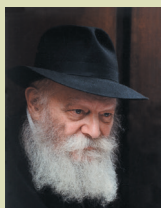


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

*from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion*

This week we read the Torah portion of *Acharei* which states, "And you should guard My statutes and My laws, that the person will do them, and live by them, I Am G-d."

The Maggid of Mezrich explains that the words "and live by them – *vachai bahem*," can also be translated, "and put life into them." Thus, according to the Maggid, we learn from these words that we have to bring life into the *mitzvot* (commandments).

How does one bring life into the *mitzvot*? What can we learn from this for our relationships?

The approach to doing *mitzvot* can take on several different forms.

There is the person whose *mitzvot* and life are not interconnected. To him, there is a separation between holy and mundane. He prays with fervor, but when he does business, eats, etc., holiness and refinement are not visible.

A second person is one whose life and *mitzvot* are connected, he does *mitzvot* with all the bells and whistles. But he does them with the hope that by doing them, he will get what he wants from G-d. His drive to do *mitzvot* is the physical pay out. In this case it is his *mitzvot* bringing life into his needs.

Then there is the one whose every physical need and act is so that he can do *mitzvot*. He eats, he exercises, he works, and rests, just to be able to carry out G-d's will. This is bringing life into the *mitzvot*; his whole life is dedicated to G-d.

Most of us at one time or another fall into the various above categories. But the goal should be to make G-d the focus, to bring life into the *mitzvot*. When you are G-d focused you eat differently, work differently, respond differently, etc., your every step will become filled with purpose and meaning. Of course, this is a life's journey. One step at a time, you have the power to reach higher, and the more you do it, the more meaningful your life will become, the closer you will feel to G-d.

It is always difficult to balance between family and work, family and personal interests. When work and recreation are an escape from family, your family is resentful. But when your family knows that they are your priority because you treat them that way, and your work and recreation are so that you can be a better spouse or parent, then they will have no resentment to your work and recreation. Just the opposite, they will take pride and joy in what a great and loving spouse or parent you are.

The key is to make G-d most important to your family and your family most important to you.

May we all be blessed with meaning in our lives, closeness to G-d, and closeness to our families.

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 Teremula, Ca.

Easy as One, Two, Three

One, two, three. Whenever we want to express how uncomplicated something is, we use the phrase, "It's as easy as one, two, three." The thinking goes that for three steps, we can certainly manage to focus our attention.

There is an ancient Jewish tradition that on Shabbat afternoons, beginning with the first Shabbat after Passover, men and women, boys and girls, study the part of the Oral Torah known as the Mishna, specifically the tractate called *Avot*.

This Shabbat we commence with Chapter one of *Avot*. Among the other magnificent teachings of our Sages it contains, we read the words of Shimon the Righteous who said, "The world stands on three things: on the study of Torah, the service of G-d, and deeds of kindness."

Sounds as easy as one, two, three, doesn't it? All you have to do is call up a Torah telephone line, log onto www.chabad.org on the Internet, or open up any of the wide assortment of books with inspirational and provocative Torah thoughts (or continue reading *L'Chaim!*), and you've taken care of number one on the list. You've helped our wobbly world stand more firmly.

Now we're up to number two. The "service of G-d" refers to prayer. Whenever we thank G-d or ask Him for help, we are pray-ing! Of course, it's a good idea to recite one of our more noteworthy formal prayers such as the "Shema," which proclaims our belief in one G-d. In fact it's a *mitzva* to say the "Shema" in the evening and in the morning. (Two for the price of one - a bargain!)

Number three: deeds of kindness. Now, what could be simpler and require less explanation? Even before the "kindness revolution" and all those "Chicken Soup" books (no, we're not talking about cookbooks), we all knew a good, kind deed when we saw one, when we did one, or when one was done for us. So, let's keep it simple and incorporate a deed of kindness into our daily routine. Surely the world will be a better place for it.

Perhaps we're oversimplifying things; maybe the world is a little more complicated? The problem, you see, is that when we say that the world stands on three things, it seems to imply that we're placing the world higher than these qualities. But how can it be that the physical, mundane world is higher than Torah study, prayer and acts of kindness?

Jewish mysticism, however, teaches that the "one, two, three" solution really does work, after all. The ultimate purpose of the creation of the world is for the G-dliness it contains to be totally revealed - totally comfortable, so to speak, with the world and in the world. This teaching of the Mishna asks us to focus our attention on Torah study, prayer, and deeds of kindness as the means by which the world can realize this purpose.

By utilizing these three methods we bring G-d's creation to its ultimate fulfillment, and establish an ideal world in which there is no jealousy nor animosity among individuals and nations, but only peace, justice and benevolence under One G-d.

SLICE OF LIFE

Generation to Generation

by Tzippy Clapman



At the age of 24, I stepped out of my sheltered little world when I became a member of the *Chevre Kadisha*, Jewish Burial Society. That is when my dear friend Rendel Alenick, *obm*, started the Crown Heights Women's *Chevre Kadisha* under the directives of the Rebbe.

I was sort of pushed into joining the *tahara* committee (that prepare the body of the deceased) over a July 4th weekend when almost all the regular members were out-of-town. They needed a person and I was there. I was very reluctant to go as I was taking part in the committee that sews *tachrichim*, burial shrouds, and I had no intention of doing any more than that. But the need was urgent and I was talked into it by Rendel's very persuasive and convincing reasoning.

My husband, whose father and uncles were members of the *Chevre Kadisha* in the Upper West Side, was very happy to see the Clapmans continuing in this great *mitzva* (commandment) after skipping one generation.

It was nothing like I expected. I thought it would be traumatic for me as I had never had any prior experience with a dead person (although I am a nurse). But it was so uplifting, even spiritual, and I felt the presence of G-d in that very room.

When involved in these *mitzvot*, the soul you

are doing it for is benefiting from the acts being performed on their bodies, but the people performing those acts are often the ones who feel transformed. These acts of *chesed shel emet*, kindnesses which will not be repaid because the person is no longer alive, make us feel the presence of G-d in our lives. They light up our days in exile and it would not be an exaggeration to say they give us a high. Can you imagine getting a high without the use of drugs or alcohol?

Of course, my children knew about me being active in *Chevre Kadisha* even though I would never disclose the name of the person I had attended to or any details, which are not allowed to be discussed. This is a very secretive society where no details are shared about the *chesed* that is being done, as a way of honoring the person who died.

I was quietly hoping that their mother being involved in *Chevre Kadisha*, *Bikur Cholim* (caring for the ill), and other organizations would inspire my children to do the same when they would grow up. We had countless *Bikur Cholim* families staying over at our home during health crises in their lives, and our children were usually involved.

For example, we had one woman who lived with us in our home for months, when her daughter was in a major car accident and in a coma after suffering from a traumatic brain injury. My children graciously tolerated her using up our limited space, cheered her on during the crisis, and helped her in any way they could, for eight months, until her daughter was discharged.

Many people would stay with us on Shabbat so that they were able to walk to the hospital to visit their family members on Friday night and Shabbat day. My children would accompany my husband on the long walks late Friday night to meet the family members in the hospital lobby and walk them back to our home for *kiddush* and the Shabbat meal.

Now with all my children married, what we hoped for has come true, and they are repeating what they saw and what they lived during their childhood in our home. Some of my children who live in Crown Heights volunteer at the Crown Heights *Bikur Cholim*.

One daughter of ours would leave the house late at night and drive to a different part of Brooklyn to pick up a nurse-companion and bring her to a Manhattan hospital to sit at the bedside of a

critically ill Jewish woman. The nurse-companion would not go unless she had a ride. Our daughter did not talk about where she was going and what she was doing, to protect the privacy of the patient, a woman without any family.

Another daughter accompanies patients during their different life-saving therapies. She picks up the patient from her home, sits with her throughout the procedure and then drives her home.

Two years ago corona hit and unfortunately throughout 2020 there was a continuous need for women to take care of the women who were passing away from the virus. The older women who belong to these organizations were at very high risk themselves. They could not do a *tahara* on women who had died from the virus. One of my daughters was called by a major *Chevre Kadisha* asking her if she would be willing to come in to help with the multiple cases that were piling up.

My daughter immediately went to help out. These souls needed their bodies to be made ready for burial as soon as possible and not to G-d forbid postpone it, which we know is painful for the soul. She went with her husband's blessing and his help, as he knew the greatness of this *mitzva*.

My daughter was called in daily for over a month to do countless *taharas* from early morning until late at night. She was part of a group of young women who were passionate about doing this great *mitzva* of getting countless Jews prepared for burial according to Jewish law and in a very gentle, caring way. My daughter said some days she would do as many as eight purifications in a row, then finally drive home and get a call to come back for some additional new arrivals. She would turn around and drive right back.

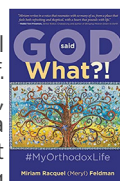
When we spend a holiday with our children out-of-town we marvel at their dining rooms filled with needy and lonely guests who now have a family to celebrate Shabbat. My daughters serve as the *mikva* matrons in their out-of-town *mikvas* when needed. And I see them in action, whether it is helping families in a medical crisis, cooking for new mothers, or other important activities.

We are proud and grateful that our children are continuing in the ways they saw as children, ways that my husband and I saw in our childhood homes, and now we pray that their children and future generations will follow in their footsteps.

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G-d Said What?!

G-d Said What?! is a memoir of a woman on a journey, physical and spiritual, seeking an awakening that she is not aware of. Once a free-spirited college grad living a hippie life in California, Miriam Racquel (Meryl) Feldman finds herself in Israel on a rescue mission. She comes face to face with her beliefs about G-d and the universe while struggling with her hope of building a life together with the man who she has always believed to be her soulmate.



Creating A Life that Matters

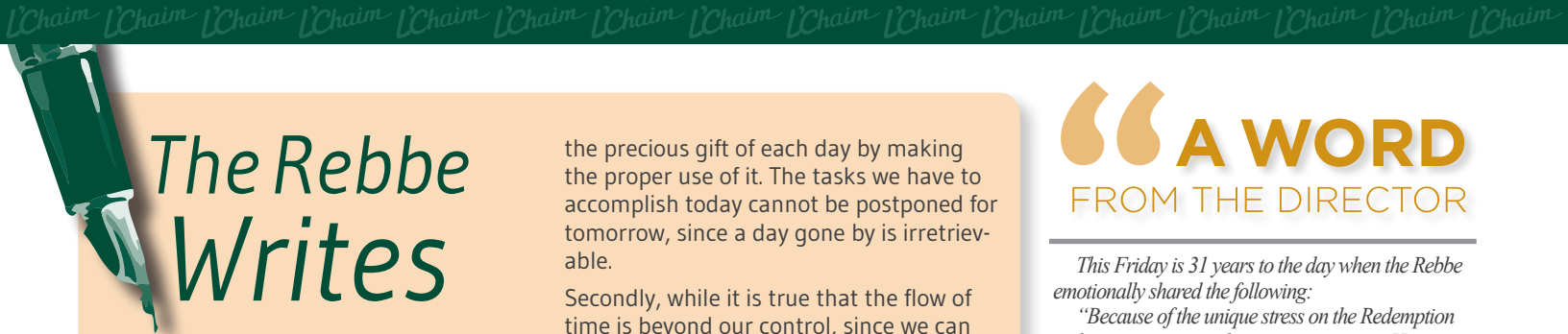
Creating A Life that Matters by Rabbi Manis Friedman and Rivka Goldstein is an insightful guide to finding meaning amidst the often confusing challenges of today's complex world. Whether the struggle to discover the purpose of life, or difficulties in relationships, or answers to the questions of life, death, and a deeper connection with G-d, Rabbi Friedman offers an approach to living with peace of mind, fullness of heart, and real happiness.



Today Is...

28 Nissan

Chassidim asked Rabbi Shneur Zalman: "Which is the superior Divine service, love of G-d or love of Israel?" He replied: "Both love of G-d and love of Israel are equally engraved in every Jew's soul. Scripture is explicit: 'I have loved you, says the L-rd.' It follows that love of Israel is superior – for you love whom your beloved loves."



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 5731 [1971]

To all participants in the "Evening with Lubavitch" in Philadelphia, Pa.

G-d bless you-

Greeting and Blessing:

I am pleased to extend greetings and prayerful wishes to all participants in the Evening with Lubavitch, and particularly to the honored guests.

Inasmuch as the event is taking place in the days of *Sefirah* ("Counting of the Omer"), it is well to reflect on the significance of this *Mitzvo* [commandment].

At first glance, the counting of days seems to be of no consequence, since the flow of time is beyond man's control. Yet, it is obviously very significant in that it lends emphasis to the period connecting the two most important events in Jewish history: Pesach – the liberation from Egyptian bondage, marking the birth of the Jewish people; and Shavuot – the Receiving of the Torah at Sinai, where the Jewish people became a truly free and mature nation.

Like all things with Torah, the Counting of the Omer has many aspects. To one of them I will address myself here.

Generally, the counting of things by the unit, rather than by approximation of the total, indicates the importance of the thing. The fact that each day, day after day for forty-nine days, a *Brocho* [blessing] is said before the counting further emphasizes the importance of this thing – in this case, the value of time. The *Brocho* we make expresses not only our gratitude to G-d for giving us the *Mitzvo* of *Sefira*, but also our gratitude for each day which He gives us. We must learn to appreciate

the precious gift of each day by making the proper use of it. The tasks we have to accomplish today cannot be postponed for tomorrow, since a day gone by is irretrievable.

Secondly, while it is true that the flow of time is beyond our control, since we can neither slow it or quicken it, expand it nor shrink it, yet in a way we can directly affect time by the content with which we fill each day of our life. When a person makes a far-reaching discovery, or reaches an important resolution, he can in effect put "ages" into minutes. On the other hand, time allowed to go by without proper content has no reality at all, however long it may last.

Correspondingly, the Torah tells us that man has been given unlimited powers not only in regard to shaping his own destiny, but also the destiny of the world in which he lives. Just as in the case of time, the real length of it is not measured in terms of quantity but in terms of quality, so also in regard to a man's efforts. Every good effort can further be expanded by the vitality and enthusiasm which he puts into it. Indeed, the period of seven weeks connecting the abovementioned two greatest historic events in Jewish life illustrates the Torah concept of time and effort as indicated above. In the course of only seven weeks, a people which has been enslaved for 210 years to most depraved taskmasters were transformed into a "Kingdom of Priests and Holy Nation," who witnessed the Divine Revelation at Sinai and received the Torah and *Mitzvoth* from G-d Himself.

"Lubavitch" teaches and exemplifies the principle of the predominance of form over matter, of the soul over the body. It is not the quantity – in terms of physical capacity and length of time – that is the essential factor, but it is the quality of the effort and the infinite capacity of the soul that determine the results.

I trust that the spirit of Lubavitch will stimulate each and all of the participants to ever greater accomplishments in all areas of Jewish life, both personal and communal.

With blessing for *Hatzlocho* [success],

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Friday is 31 years to the day when the Rebbe emotionally shared the following:

"Because of the unique stress on the Redemption in this time, an astonishing question arises: How is it possible that despite all these factors, Moshiach has not yet come? This is beyond all possible comprehension.

"It is also beyond comprehension that when ten (and many times ten) Jews gather at a time that is appropriate for the Redemption to come, they do not raise a clamor great enough to cause Moshiach to come immediately. They are able to accept the possibility that Moshiach will not arrive tonight, and even that he will not arrive tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow; heaven forbid.

"Even when people cry out 'Ad mosai – Until when will we remain in exile?' they do so only because they were told to. If they had sincere desire, and cried out in truth, Moshiach would surely have come already.

"What more can I do to motivate the entire Jewish people to clamor and cry out, and thus actually bring Moshiach. All that has been done until now has been to no avail, for we are still in exile; moreover, we are in an inner exile in regard to our own service of G-d.

"All that I can possibly do is to give the matter over to you. Now, do everything you can to bring Moshiach, here and now, immediately. I have done whatever I can; from now on, you must do whatever you can....

Far from "passing the buck," from that day forth the Rebbe continued, with increased vigor, to discuss the imminence of Moshiach's arrival and to suggest what we could do to get ready for the Redemption.

In fact, the very next Shabbat, the Rebbe said: "Every Jew, man, woman and child, has an individual responsibility to add to his service with the intent of bringing Moshiach. One should not try to shift the burden of responsibility to others. Rather, each person should recognize his individual responsibility.

"This service must involve an increase in Torah study and an increase in mitzvot in a beautiful manner...One should also influence others to make similar increases. And all of this should be suffused with yearning for and expectation of Moshiach's coming.

"May our resolutions be successful and bring about the coming of the ultimate redemption."

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

With this ("bezot"), Aaron will come into the holy place (Lev. 16:3) The Hebrew word "bezot" has the numerical value of 410, alluding to the 410 years of the First Holy Temple's existence. But why would Moses

tell the Jews that the Temple would exist for only a specific time? What is gained by sharing this tragedy? Moses' intent was not to dishearten; he empowered the Jewish people to prevent the destruction! Proper behavior would confer eternity to the first Temple and preclude any exile. Now, too, it is up to us. Our actions can hasten the coming of Moshiach and the establishment of the Third Holy Temple. (The Rebbe)



Reb Shmuel Brin sat in a waiting room packed with chasidim who had traveled from far and near to seek the advice of the Rebbe Maharash – the Fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe. A tense atmosphere prevailed and showed itself in the serious and worried faces of all. Reb Shmuel was well known, the owner of a distillery which produced vodka, and an ardent follower of the Rebbe Maharash. He had been waiting to see the Rebbe for days, and now his turn had come, and he sat reciting Psalms with a broken spirit.

He entered the Rebbe's study, and was overcome with emotion – what had he done to bring this terrible calamity upon himself? He began to explain the situation to the Rebbe: "As the Rebbe knows, I earn my livelihood from my distillery. A certain tax is paid to the government for the amount of liquor produced, and a special meter attached to the fermenting vat measures each quart. From time to time an inspector comes to assess the taxes due.

"Until now there has never been any trouble, but it seems that one of my employees has found a way, through making a small hole in the vat, of siphoning off some of the vodka, and thereby bypassing the meter. The vodka he managed to steal he sold to his friends, and so he cheated both me and the government. I have no idea how long this has been going on, but this is how it came to my attention:

"A second worker caught the first thief red-handed, and demanded a share in the take. The first thief agreed, but later they had an argument and the second "partner" went to the police. Upon investigation, the police discovered the swindle and arrested the thief. When questioned, he admitted the theft, but he claimed that it was done on my orders.

"I don't know why, but then the police freed the thief and arrested me instead. My family barely managed to bail me out and I came here right here away to seek your advice. The penalty for cheating the government is very severe – there is even the possibility of life imprisonment or slave-labor in Siberia."

With that, Reb Shmuel broke into uncontrollable sobs, crying "Rebbe! Help me! *me'ayin yavo ezri* – From where will come my help?"

The Rebbe was thoughtful for a while, and then responded: "Yes, your help will come from *me'ayin*, from the Unknown, from G-d. Return to your home, and when you will meet a Jew in trouble who will say: 'Me'ayin yavo ezri' help him; then G-d will also help you."

Reb Shmuel left very much encouraged. Not long after, Reb Shmuel heard about a terrible misfortune that had befallen his old friend Reb Chaim. He had become destitute in a devastating fire which destroyed his entire inn. With a house full of children, Reb Chaim was desperate.

Reb Shmuel went searching for his friend, and found him sitting near some scorched wooden logs where his inn had previously stood.

The two friends greeted each other warmly. Reb Shmuel eagerly offered his friend a loan, but he shook his head. "Where would you get the money? You have troubles enough of your own," he replied. "As we say in Psalms: 'From where will come my help? My help will come from G-d.'"

As soon as he heard the words of the Rebbe echoed by Reb Chaim, he was even more anxious to extend his help. He didn't let Reb Chaim go until he finally accepted the money.

Weeks passed and finally the day of the trial arrived. Many members of the community appeared to testify on behalf of Reb Shmuel, but things didn't go well for him. The two accusers swore that they acted under orders of their boss, and the prosecutor made a fiery speech denouncing Brin as a swindler of the worst type. Brin could only repeat over and over again that he was innocent of the charges.

After the lawyers had concluded their arguments, the judge proceeded to summarize the case and instruct the jury. He concluded his speech saying, "I want to recount the following episode which has a bearing on the case: Once, the young son of a nobleman was traveling by train. He left his luggage on the platform to get some refreshment. On his return it was

missing, and along with it, all of his money and ticket. For a couple of days he hung around the station hungry and miserable, noticed by no one.

"Then a man descended from an incoming train, and with one look at the boy, invited him to partake of a meal at his expense. The boy accepted gratefully and told the stranger about his predicament. The man reached into his pocket and gave him money for a ticket. When the boy requested his name, so that he could repay him, he refused, saying that one day the boy would pass on the favor to another, and that would be his reward.

"Members of the jury," concluded the judge, "this man that you see before you is the very man who helped me so many long years ago! Such a man could not be liar and a thief! A man who could so graciously help a complete stranger with no thought of recompense could never commit this crime! I leave it up to you to decide!"

In a few minutes the verdict was returned. "Not guilty!" Reb Shmuel Brin did not immediately hear the verdict. His mind was on the words of his saintly Rebbe: "Fill the void of another in distress, and G-d will fill yours."



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

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

Upon the kohanim and all the people of the congregation shall he bring atonement. (Lev. 16:33)

The words "of the congregation" appear to be superfluous. The Torah could have just said "upon all the people he shall bring atonement." A congregation refers to a group of people gathered together. The Torah is emphasizing the importance of unity among the Jewish people. When the people are gathered together, we are able to beseech G-d to forgive our transgressions. (*Be'er Moshe*)

For on that day [the high priest] shall make an atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins; before G-d you shall be clean (Lev. 16: 30)

Why is it necessary to explicitly add the words "from all your sins"? Is this not already implied? "An atonement to cleanse you" refers to sins that are committed against G-d; "All your sins...you shall be clean" refers to sins that are committed against one's fellow man. For these transgressions, Yom Kippur does not offer atonement until the wronged party has been properly conciliated. (*Likrat Shabbat*)

Dedicated in Honor of
Mr. and Mrs. William Shulman



7:32 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
28 Nissan/April 29
Blessing of the new month Iyar
Torah Portion Acharei
Ethics Ch 1
Shabbat ends 8:35 PM