with G-d's help, make the most of your summer vacation along the above lines, and G-d will surely bless you with a truly healthy summer, healthy both in soul and in body.

directs us that we should not return one inch of those portions of the Land of Israel that G-d has given us. This resolve to maintain full possession of the Holy Land will lead us to the era when the size of Israel will encompass the lands of ten nations. And we will proceed to the Holy Temple and offer the Thanksgiving sacrifice in thanks for our redemption from exile. May this be in the immediate future. (The Rebbe, 26 Sivan, 1991)

## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

The 28th of Sivan (June 27 this year) marks 81 years since the Rebbe and Rebbetzin came to the United States.

The Rebbe and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka were in France during the early years of World War II.

In 1941, with tremendous effort on the part of the Previous Rebbe – who was already in the United States – the Rebbe and Rebbetzin were able to travel to Portugal, and from there to Barcelona. In Barcelona they boarded a ship to the United States.

The trip itself was quite dangerous, with the ship being stopped numerous times en route by Nazis.

On the 28th of Sivan 1941, the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin arrived on the shores of New York.

The Previous Rebbe, who, because of ill health, was unable to greet his daughter and son-in-law personally; sent four of his most eminent Chasidim to greet the Rebbe.

The Previous Rebbe informed them, "I am selecting you as my emissaries to go and welcome my son-in-law, who is arriving tomorrow. I will reveal to you who he is: Every night he says the Tikun Chatzot prayer over the destruction of the Holy Temple; he knows by heart the entire Babylonian Talmud with the commentaries of the 'Ran, 'the 'Rosh' and the 'Rif'; he knows by heart the Jerusalem Talmud, Maimonides' Mishne Torah and Likutei Torah with its commentaries. Go and greet him!"

The 28th of Sivan was established as a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the rescue of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin from the fires that raged in Europe.

It also marks the beginning a new era in Chabad outreach with the establishment by the Previous Rebbe of the Lubavitch publishing house, the educational branch of Lubavitch and Machne Israel. All three vital organizations were under the directorship of the Rebbe.

May the 28th of Sivan this year be the ultimate day of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the rescue of the Rebbe and the entire Jewish people from these last moments of exile, may G-d send the redemption NOW!

Shmuel Beilman

## 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

The Haftorah read with our Torah portion of Shelach concludes with the verse, "G-d gave the entire land into our hands and all the inhabitants of the land have melted [in fear] of us." This verse

