

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

The *Haftora* for the portion of *Nasso* is from the book of *Shoftim* (Judges). It is the story of how Shimshon (Samson) was born.

The connection to our portion is that *Nasso* tells the laws of the *Nazir*, one who took upon himself to abstain from drinking wine, cutting his hair, or coming in contact with anything impure for a period of time, usually a month. Similarly, in the *Haftora*, Shimshon's parents are instructed that he is to be a *Nazir* all his life. There is also a connection to *Shavuot*, which always falls in the week preceding or following *Nasso*, as we will soon see.

Shimshon's mother, who according to the Talmud was called *Tzalponit*, was the wife of *Manoach* from the tribe of *Dan*. She was barren. An angel in the form of a man appeared to her and told her that she would have a son. He instructed her that he be a *Nazir* from the time he was conceived and with regards to the upbringing of the baby.

When she told *Manoach* what happened, he prayed to G-d that He send the angelic man again. G-d granted his wish. When *Tzalponit* was out in the field, the angel appeared to her again and she ran to get her husband.

Manoach asked the man, "Now your words will come true, what rules should be followed with the lad?" The angel answered, "Be careful of everything I said to your wife."

The *Haftora* concludes with Shimshon being born and that the spirit of G-d would come to him, meaning, that he would receive prophecy.

We aren't told much about *Tzalponit*, her name isn't even mentioned in the Bible, but from the *Haftora* we gather that she was a great woman. The angel appeared to her twice, the second time when she was in the field. Being in the field signifies prayer. It is telling us that she prayed and was close to G-d. From her answers to *Manoach*, we understand that she was wise. And finally, she gave birth to the mighty Shimshon, who was a prophet, a righteous person, and a judge who led the Jewish people for 22 years.

The Talmud records *Tzalponit's* name with the names of *Avraham's* and *David's* mothers who were also very special women. Why are their names not recorded in the Bible? Because the essence of who they were was total selflessness. They devoted themselves to providing for their singular children. *Avraham* became the first Jew, *David* was quintessential king from whom *Moshiach* will descend, and Shimshon was given miraculous strength to save the Jewish people from the *Philistines*.

About *Manoach* we know very little. From the *Haftora* we know that he was from the tribe of *Dan*, that G-d answered His prayer to meet the angel, that he was grateful, was extremely G-d fearing, and he had a great wife.

Just as we read in the *Haftora* how G-d provided the Jewish people with one who could save them at that time, may He provide us now with one who will redeem us from this exile, *Moshiach*.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz from the teachings of the Rebbe, yitzihurwitz.blogspot.com. Rabbi Hurwitz, who is battling ALS, and his wife Dina, are emissaries of the Rebbe in Temecula, Ca.

Judgment

A dictionary defines judgment as, "The forming of an opinion, estimate, notion, or conclusion, as from circumstances presented to the mind." Forming judgments is basic to the very fabric of human existence.

We are called upon to "judge" or evaluate people and situations every day. And yet, aphorisms abound about how unwise it is to judge our fellow man. We are told: "Don't be judgemental," "Don't judge a man until you have walked a mile in his shoes," "Don't judge a book by its cover." Who could imagine that judging another favorably brings great benefit to the "judge"?

The *Talmud* teaches that "He who judges his fellow man favorably, is himself judged favorably." (*Shabbat 127b*) This means that on a Divine level, G-d will also judge the person in a favorable manner.

In connection to this concept is a Jewish teaching explaining that after 120 years, when a person enters the World of Truth, he is shown a "video" (tiktok...reel... status...) of the deeds and actions of another person and is told to pass judgment. Then, he is shown a "video" of his own life. Suddenly he realizes that he performed the same deeds and actions committed in the first "video"; the judgment previously passed on the other person is his own.

Judaism does not tell us to be non-judgemental. We are encouraged to be very judgemental but to judge favorably. At every opportunity we should judge – favorably. Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch declared: "Better that a hundred should be

judged too favorably than that one should be wronged in judgment."

The famous codifier of Jewish law, Rabbi Moses Maimonides, goes one step further. He states: "If there is a person you do not know to be either righteous or wicked, and you see him doing or saying something which might be interpreted either favorably or unfavorably, interpret his action favorably and do not suspect him of evil."

Though coming to these types of conclusions might seem more



than a little difficult, our Sages offer us practical advice on how to implement this plan of positive action. "Judge every person – *kol adam* – on the scale of merit," the *Mishna* (*Avot 1:6*) teaches.

"*Kol Adam*" can be interpreted also as "the whole person" i.e., "Judge the whole person on the scale of merit." Do not see only his faults, but look at the whole person and you will surely find good in him to judge him favorably (*Sfat Emet*).

When confronted with another person's seeming reprehensible action or deed, consider the entire person. Certainly he has redeeming qualities; assuredly there is a reason for this lapse; or possibly it is not a *faux pas* after all, but rather the observer's lack of omniscience.

SLICE OF LIFE

Generation to Generation

by Rivka Bendetskaya



I was raised in a traditional Jewish home in Zaporozhye, Ukraine. I always knew I was Jewish. All of my family members are Jews. I grew up hearing Jewish songs in Yiddish. I was told stories about my great-grandparents who passed through Stalin's camps and who struggled through life just because they were Jews.

I remember my grandfather David Bendetsky, of blessed memory, leading the Passover Seder every year, giving me Chanuka gelt and cooking a huge fish with an even bigger head for Rosh Hashana.

And I remember my grandfather would always say to me, "You have a *Pintele Yid*." I don't know why I didn't ask my grandfather what that meant, but I would often wonder, what is a *Pintele Yid*?

I never heard that saying "*Pintele Yid*" from anyone other than my grandfather – until this year when I came to a very special place – Machon L'Yahadus Women's Yeshiva.

But I'm getting ahead of myself...

A year ago I finished university with a degree in socio-cultural event management. As soon as I graduated, Rebbetzin Dina Ehrentreu, the

Rebbe's emissary in Zaporozhye together with her husband Rabbi Nachum Ehrentreu, told me "Rivka, I think you should go to America and study in Machon L'Yahadus next year!"

My immediate response was: "Why? I have everything I need, my life is fantastic. It's not for me."

I had just finished university, I was exhausted from studying, annoyed with endless classes, tired of the teachers. I needed some time and space for myself, my dreams, my plans. I wanted to "enjoy life."

Growing up I had heard stories about the Rebbe, and about the huge impact he had on people.

I had also heard how much the Rebbe loved the students of the Machon like his own daughters, and that the Rebbe even came to the dorm a number of times to the Passover Seder.

And G-d always has His own plans for each one of us! So I came to study at Machon L'Yahadus.

The morning I arrived in New York, I met Rabbi Shloma Majeski the principal, Mrs. Shterna Rodal the dorm mother, and many of the staff members. My first (and lasting) impression was that every person involved with Machon L'Yahadus puts in a lot of effort to make each student feel welcome and very special.

One of the first things that I learned at Machon L'Yahadus is that studying can be enjoyable! I had studied in university and I had found many of the classes to be annoying. But when I started classes at Machon L'Yahadus I realized that learning can be very interesting and the learning atmosphere can be positive and pleasant.

Machon L'Yahadus is the place where my "*Pintele Yid*" – my Jewish soul – could be revealed in the most beautiful way, where I have learned to live a real life full of joy and happiness.

A little over six months into the school year the war began in Ukraine. In my case and that of my fellow students from Ukraine, we were in a very difficult place emotionally. Our families, relatives, and friends were in Ukraine.

I remember that in the first weeks of the war, we didn't sleep at night so that we could keep in touch with our families because who knew what could happen at any moment? At night

we didn't sleep, and during the day we couldn't concentrate in class because we were so stressed out about the situation and constantly scrolling through the news to see what was going on. We were comforted when on the first day signs were posted in school that our classes were dedicated to the safety of the people in Ukraine. At Machon L'Yahadus, we got priceless emotional support that literally enabled us to live as normally as possible during these trying times.

Another thing that I found unique about Machon L'Yahadus is that it is a place where people don't know the word "judgment." I had a period in my life when I was surrounded by very judgmental people. I assure you, it doesn't help a person to grow at all.

This year, I found a place that focuses only on the good, a place that encourages every student to create positivity. Everyone student is in her own place in her journey and that's totally fine! And I believe this is the secret – to stay focused only on the good things each one of us has.

I had many options of what I could do this coming year. Although at this time I can't go back to Ukraine, I was offered positions in Germany and Israel. But after my experience this year at Machon L'Yahadus, I've decided to continue my studies for a second year.

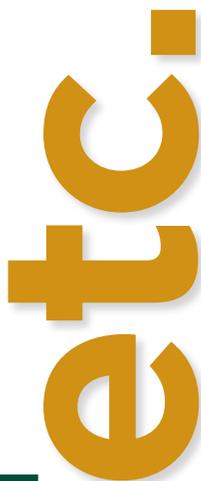
Clearly, coming to Machon L'Yahadus was one of the best decisions I made in my life. This decision has changed my life and made it more clear, calm and pleasant.

My grandpa always said that you should know what you are doing in your life, why are you doing it, and what is the goal.

Now I know. I know where I'm holding, I know who I am, I know where I am going to!

And the most important thing I know and feel is that I am valuable and everyone else is valuable!

From a speech at the 67th International Convention of the Lubavitch Women's Organization dedicated by Rivka to her beloved grandfather David ben Yevsey-Izya. Machon L'Yahadus, under the leadership of Rabbi Shloma Majeski, is a full-time yeshiva for young Jewish women at all points on their Jewish journey. Study programs are available from 12-days to two years. For more info visit womensyeshiva.org or email info@womensyeshiva.org



New Mikvas

Chabad of Greece recently completed a Mikva in central **Athens, Greece**. The funding for the Mikva was provided by donors around the world. Most notably, donations came from a group of Shabbat-observant Jewish passengers who had been stranded during a stop-over in Athens on a delayed Tel Aviv-bound El Al flight from New York. Chabad of Greece under the direction of Rabbi Mendel and Nechama Hendel made all of the Shabbat arrangements for the group of 150 people.

Bais Chabad Torah Center in **West Bloomfield, Michigan**, are dedicating the Mallor Walder Community Mikva Center, a 2,500-square-foot facility that is triple the space of the current Mikva.

New Torah Scroll

Georgina, a town in **Central Ontario, Canada**, recently welcomed a new Torah scroll. After the Torah was completed it was brought to the Chabad Center of Georgina, directed by Rabbi Yossi and Chaya Vorovitch.

Today Is...

12 Sivan

Rabbi Sholom Ber of Lubavitch wrote: Cherish criticism, for it will place you on the true heights.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

15 Iyar, 5738 [1978]

Sholom Ubrocho [Peace and Blessing]:

I am in receipt of your letter of May 13, in which you write about your present state and feelings toward Jews, *Yiddishkeit* [Judaism], the Torah, etc., which you blame on the attitude towards you on the part of the Yeshiva and its students.

Needless to say the connection is most surprising, for it is plain and obvious that a Jew, whoever he may be, who believes in the Torah and does his best to observe its *mitzvot* [commandments], does it because of his personal commitment to G-d's Torah and mitzvot, which were given to each and every Jew at Sinai, and as our Sages tell us that the souls of all Jews of all generations were present there and accepted the Torah and mitzvot. Hence, if a Jew should declare, G-d forbid, that he does not accept the Ten Commandments because his friends or teacher do not conduct themselves as they should – I do not think that anyone will say that this is a proper or sensible approach.

To put it a different way: If a teacher whom you respect will say that two times two is five, it is incorrect; and if a teacher whom you do not respect will say that two times two is four, it is nevertheless correct, for Torah is independent. Judging by your writing, there is surely no need to elaborate to you on what is self-evident. As for you, your complaint about your friends' attitude toward you - it is also clear that neither I nor anyone else can make a judgment on this without first hearing what both sides have to say.

Now, let us assume – from your point of view – that you have reasons to complain – surely you know, and must have seen it yourself from other situations where people have a

disagreement, that in every dispute between two people it is impossible that one should be 100% right and the other 100% wrong. It would be rare indeed, if it ever happened, although one does not have to be 100% right to win his case, and 99% against 1% is also sufficient. But when one of the parties, who is personally involved and subsequently subjective, claims to be 100% right and all the other 100% wrong, this is most extraordinary. Don't you think that someone who examines the whole situation objectively may find you also wrong, at least to the extent to 1%? If this be very likely, how is it that you don't mention anything about it in your letter, not even by as much as a hint? All that has been said above is by way of response to your writing, dealing with the "letter" as distinct from the "spirit."

The crucial point, however, is that suffice it to consider the fact that Yiddishkeit, Torah and mitzvot, and the Jewish people have survived 3500 years of persecution, pogroms, the Holocaust, etc., and yet our people are alive and thriving to this day, while many powerful nations and "civilizations" have disappeared without a remnant – to be convinced (despite your assertions in the beginning of your letter) that the Torah is *Toras Emes* [the torah of truth], and its mitzvot are Emes, and that "they are our life and the length of our days," both for our Jewish people as a whole and for every Jew individually.

It is also self-understood that G-d desires Jews to observe his mitzvot not for His benefit, but for the benefit of the one who lives in accordance with G-d's Will. In light of the above, I hope and trust that you will do all that is in your power to learn the Torah with devotion and diligence and to fulfill the mitzvot with *hiddur* [in an enhanced manner] – not because I, or anyone else, tells you to do this, but because it is the Truth itself, as has been amply verified by the uninterrupted history of our people from generation to generation. And although this is an obvious "must" for its own sake, this is also the channel to receive G-d's blessing for *hatzlocho* [success] in all your needs, as well as for your parents and all your dear ones.

With blessing,

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Traditionally, from the beginning of Passover until Shavuot (or in some communities until three days before Shavuot) weddings are not held. This time of semi-mourning, known as "sefira" culminates with Shavuot, the day of the wedding between G-d and the Jewish people. Thus, it is common that the week after Shavuot is an unusually busy time for weddings.

In the Chabad calendar, the week following Shavuot was filled with numerous weddings of great import:

On 8 Sivan, 5632 (1872) the wedding of Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, the eldest daughter of the Rebbe Maharash, fourth Chabad Rebbe and Rabbi Moshe Leib Ginsberg took place. Rebbetzin Devorah Leah was well-known for her clear thinking and sharpness as well as her excellent memory even in her later years.

The tenth of Sivan, 5692 (1932) was the date of the wedding between Rebbetzin Sheina, the daughter of the Previous Rebbe, and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Horenstein (grandson of the above-mentioned Rebbe Maharash). The wedding took place in Poland though the Previous Rebbe was living in Latvia at the time.

On 11 Sivan, 5681 (1921) the wedding of Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary (known as "the Rashag") to the daughter of the Previous Rebbe, took place in Rostov. The Rashag was appointed by the Previous Rebbe to be in charge of the Central Lubavitcher Yeshivos, a task which he fulfilled with utter devotion and self-sacrifice. After the passing of the Previous Rebbe, the Rashag became a loyal chasid of the Rebbe.

The thirteenth of Sivan, 5660 (1900) is the wedding day of the Rebbe's parents, the Gaon Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson and Rebbetzin Chana. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was the great-grandson of the Tzemach Tzedek, third Chabad Rebbe.

The wedding of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, the youngest son of the Rebbe Maharash, to Sara Kornitzer took place on the 14th of Sivan, 5642 (1882).

May each and every individual Jew, and the entire Jewish people as a whole know only simchas – joyous occasions, and may we all meet at the ultimate simcha – the coming of Moshiach and the Redemption.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקה

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

"When a man or a woman who sets himself apart by making a nazirite vow... all the days of his abstinence he is holy to G-d." (Num. 6:2-8) The Hebrew word "nazir" (nazirite) has two meanings: The nazir is "separate" or removed from society because of the restrictions he takes on; the term is also derived from "nezer," a crown, indicative of the nazir's special aura of

holiness. When Moshiach comes, the definition of a nazir will change somewhat. Our prophets foretold a time when many people, not just a small number of individuals, will be nazirs. In the Messianic Era, however, being a nazir will not necessitate separating oneself from certain aspects of the material world. At that time, indulging in physical pleasures will no longer have the power to exert a negative spiritual influence on the Jew. Material wealth will be commonplace, enhancing the real purpose of the Messianic Era – the pursuit of the knowledge of G-d. (Sichot Kodesh, 5751)

IT HAPPENED ONCE



It is known that the Prophet Elijah is sometimes permitted to descend to this world to help Jews in need. Once three men – a poor man, a simpleton, and a bachelor who was both poor and simple – came to Elijah to ask for his blessing.

The first man came to the prophet and said, “I’m so poor that I can’t even feed and clothe my family. Please, take pity on me, and give me your blessing that I may become wealthy.”

Elijah agreed to help, but on one condition: “When you become rich, and you certainly will, you must promise to give *tzedaka* (charity) and share your wealth with others.” The man promised, and Elijah handed him a coin. “This coin will make you rich,” assured the prophet. “Don’t forget your promise.”

The second man came and made his request: “Elijah, the thing I desire most in this world is to become a Torah scholar. Please, help me.”

Elijah considered his request worthy, but made one condition: “When you become a Torah scholar, and you will, you must promise to instruct simple folk who want to learn Torah.”

“Of course, I promise,” said the man. “It would be my honor and privilege to teach my fellow Jews.”

Elijah took a sheet of paper on which was written the Hebrew alphabet and handed it to the man, saying, “If you study from this piece of paper, you will certainly become a great scholar. Don’t forget your promise.” The man parted from the prophet happily clutching the paper to his chest.

Then the third man approached the prophet. “Elijah, please take pity on me. I am no longer young; I am very poor and not so bright; and worst of all I’m all alone in the world without a wife. But I won’t take just any wife – I will marry only a woman with good sense.”

Elijah took pity on the man. “I have the perfect wife for you. But, you must promise to listen to her in every matter, all the days of your life.” The man agreed and Elijah led him into the depths of the forest. They entered a small hut in the forest where an old woman and her daughter were sitting. “This woman is the perfect wife for you,” said the prophet, nodding towards the daughter. Both parties agreed to the marriage which was held without delay.

Two years passed and Elijah returned to see if the three had kept their promises. First, he visited the opulent home of the formerly poor man. Approaching the door, he saw a sign which said in large letters: “Beggars and Deliveries to the Rear.” Elijah went to the back door and was given a small coin. “I wish to speak with your employer,” demanded the prophet. “Not permitted. You can have a coin and a loaf of bread.”

“No,” insisted Elijah. “I want to see the owner of this house.”

“Take two coins and be off with you!” Still, Elijah stood his ground. In fact, he created such a fuss that the servants had to call the wealthy owner.

Elijah asked the man for a more substantial sum, but he just scoffed, “A coin should be enough for you!” Each time he asked, Elijah was rebuffed more violently.

“I see that you don’t recognize me and you have forgotten your promise. I am Elijah the Prophet and you must return my coin” Elijah told the ungrateful man.

“Ha! Do you think that silly coin did anything for me? You can gladly have it back. It’s worthless!” He returned the coin, laughing. Needless to say, in no time the man was poor again.

Next, Elijah visited the great yeshiva where the would-be scholar was now a famous Head of the Academy. “Pardon me, Rabbi, but I would like to learn Torah,” the prophet said to the great man.

“Have you studied the entire Talmud with all of its commentaries?” “No, I haven’t had the chance to learn, but I want to very much.” “I’m sorry, I don’t have time to instruct low-level students. You see, I am the Head of the Yeshiva, and I have more important things to do!”

Elijah begged three times, but to no avail. Then he said, “I see you don’t recognize

me and you haven’t kept your promise. You must return my paper!”

“The paper is worthless,” the scholar laughed. “Here, take it!” No sooner had the prophet departed when the Head of the Academy forgot all of his learning and was an ignoramus again.

Elijah trudged to the poor hut of the couple. The wife saw Elijah from afar and said to her husband, “We have never been privileged to have a guest, and here is a distinguished-looking man approaching. Let’s slaughter our cow and serve him properly.”

The husband couldn’t imagine life without the cow, from which they eked out a bare subsistence, but he agreed. “If you feel that we should, let’s prepare the cow.”

Elijah ate, and when he finished he said to the couple, “I see that you have lived according to your promise, and so, I have two more gifts for you – a coin and a paper.”



The L-rd bless you and guard you. The L-rd make His countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you. The L-rd turn his countenance toward you and grant you peace. (Num 6:24-26)

This special blessing was uttered by the priests in the Holy Temple and continues to be invoked by kohanim in synagogues today, but with one significant difference: In the Holy Temple, the kohanim would actually pronounce G-d’s ineffable Name, indicative of the sublime level of holiness that was brought down by their blessing, whereas today we are forbidden to do so. When Moshiach comes kohanim will return to their former practice, at which time the power of the blessing itself will be even greater than during the time of the Holy Temple. (*Sichot Kodesh, Parshat Mishpatim, 5752*)

Why do kohanim raise their hands when blessing the Jewish people? Our Sages taught that while giving blessings is both proper and appropriate, it is extremely important that we also “raise our hands” and do something to actually help the person in need. (*The Rebbe*)

Before the kohanim recite the priestly blessing they say, “Who has sanctified us through His mitzvot and commanded us to bless His people Israel with love.” On the most literal level this means that the kohanim are to bestow their blessing out of a sense of love for their fellow Jew. Yet on a deeper level it expresses the intent that the benediction bring the Jewish people to love one another, rendering them a suitable vessel for G-d’s beneficence. (*Ta’amei HaMinhagim b’shem Torat Chaim*)



8:08 Candle Lighting Time

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11 Sivan/June 10
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 Shabbat ends 9:17 PM

Dedicated in honor of a dear friend of the Lubavitch Youth Organization

Mr. Joel Kerman

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 “long and happy days and years”

and much continued success in all your endeavors

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