בס"ד

L'Chaim

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The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"Jerusalem has mountains around it, and the L-rd is around His people from now and to eternity" (Psalms 125:2)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

This week's portion, Chayei Sara, begins, "Sara's lifetime was 127 years, the years of Sara's life."

What do the words "the years of Sarah's life" add?

Also, why does the Torah tell us how long Sara lived? After all, the Torah doesn't mention the lifespan of the other matriarchs!

The Zohar comments that because Sara went down to and came up from Egypt, she merited to have an exalted state of living. This high spiritual state was a "gift" from Above. The Zohar further comments that "her life was hers," meaning that she was master over every aspect of her life, and even more, not only did she receive the gift of an exalted state of living, but she internalized it, and mastered that as well.

The Rebbe Rashab (the fifth Rebbe of Chabad, Rabbi Shalom Dovber) explains the words of the Zohar, that the first part of the verse, "Sara's lifetime was 127 years," means that she merited to have an exalted state of living, and the second half of the verse, "the years of Sara's life," comes to teach us that her life was hers.

Not only do we learn this lesson from Sara, but because she was at such a high level, and she was able to internalize it, and take ownership of every aspect of her life, it means that we could as well. Because Sarah is our mother, and it is in our genes to be like her. Therefore, we have the ability to have all our years equally good and that our lives be ours, just like her.

You might think, "I am not holy enough or special enough to be the master over every aspect of my life." It is a mistake to think this way, as every Jew is holy and special, and every Jew can correct whatever in the past is standing in the way of "owning" his or her years. It is not the easy route, it will take work. But when you begin to understand that you can master your life, your love for G-d will start to grow and will lead you to do the necessary work out of love.

If you follow these steps, you will begin to see Judaism differently. Rather than feeling Judaism is a responsibility, you will begin to have a passion for it and do it with joy. And joy is the key to breaking all boundaries and reaching the greatest heights. You will become the master over your life, past, present and future, just like Sara our mother.

May our efforts to get closer to G-d, bring us to "serve G-d with joy." This joy will break all boundaries, especially the constraints of this dark and long exile, and usher in the coming of Moshiach. The time has come.

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

Do This With Your Money

By Rabbi Eli Friedman

Originally, the answer was between $5 billion and $20 billion.

The question I posed to ChatGPT was: What might the Temple Menorah be worth today?

First answer: As pure gold, approximately $3 million.

Second answer: Considering its extraordinary craftsmanship, between $50 million and $200 million.

Third answer: As a historical treasure, between $500 million and $2 billion.

Finally, considering its religious significance, between $5 billion and $20 billion. Effectively priceless.

Very impressive.

But then I asked the robot another question. What if we include the Jewish tradition that the Menorah was so difficult to construct that even Moses struggled, and ultimately G-d Himself made it?

ChatGPT responded, “Ah.” Such a Talmudic response!

It explained that once something is believed to have been created by G-d Himself, ordinary economics no longer apply.

Its value? “Effectively trillions — functionally infinite.” Talk about growing your money!

Think about it. Ordinary gold, transformed into something priceless.

And therein lies a beautiful lesson about what we do with the blessings G-d places in our hands.

The Menorah was fashioned from one solid piece of gold. Its branches, flowers, and ornaments could not be made separately and then attached. Everything had to be hammered from one piece. Different branches. Different shapes. One magnificent whole.

Why? Because the Menorah represents the extraordinary power of unity.

And here comes the practical lesson.

G-d blesses each of us with resources, some more, some less. The question is what we choose to do with them.

Because everything in life carries an energy. Money is no exception.

Money used to create conflict carries one kind of energy. Money used to heal, uplift, and unite carries something entirely different.

Think about it.

A dollar can feed resentment or nourish friendship. It can build a wall between people or open a door between hearts.

The amount is identical. The spiritual impact is worlds apart. And that is where the real value begins.

Invest in things that bring people together. Support projects that create friendship, kindness, and community. Help heal divisions rather than deepen them.

A thousand dollars that creates lasting friendships may accomplish something worth millions.

And the goodness generated by those friendships can continue spreading, touching lives we may never meet.

That is the beautiful mystery of goodness. It multiplies without diminishing. The more light we share, the more light there is.

The Menorah teaches us that unity is not merely a beautiful ideal. It is a Divine energy capable of transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary.

So invest in goodness. Invest in kindness. Invest in people who bring people together. Help repair a world too often divided by conflict.

Create warmth where there is loneliness, friendship where there is distance, and light where there is darkness.

Turn ordinary resources into extraordinary blessings. Transform something valuable into something priceless.

And watch your money grow.

Better yet, **watch your money glow.**

SLICE OF LIFE

He Went to China for Business, and Became a Chabad Emissary



Rabbi Gadi Louzoun

Rabbi Gadi Louzoun is 43 years old and serves as a Chabad emissary in Foshan, China. What began as a business venture turned into a life mission. Today, he leads a vibrant Jewish community complete with a school, kindergarten, kosher restaurant, and a growing network of Jewish institutions that serve Jews from around the world.

"I was born into a traditional family in Ashdod," he says. "After my military service, I studied international economics at a university in China and began working in business. A visit to the Chabad House in Guangzhou marked the beginning of my journey back to observance. That path eventually led me to yeshiva and kollel, rabbinical ordination, and the decision to become a Chabad emissary."

His first meaningful encounter with Chabad, however, came earlier. At the age of seventeen, he traveled to the United States as part of a student delegation and stayed with the Sasonkin family in Ohio. "I watched their children and was deeply moved by the way they behaved," he recalls. "Something stirred in me. I hoped that one day my own children would grow up that way." Years later, at the International Conference of Shluchim, he found himself sitting next to a young emissary who turned out to be one of those very children.

Foshan is an ancient city in southern China that has become a major economic hub, particularly in construction and design. Merchants from across the globe pass through its streets. "Until recent years, Jews were almost unknown here," Rabbi Louzoun explains. "Today, most of the Jews who come are businesspeople, and many have chosen to live close to the Chabad House."

Over time, a strong community took shape. "We have a kindergarten, a school, youth activities, and a kosher restaurant," he says. "We are completing the construction of a mikvah and hope to build a synagogue as well. Beyond the institutions, there is real friendship and a sense of belonging."

His Shabbat table reflects that diversity. "On an average Shabbat, we host around one hundred guests," he says. "People come from all over the world, many from Israel. At least a fifth are newcomers each week. We have hosted Jews from fifteen different countries in a single Shabbat, including people from places like Tunisia and Iran. The atmosphere is joyful and deeply enriching."

Shortly after the Chabad House opened, the COVID pandemic struck. "We happened to be in Israel on vacation when the outbreak began," he recalls. "Everyone was trying to leave China, while we were doing everything we could to return." They managed to get back just before the country shut down. "We found an empty bar and held a Passover Seder there. I told the participants that while almost no one else in the world was celebrating a Seder, we were. In that moment, we felt that the responsibility rested on our shoulders."

Torah study is central to community life. "We offer a variety of classes," Rabbi Louzoun says. "One of the most popular is a class on Tanya. Even reading a few lines from this holy book has a powerful effect on the soul." Plans are underway to open a rabbinical training program for young men and an evening yeshiva program for community members.

Each year, Rabbi Louzoun travels with members of his community to the International Conference of Shluchim in New York. "We pray together at the Rebbe's resting place," he says. "Everyone who has gone with me returns changed, with a deeper sense of purpose. The highlight of the conference is the joint prayer of thousands of emissaries. From that moment, I draw strength for the entire year."

"Our connection to the Rebbe gives us strength," he adds. "When challenges arise, my wife and I write to the Rebbe, and we repeatedly see matters resolve themselves. There is a deep sense that the shepherd is still guiding his flock." Recently, the arrival of additional staff, Rabbi Shmuel Amar and his wife, has brought new energy to the community.

Despite the rise of antisemitism around the world, Rabbi Louzoun says life in China has remained calm. "Thank G-d, we have not experienced hostility. The Chinese respect Israel, and we respect local laws and customs. Over the years, senior government officials have visited the Chabad House, been impressed, and have taken steps to ensure its security."

Adapted from Sichat Shavua Magazine

etc.



In Bel Air, Md., a New Chabad Center Wins Town's Top Design Award

The new Chabad center at 38 E. Broadway in the seat of Harford County in northeastern Maryland opened in June 2025. In October it received the 28th annual Archer Bull Award from the town's Economic and Community Development Commission.

Rabbi Kushi Schusterman, who directs Chabad-Lubavitch of Harford County, Md., with his wife, Fraida stepped up on Thursday night to accept the Town of Bel Air's award for architectural excellence. Bel Air is a commuter town roughly an hour from both Baltimore and Philadelphia, and many residents work at a nearby U.S. Army base. Chabad also serves neighboring Cecil County.

More than 300 people attended the opening, taking the opportunity to tour the building's sanctuary and social hall, kosher kitchen, classrooms, mikvah and Jewish library. Schusterman believes it is the first Jewish house of worship built in the area in some 70 years.

CUSTOMS

Are there any special customs associated with traveling?

A special "Prayer for Travelers" (Tefilat HaDerech) is said upon reaching the outskirts of the city from which you are traveling. In this prayer, we ask G-d to protect us and enable us to arrive at our destination in safety. If one will be away for more than one day, the prayer is said - without using G-d's name - each subsequent day after the morning prayers. For a more extensive guide to Jewish customs when travelling visit chabad.org.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

22nd of Cheshvan, 5735 (1974)

This is to confirm receipt of your letter of October 10th with enclosures, which reached me with some delay. I appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending me the enclosure.

One of the reasons why my acknowledgment was delayed was the fact that there was reason to believe that Prof. Branover would be visiting the U.S., although I do not know how definite this is, when there would be an opportunity to discuss the various matters of your letter personally with him.

I was particularly gratified to read in your letter that a beginning has been made in regard to the suggestion which we discussed, namely to obtain interest-free loans from persons, in order to pay off the debts and eliminate the high interest rate.

May G-d grant that you should soon be able to complete the list of such persons, especially as some of the participants in this project have made it conditional upon the complete list of participants.

I trust that you have been active in the Five Mitzvah [commandment] Campaigns which I have stressed, and more recently also in the matter of encouraging young girls from the age of Chinuch [Jewish education], to light the candles Erev [the eve of] Shabbos and Erev Yom Tov. And while you are destined for, and are capable of, great things and accomplishments, and to participate in the above mentioned Mitzvah Campaigns may seem to you that these things should be done by others, we have one of the basic teachings of the Torah to the effect that one should not attempt to weigh the importance of big mitzvos and small mitzvos, but do them all as they come along.

It should be noted that the above statement speaks of "big" and "small" mitzvos but the conclusion is that all mitzvos should be carried out with the same eagerness and joy and vitality.

One of the explanations which explains the seeming anomaly in the above statement is that when a person does a good thing, no matter how big or small, he "pleases G-d" thereby and becomes attached to G-d through the fulfillment of His commandments. In this way G-d's unity permeates all these good actions of the person. Hence, bigness or smallness is of no consequence, since he fulfills G-d's commandments for the sole reason that G-d commanded him to do them.

At this time, before Shabbos Mevorchim Kislev [the Sabbath on which the month of Kislev is blessed], the mitzvah of the Shabbos lights is particularly pertinent inasmuch as we shall soon be observing the festival of Chanukah with the lighting of the Chanukah candles.

We are told that the Shabbos candles have a priority over the Chanukah candles (in a case where one cannot afford both), which goes to show how important the Shabbos candles are.

You do not mention about your own daughters lighting the candles, but I am certain they do. I only want to express the hope that they are a shining example to their friends in this and in every other respect.

Wishing you hatzlocha [success] in all the matters about which you write, and especially that you and your wife should have true Torah Nachas [pleasure] from each and all of your children.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

This week we read: "Isaac brought her into his mother Sara's tent, and he married Rebecca" (Gen. 24:67) When Isaac took Rebecca as his wife, it says that he took her "ha'ohela - into the tent." "Ha'ohela" is 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 seven places where the Divine Presence already rested were: the sanctuary in the desert; Gilgal; Shilo; Nov; Givon; the First Holy Temple; and the Second Holy Temple. The eighth place will be the Third Holy Temple which will be built in the Messianic Era.

(Baal HaTurim as quoted in Discover Moshiach)

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

On this weekend each year, the Lubavitcher Rebbe's emissaries convene at World Lubavitch Headquarters. While the first International Shluchim Convention in 1984 was attended by 65 emissaries, today housands of emissaries attend, and the number continues to grow each year as more and more young couples join the Lubavitcher Rebbe's army.

The convention in 1990 was opened by the Rebbe at a Shabbat gathering of the emissaries and thousands of other Chasidim. The Rebbe explained the characteristics of an emissary and his mission:

"First and foremost, each emissary should feel strengthened and reinforced by this meeting. He should realize that no matter how far away he has been sent, the one who appointed him is with him. Indeed, 'a person's emissary is considered as he, himself.':

The deeds of the emissary are considered as having been performed by the one who appointed him; the shliach, and his powers, however, are considered as separated entities.

The emissary's power to act is considered as given over to the one who appointed him; his other powers, his thoughts and his feelings, are his own. All of the shliach's powers, his thoughts, his feelings, his will, and his pleasure, are given over to the one who appointed him.

The Rebbe then went on to explain the mission of each emissary, near or far, which is to spread Judaism and the teachings of Chasidism outward. The Rebbe continued: "These activities will lead to the realization in deed and action of the concept that the Hebrew word 'shliach' [emissary] together with the number ten (signifying the ten powers of the soul), is numerically equivalent to 'Moshiach.'

"Every single Jew has a spark of Moshiach within his soul which can be revealed through the service described above. The revelation of the spark of Moshiach on an individual level will lead to the revelation of Moshiach for the entire world and the coming of the ultimate Redemption. May it be in the immediate future."

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA
לזכרון חי"ה 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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During the Turkish rule, there lived in Israel a poor Jewish woodchopper.

Although he worked hard day after day, his livelihood remained meager. His unfortunate wife was beside herself, watching helplessly as their small children cried from hunger. With six children and the seventh on the way, the husband became desperate. Out of sheer hopelessness, the husband decided to take his own life. He set out for the forest with his wood-chopping knife and recited the final confession.

Suddenly a gray-bearded old man ran up to him. "What are you doing, old man? I have enough troubles without your interference!" he cried.

The old man sat patiently with the distraught husband and calmed his nerves. He revealed that he was none other than Elijah the Prophet, and he would entreat G-d to bring the poor man success in his livelihood. The poor man wept tears of relief and joy.

"How soon can I expect help?" the man inquired. "In about two months," Elijah replied. The poor man went home and related the happening to his wife, and the two of them waited expectantly for their luck to change.

After two months Elijah appeared to him again, and told him that in Heaven it was determined that for their situation to improve, they must move to a different city.

The family moved at once from Jerusalem to Jaffa, fulfilling the prophet's instruction. Upon arriving in a beautiful park in Jaffa, they saw a crowd of people near a great palace. The man walked over to see what was happening. An Arab was accepting bids on the palace which was for sale.

"Who will bid more than ten thousand pounds?" he asked. The poor man spoke up and said, "Ten thousand one hundred" The Arab auctioneer looked at the ragged beggar who had interrupted him, and with one kick, sent him rolling on the ground.

Later that night the Arab happened to look out of the window of the palace and he saw the man he had kicked and his pregnant wife and bedraggled children all sitting and shivering from cold. He took pity on them and brought them into the palace. "Come inside. There is one small room you may use, but only until my master returns."

It was almost midnight when the woman roused her husband to announce that she was about to give birth. After the baby was born, the man went out to find some water to clean the child.

As he groped in the garden searching for a stream of water, he stumbled on a metal ring. He pulled on it and suddenly the ground below opened, revealing a subterranean staircase. The man descended into a treasure house filled with gems and gold coins. The man's eyes were drawn to pearls which lay in a chest. He filled his pocket with precious pearls and then carefully left and returned to the palace.

The following day, he approached the Arab again saying that he wanted to buy the palace. This time the Arab laughed.

"Don't laugh, my friend, for I have very valuable pearls which I intend to sell." He took out a pearl and showed it to the Arab.

"If you are so rich, why are you all wearing rags?" the Arab asked.

"If I dressed in rich clothing, I would only attract robbers. This way my family and I are safe."

"You are a wise man," said the Arab, admiringly.

The poor man then took one pearl and instructed the Arab to go around to the local pearl merchants and see what kind of price the pearl would fetch.

The Arab did as he was asked, and to his surprise, the first merchant refused to buy the pearl, saying, "It is far too expensive for me, but go to so-and-so and he will certainly purchase it from you."

The pearl fetched 1,600 pounds and the Arab ran back to the Jew to announce the sale. A deed to the palace was soon drawn up, and the Jew was the new owner. The man never disclosed the source of his wealth.

The newly rich man inquired locally what would be a good investment. He was told to buy up all the skins from the slaughterhouses for a year.

This he did, establishing great tanneries, employing many Jews in his work, and paying them a fine wage. He become one of the wealthiest men in the city, dispensing charity with an open hand.

One day as he was strolling through the streets, he saw Elijah the Prophet and ran to him. "Don't you recognize me?" the man asked, but the prophet didn't. The man reminded him of how he had wanted to take his own life and was stopped by the prophet.

He continued telling him how he had changed his place, according to the prophet's instruction.

"From your appearance I see that your fortune has changed and you are indeed a wealthy man. I want you to know that your change in fortune was certainly influenced by your move to a different city, for as it is said, 'When one changes his place, he changes his luck.'

But the main reason your luck changed was the birth of your seventh child, for every child brings with him into this world his own unique mazal [good fortune], and this is the mazal of this child."

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the Weekly Torah Portion

And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah (Gen. 23:19)
Till today, Ishmael's descendants claim that the Cave of Machpelah (in Hebron) belongs to them, by virtue of their being the children of Abraham. Among the rejoinders: 1) Ishmael did not have the right of inheritance, as he was the son of a maidservant and not Abraham's wife. 2) Ishmael had no connection to Sarah, so obviously he has no entitlement to a property that was bought as her burial place. 3) In the modern era, the majority of Arabs living in the Middle East are not ethnical descendants of Ishmael. *(Likutei Sichot)*

And Abraham was old, and well advanced in age... (literally "along in days") (Gen. 24:1)
The physical manifestation of day is associated with light and illumination, as it states, "And G-d called the light day." In other words, Abraham's life was completely illuminated, as he did not squander any light of even one day of his existence. *(Chidushei HaRim)*

...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)*



4:28 PM *Candle Lighting Time*
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of the Lubavitch Youth Organization
Mr. Jerome Belson, OBM

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