



Once, when Reb Elimelech of Lyzhansk was on his way to immerse in the mikva he heard a heavenly voice announce that the rabbi of Nikolsburg, Reb Shmelke was having terrible problems with those who were bitterly opposed to his spiritual path. The heavenly voice promised great rewards in the Next World for the one who would extricate Reb Shmelke.

Reb Elimelech turned to his companion and asked, "Did you hear anything?" But his companion replied that he had heard nothing at all. From that, Reb Elimelech deduced that it was up to him to travel to Nikolsburg and offer his help. As soon as he arrived he asked Reb Shmelke's permission to address his congregation with a hearty sermon that would bring them to repentance. "My friend, I certainly have no objection. But, any criticism will fall on deaf ears."

When it was announced that a visiting preacher would address the congregation, the synagogue filled to capacity. Reb Elimelech used his brilliant scholarship to deliver a speech using the most involved and seemingly erudite arguments to prove that many of the prohibitions mentioned in the Torah were actually permissible.

The congregants were very impressed with his great learning and skillful arguments. So, when they heard that he would speak the following day, they flocked to hear him. But this time he proved to them, now with genuine evidence, that all the precepts which he had so skillfully disproved the previous day were actually true. In fact, he stressed that any deviation from them went completely against the teaching of the Sages.

His words were received in the manner intended, as "words from the heart enter the heart," and the people were moved to repentance. When they realized that the words of their own rabbi had been echoed by this guest preacher, they went as a group to beg Reb Shmelke's forgiveness.

Reb Elimelech left Nikolsburg and continued on his way. Soon after he left the town, he again heard a heavenly voice, this time proclaiming: "Reb Elimelech, because you helped Reb Shmelke, whomever you bless within the next twenty-four hours will have the blessing realized."

Reb Elimelech's initial happiness over this marvelous gift gave way to bitter disappointment, when after many hours of walking he met not one person he could bless. He cried out his complaint to G-d: "Why did you give me this gift, when you haven't sent me anyone that I can bless?"

Just as he finished his plaint he saw a lone woman walking toward him. He ran up to her and began to heap blessing on the startled woman. Seeing her fright, he reassured her that he meant no harm. He questioned her gently, and she told him about her life situation and the difficulties she and her husband were having with their livelihood. He finished blessing her, and they parted ways, each continuing on his own journey.

From that day on the woman and her husband experienced no more hardships and prospered in their endeavors. Their business grew more and more successful, until they had a comfortable life. They generously shared their blessings with those less fortunate and they were always sure that the stranger who had blessed them was none other than Elijah the Prophet.

Years later Reb Elimelech and his brother Reb Zusha were travelling to collect money for the mitzva of redeeming captives. They heard that in a certain city there was a very generous merchant who dispensed a great deal of charity. When they arrived at his residence, they were ushered into his parlor where he was sitting with his wife. No sooner had they seated themselves, than the wife swooned to the floor. When she regained consciousness, she said to her husband, "That is Elijah the Prophet who blessed us, and I'm sure that he has come to remove the blessing."

Reb Elimelech had heard her comment, and he replied, "I am not Elijah, but just a simple Jew, and I am not here to take any blessings from you. Through G-d's will my

blessings were brought to fruition."

The merchant turned to Reb Elimelech and asked him how much money he needed to redeem the imprisoned Jews. Hearing the huge sum of five hundred gold rubles, he went to his room and brought out the entire sum and handed it to the Reb Elimelech. But Reb Elimelech was not willing to accept it; he preferred to give other Jews the opportunity of joining in that great mitzva. He accepted a large sum of money, bid a warm farewell to the couple, and continued on his travels.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

Four hundred shekels of silver, in negotiable currency (Gen. 23:16)

The Torah foresaw the future difficulties Jews would have defending their rights to their holy sites. The Torah therefore devotes much time detailing the transaction by which Abraham acquired the Cave of Machpela, and the exact sum he spent to purchase it. (*Drashot El-Ami*)

Who ruled over all that he had (Gen. 24:2)

These words refer to Abraham and indicate just how great a person he was. Though Abraham amassed wealth, he did not become like some other wealthy people for whom money becomes the only motivating factor in their lives. Abraham ruled over his possessions, and not the other way around. (*Klai Yakar*)

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field (Gen. 24:63)

Rashi explains that the word "meditate" means "to pray-as if pouring forth the contents of one's heart." If such is the case, why didn't the Torah explicitly state that Isaac went out to pray in the field? We are supposed to take a lesson for our general conduct from the way Isaac prayed. A person should not call attention to himself and publicly announce his fear of Heaven. Rather, we should conduct ourselves as Isaac did--quietly, and without fanfare. A passer-by would have thought that Isaac was only strolling in the field, when in reality he was composing the afternoon prayer. (*Leket Amarim*)

And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, but to the sons of the concubines...he gave gifts (Gen. 25:5-6)

Isaac is symbolic of holiness and the spiritual realm; the "sons of the concubines" stand for the physical and corporeal world. The Torah teaches that we must give "all" of ourselves – the lion's share of our time, energy and talents – to spiritual matters. Worldly matters, however, can be placated with "gifts"...(*The Rebbe*)



4:17 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
24 Cheshvan/Nov 18
Torah Portion Chayei Sara
Blessing of the new month Kislev
Shabbat ends 5:18 PM

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In the Torah portion of *Chayei Sarah* we read "Abraham became old, advanced in years." In this week's *Haftora*, the beginning of first chapter of Kings I, we read "King David became old, advanced in years." This is the first connection between the *Haftora* and the Torah portion.

The *Haftora* tells us that when David was at an advanced age, Adoniyahu – his eldest living, extremely handsome and spoiled son – sought to claim David's throne, knowing that his younger brother Solomon was meant to be king after David.

With the guidance of the prophet Nathan, Solomon's mother Bat Sheva went to David and let him know what was happening. David reassured her, reiterating the promise he made earlier, that her son Solomon would reign after him. She bowed before the king and said, "May my master King David live forever!"

Here we find another similarity between the *Haftora* and the Torah portion. In the portion Abraham makes his younger son Isaac his sole heir, just as King David made Solomon, his younger son, the heir to his throne.

However, our portion continues to tell us of how Abraham gave Isaac everything, making him his heir in his lifetime. It also tells us that after Abraham died, G-d blessed Isaac, just as He had blessed Abraham.

It is customary to end the *Haftora* after King David's promise to Bat Sheva. The continuing verses tell us how David had Shlomo anointed as king during his lifetime. It also tells us what happened after David died, that Shlomo sat on the throne. Would it not make sense, being that the events of the following verses parallel the events in the Torah portion, to continue reading on?

The law is that the royal Jewish dynasty is everlasting. A Jewish king must be a descendent of David specifically through his son Solomon. The Davidic dynasty was only solidified once Solomon became king.

The Jewish dynasty started with Abraham and continued on through his son Isaac. But the Jewish dynasty was only solidified once Jacob was born and Isaac blessed Jacob as his spiritual heir. The birth of Jacob and his role as one of the Patriarchs of the Jewish people happens in next week's Torah portion, not this week's portion. It is for this reason that the *Haftora* does not include the anointment of Solomon and concludes with David's promise to Bat Sheva.

The establishment of the Davidic dynasty is the final solidification of the Jewish nation. Before the Jewish people had a king, they were not unified. It was the appointment of David that unified the Jewish people under one everlasting rulership. So our *Haftora* is the completion of the events of the Torah portion.

May the events that began in our portion and continued in the *Haftora*, come to the ultimate completion. When our Davidic king, Moshiach, once again ascends the throne. May it happen soon.

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.

A Fly and a Flea

*A fly and a flea in a flue
Were imprisoned
So what could they do?
Said the fly, "Let us flee."
"Let us fly," said the flea.*

So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

Repeat this little tongue-twister three times. Finished?

Good. Now let's consider it for a moment.

Have you ever watched a fly try to get out of a closed window? It beats itself against the window in an attempt to reach freedom on the other side. Trying harder and harder, it repeatedly flies into the glass.

If you open the window the fly might just follow the window up and attempt to exit at a higher section of the same window, straight through the glass.

It's as if the fly is saying, "I know all I have to do is try harder and harder, and eventually I will succeed." Instead of stopping for a moment and evaluating his situation, the fly just keeps on trying.

The fly and the flea in our opening ditty behave differently, though. Stuck in a flue, they do not try to bash their way out through an impenetrable brick wall or even through the more conventional flue. They notice a flaw, a hole in the flue, and safely whizz away to freedom.

We are encouraged by Jewish teachings to approach many of life's obstacles like the flies in both scenarios.

If we try hard enough, if we keep on trying and trying we will eventually succeed.

Jewish teachings support this belief, stating, "If someone says, 'I tried but I did not succeed,' don't believe him. If someone says, 'I didn't try hard but I succeeded,' don't believe him. If someone says, 'I tried hard and I succeeded,' believe him."

In addition, our Sages teach that "Nothing stands before one's will." There are times when drive, perseverance and will allow a person to succeed.

There are also unique and singular moments in each person's life when a totally new approach – a fresh outlook or innovative perspective – is required in order to break out of and away from our limitations.

But, there are instances when – while battering away at that window with determination, will and faith – G-d opens it up for us and we sail through. Or, as with our ancestors when confronted with tests, they ignored them and the obstructions disappeared.

In the regular scheme of things, effort will bring us success.

When we are attempting to break through boundaries and limitations, it is often necessary to step back for a moment and try an unconventional approach, something totally above and beyond one's nature or natural instincts.

Whichever method is the most appropriate, we need to realize that we are not a solitary fly in a flue or near a closed window. We contain, as Jewish teachings explain, an actual, essential part of G-dliness and are part of the Divine scheme.

When we allow ourselves to be ruled only by our limited intellect or nature, we restrict ourselves. Yes, we can be successful at reaching our goals, whether mundane or noble, for truly nothing stands before the will. But, if we want to achieve something totally beyond our natural capacities, we must hookup with the Infinite in our own selves, the essential spark of G-dliness within, which gives us unlimited power to overcome all obstacles, boundaries and limitations.

SLICE OF LIFE

My Shtetl – Crown Heights by Yehudis Cohen



When I moved to New York, and particularly the *shtetl* (neighborhood) of Crown Heights, Brooklyn, it was a big adjustment. I remember my first autumn, well into November. I was commuting by subway each morning into Manhattan where I taught, and back again after school to Crown Heights.

I left while it was barely light and returned when it was nearly dark. Or perhaps I focused too much on the sidewalk in front of me. But I do recall that one day, I either looked up, or maybe I came home a little earlier than usual. And that's when I noticed that the leaves on the trees had changed colors. And a smile replaced my typical New York furrowed brow. Yes, trees do grow in Brooklyn!

Recently, As I walked to the women's yeshiva in Crown Heights where I teach, I was enjoying the multicolored foliage. (In fact, when I got to school, I couldn't resist taking the above photo.) I smiled when I recalled that autumn day over four decades ago. Because now Crown Heights is my home. This is my shtetl, my community, my neighborhood.

I smiled as I passed a father walking his five well-behaved and adorable children to school. Every day, I see fathers and mothers holding their children's hands and talking to them as they walk them to school or wait at the bus stops with them, or push their strollers.

(I'll meet some of these same people in the local butcher shop, or fish store, or fruit & vegetable market, or kosher supermarket. I'll see some of them in *shul* [synagogue] on Shabbat, but only some of them. Because in addition to the main synagogue at Chabad-Lubavitch World Headquarters 770 Eastern Parkway, there are 65 other shuls in Crown Heights – some with buildings of their own and others renting spaces wherever they can.)

Every morning, there are literally thousands of children out and about. And it's no wonder, with nearly 8,000 children attending the Chabad-Lubavitch schools in Crown Heights.

And if I'm already throwing out numbers, I'll share that 1500 college students converged on Crown Heights the weekend of November 4. Originally registration was closed at 1200 participants. But with more than 260 Chabad Houses serving colleges and universities world-wide, you can imagine that there was a big push to accommodate more. And somehow Chabad on Campus figured out a way to open up registration for another 300 students which quickly filled up as well.

That means local Crown Heights families housed 1500 college students, hosting students in their homes even though they had never met them before. (Five stayed at my house which means that 1495 were housed by my friends, neighbors, colleagues and acquaintances.) As the saying goes, "When there's room in the heart, there's room in the home." That's my shtetl for you. Lots of room in our hearts!

While most of the weekend included large group events, including a Friday afternoon concert and a post-Shabbat event, the Friday night meal was with local families to make it more "homey," just like the vibe at the Chabad Houses that the students came from. Our dining room and living room were filled to capacity with 25 students from NSU in Florida, Miami University in Ohio, Hamilton College and Union College in New York,

and Towson University in Maryland. (Which means that 1475 were hosted by my friends, neighbors, colleagues and acquaintances.)

Did I mention that this Chabad on Campus "Pegisha" Shabbaton took place just two weeks after my shtetl welcomed thousands of guests from across the USA and around the world who came to Crown Heights to celebrate Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Simchat Torah? No one knows the exact numbers but estimates are that for this special Hakhel year there were between 5,000 - 7,000 men, women and children who were given the honorable title of "the Rebbe's guests."

There are entire organizations that operate the month before and during the holidays just to assure that there are accommodations and meals for all of these guests. In addition to these "pop-up" organizations that work tirelessly for two solid months, there are also individuals who give of their time and money to the guests who come for the holidays. Like the private individual who parks a refrigerator truck in front of "770" filled with orange juice and pallets of cake and rolls for people to break their fast after Yom Kippur. Or the private individual who builds a sukka 320 feet long and hires a team of chefs to prepare food for anyone who needs a sukka and food on Sukkot. Or the private individual who organizes the nightly *Simchat Beit HaShoeiva* dancing on the streets of Crown Heights that the locals, and guests and thousands of visitors from the tri-state area enjoy.

This coming weekend, November 18-20, Crown Heights will once again be hosting. This time it will be over 3,000 Chabad rabbis for the men's International Conference of Emissaries of the Rebbe. One thousand lay leaders and 450 children will also be in Crown Heights, attending programming crafted especially for them. (The women's International Conference of Emissaries of the Rebbe will take place in February.)

Like I said, if there's room in the heart, there's room in the home. And Crown Heights has a huge heart!

Yehudis Cohen is the editor of L'Chaim and the assistant principal of Machon L'Yahadus, a women's yeshiva in her Crown Heights shtetl.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rosh Chodesh Teves, 5734 [1974]

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 24th.

It surprises me that, apparently, you are misinformed about the present state of affairs in the matter about which you write.

In the natural order of things, it is now well-nigh impossible to do anything to reverse the tide, inasmuch as those who determine the policy have brought it to a situation where it is impossible to retract all that has been promised in regard to the returning of territories, etc. This is not the place to dwell at length on such a painful and appalling matter.

Perhaps you know that there is a judicial formula, which originates in the Torah (*Talmud*), to the effect: *t'chiloso b'rotson usofo b'onus* ("He began voluntarily and ended up under compulsion"). The present situation has reached the stage of "compulsion." The time to have averted it was when I began to storm (naturally not through the press) immediately after the Six Day War, when those policy-makers hastily dispatched emissaries to Washington with assurances that they were prepared to return such and such territories, and that most of them were negotiable, etc. This was the "voluntary beginning" which has resulted in the present situation.

What will happen in the future – no one can say. But we are a people who depend on miracles, and, indeed, our whole existence is a miracle. And so when the offer of territorial concessions was made immediately after and since the Six Day War, there was the miracle that the other party, the Arabs, rejected the offer. And during the Yom Kippur War there was even a greater miracle when the Egyptians, after crossing the Suez Canal with a huge army, known to be at least 100,000 strong, and most likely much

stronger, yet for no reason stopped in their tracks only a number of kilometers east of the Canal facing no military resistance, and with the road ahead of them wide open. Unfortunately, extraordinary opportunities on both fronts which the miracles had provided, were missed, and, again, I do not wish to dwell on matters which do not reflect favorably on our fellow Jews.

As for the practical thing which Jews everywhere can do to help the present situation—something which is most regrettably ignored, in line with playing down the obvious Divine intervention in the most critical days of the war – is that every Jew must strengthen his bonds with the Torah from Sinai, when G-d made us the "chosen people." This is also something of which we need not be ashamed, for contrary to those who misunderstand or misrepresent this in terms of privilege which smacks of chauvinism, this chosen-ness is primarily a matter of duty and obligation to be a model people for the whole world to emulate, a people where form takes precedence over matter, the spiritual over the material, and the soul over the body, a people which was destined to be "a light unto the nations" (*Isa. 42:6, etc.*).

But we are a people who depend on miracles, and, indeed, our whole existence is a miracle.

It is this kind of life and conduct which the Torah describes that also stimulates right thinking and the proper outlook on life. It is this kind of life that also strengthens the self confidence of every Jew wherever he may be, and enables him to shed any inferiority complex and the readiness to be impressed by a *goy* [non-Jew], or by an idea which comes from a *goy*, or actually non-Jewish ideology. It is sad indeed when, instead of being a model for a living example for non-Jews to emulate, some Jews fall over themselves to emulate non-Jews, rejecting the "spring of living waters," the Jewish Torah and Jewish traditions, etc.

continued in next issue

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה'ה 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.



Published by
Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St., Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000

Chairman
Director
Program director
Secretary
Administrator
Editor
Associate Editor
Chairman Editorial Comm.
Rebbe photo

Rabbi David Raskin י"ד
Rabbi Shmuel Butman
Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Rabbi Moshe P. Goldman
Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
Yehudis Cohen
David Y. B. Kaufmann י"ד
Rabbi Nissen Mangel
S. Roumani

L'Chaim contains words from sacred literature. Please do not deface or discard.
All contents © 2022 by L.Y.O. ISSN 1050 0480
L'Chaim Subscriptions
For a one year subscription send \$47,
payable to LYO (\$60 outside of U.S.A.) to:
L'Chaim, 1408 President St., Bklyn, NY, 11213
L'Chaim on the Internet
Current issues and archives: lchaimweekly.org
Learn about Moshiach
Visit www.moshiach.com or call (718) 953 6100



New Emissaries

Rabbi Chaim and Esty Zippel are establishing Chabad of Utah County in Lehi, Utah. Recognized as one of the fastest growing counties in the US, Utah County is home to a booming tech community. The Zippels will focus on creating a warm community and revamping Chabad's acclaimed Project HEART's activities in the area, providing a local resource to the hundreds of Jewish at-risk teens who are at nearby care facilities.

Yom Kippur War – comics

Six years after the Six Day War, Israel was complacent and confident that it wouldn't be attacked, but meanwhile the Arabs plotted a large war against the Jewish country. This is the first volume of a spellbinding, suspenseful series, filled with fascinating, historic information and strong Jewish values. Published by Orot.



Hakhel – Unite!

"The significance of Hakhel, in a spiritual sense, is that it indicates and demands the gathering of all one's thoughts, words and deeds, in order to orientate them toward, and place them in, one's inner "Holy Temple," with wholehearted submission to the King's command — the Will of G-d." (The Rebbe, 5727-1967). *Learn more about the significance of this Hakhel year and how to unite with other Jews in the spirit of Hakhel at hakhelnation.com and chabad.org*

MOSHIACH MATTERS

These were the years of the life of Sara (*Gen. 23:1*) Although the Torah portion is entitled, "The Life of Sara" it really commences with

her death and events occurring after her passing. This is because the actual effects of Sara's work during her 127 years were only fully revealed in the events which unfolded after her death. So, too, the ultimate reward and effect of the mitzvot which we fulfill in this world will be fully revealed only in the days of Moshiach. (*Likutei Sichot*)