



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Teruma, we read about the Shulchan, the intricate table that was in the Temple. The Shulchan was made of many different pieces.

It was made of wood overlaid with gold, and the rest of its parts were made of pure gold. On the Shulchan was a golden trim like a crown around the table. It had a golden framework, with golden trays, that held 12 loaves of bread, called "Show bread."

This unleavened bread had ends that turned up, and then turned again, so that the two ends faced each other. On the table were two golden spoons filled with Frankincense. What is the symbolism of the Shulchan? How do we experience the Shulchan in our lives today?

According to the Zohar the Shulchan brought blessings of sustenance to the tables of the whole world. The Talmud explains that the crown around the Shulchan is symbolic of royal wealth. So the Shulchan brought blessings of sustenance to all and wealth to those who deserved it. How can we harness these blessings in our own lives?

By taking a deeper look at the Shulchan and its parts, we find hints that guide us. First there is a table; the table is the center of the home and therefore is symbolic of the home, the center of Jewish life. Laden with pure gold and surrounded with a royal crown alludes to our dress and sense of dignity.

How do we act? Do we see ourselves as ordinary, and dress and act that way? Or do we see ourselves as the royalty we are, the children of the King of Kings, and act accordingly. The way we see ourselves affects the way we act. The way we act, controls the flow of blessings to our homes. On the table was the unleavened Show Bread. Bread is symbolic of livelihood. Unleavened symbolizes humility, recognizing that our wealth is from G-d and not arrogantly thinking that it is merely our personal accomplishment. The breads' ends faced each other, symbolizing love for one's fellow.

The fact that it is one loaf, shows that we are essentially one at our core. Frankincense is a pleasant-smelling spice, a white resin from a growing tree. A good scent is symbolic of one who does mitzvot. White connotes doing without an ulterior motive. From a growing tree alludes to the need to be constantly growing in mitzvot. Finally, the Shulchan was placed on the north side, the left side, because in Kabalistic teachings, the Shulchan is connected to the cognitive faculty of Bina, which is on the left.

Bina is the ability to take an abstract concept, and develop it into a concrete, understandable and meaningful idea. This is done by breaking down the many parts of the concept and understanding them thoroughly.

This refers to the study of Torah. Learning, digesting, developing and finally bringing it down into the concrete, making it accessible to all. This, in essence, is the Jewish home. A royal abode, a place of dignity, humility, and love. A place of Torah and mitzvot. A place where G-d wants to be and gives His blessings.

Adapted by Rabbi Yitz 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.

Great and Grand or Small and Simple?

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

Can human beings really build a House for G-d? The Almighty Himself instructs us to do just that: "And they shall make Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell among them." How are we to understand that the Infinite Creator can be contained in a physical house built by finite men and women?

Let's do what Jews have always done and answer this question with another one.

Why is the Sanctuary described in this week's reading so small? One would imagine that the very first House of G-d would have been spectacular. It was smaller than a starter home! A roof of animal skins, held together with bolts and nuts, hooks, pegs and sockets. And while it was, admittedly, covered in gold, it was a far cry from the magnificent palaces and citadels of others.

The moral of the story? Where is G-d found? In the nitty-gritty nuts and bolts of a simple synagogue.

Back in 1983, the Torah Academy Shul in Johannesburg had purchased a large tract of land which had previously housed a Catholic institution and the new synagogue was going to be situated in what was previously the chapel. At the time, Rabbi Betzalel Zolty,

a respected halachic authority was visiting the community and was asked "Do we need to do anything special to convert the chapel into a shul?"

His sharp and simple reply? "Make a minyan!"

A minyan, a quorum of Jews praying together, is all that was needed to inaugurate and consecrate the synagogue.

And that is exactly how we invite G-d into our synagogues and make Him feel welcome. Sometimes we think we must conquer the cosmos to bring heaven down to earth, but all we need to do is make a simple minyan.

The Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad chassidism, once said:

Avodah—true service of G-d—does not imply, as some think, altogether erroneously, that one must pulverize mountains and shatter boulders, or turn the whole world upside down.

No!

The absolute truth is that any act is perfectly satisfactory when performed with authenticity and true intent. A blessing pronounced with concentration, a word of prayer as it should be with awareness of "before Whom you stand," an act of kindness and compassion expressed in befriending another person with love and affection.

SLICE OF LIFE

After Her Son Was Shot at Bondi, Manya Lazaroff Had to Live What She Taught

By Bruria Efune / Chabad.org



For nearly three decades, Manya Lazaroff has been co-directing the Rohr Chabad Jewish Center at Texas A&M University in College Station with her husband, Rabbi Yossi Lazaroff. College Station is one of the largest university campuses in the United States. With more than 70,000 students—and only a few hundred Jewish ones—College Station is both geographically and culturally isolated. The nearest major Jewish communities are hours away. But with Lazaroff's chabad center, Jewish life on campus is bustling. They have many different programs, ranging from guys' nights out to Challah bakes to Friday night Shabbat meals. They strive to make Jewish life a focal point for their students' lives.

"Every student's journey looks different," Mrs. Manya Lazaroff says. "Every pivotal moment is unique. For one student, it means telling people they're Jewish. For another, putting on tefillin. The privilege is being part of that journey."

The Lazaroffs strive to make the Jewish community on campus more of a close-knit family, and Mrs. Lazaroff recounts that they are successful in this.

The nine Lazaroff children have been raised around this unusual family. Far away from the nearest typical Jewish community, these kids grew up with friends aged 18 to their early 20s. They come along to help out at events and sit at Shabbat tables side by side with the students. This built character and resilience; Mrs. Lazaroff

recounts.

That resilience soon came in handy in a way they never could have imagined.

THRUST INTO TRAGEDY

During the predawn hours of Sunday, Dec. 14, the morning before Chanukah, Manya and Rabbi Yossi were asleep when their phones began ringing nonstop. They woke up to dozens of missed calls and messages from students and friends trying to reach them from around the world.

Their son, Leibel, was in Sydney, Australia, where he was working as an assistant to Rabbi Eli Schlanger at Chabad of Bondi. He had helped organize a massive public Chanukah celebration at Bondi Beach.

A niece arrived at their door and told them there had been a terror attack at the event, when two terrorists opened fire on the unsuspecting attendees. Fifteen were killed and forty injured.

At first, all they knew was that Leibel had been shot. Rabbi Schlanger too—and it didn't look good. It took several phone calls and a lot of help from locals in Australia until they finally located their son.

"Deep inside, I knew he was alive, I knew he would be OK," says Manya. I knew that I had to focus on the logistics and leave the rest up to G-d. We were in His hands."

The Lazaroffs soon learned that Leibel had been through a life-saving surgery. He had been shot multiple times while saving an injured police officer, and was in critical condition.

Within hours, the Lazaroffs were on their way to Australia, leaving their younger children—aged four, two, and one—with their older children and daughters-in-law. The journey from College Station to Sydney took nearly two days.

Before boarding her flight, Manya wrote a message that would later circulate widely: "... The trauma is real, the feelings so heavy and yet—we can NOT allow the darkness to become internal."

This was darkness against light, she explained. An existential struggle. We could not allow the darkness to have power over us, to define our narrative. It was time to shine as ambassadors of light.

She realized in that moment, that she was being asked to live what she had spent decades teaching.

"For years, we have taught these ideas—about

challenges, about faith. And suddenly, I had to step into them," she says. "My role as a Chabad emissary gave me the tools to handle this insanity."

SURROUNDED BY LIGHT

When they arrived in Sydney, Leibel was still unconscious. He would eventually undergo eleven surgeries.

But he was never alone.

Fellow Chabad emissaries, Jewish community members, students—people he had known for only weeks—filled his hospital room in shifts. They brought a prayerbook, a Chitas, and a menorah. They prayed by his bedside. Nurses watched in amazement as strangers treated one another like family.

When Leibel woke from his medically induced coma, he began to understand what had been happening beyond the hospital walls. He also learned that thousands of people around the world had wrapped tefillin, lit menorahs, and prayed in his merit.

"That's why I'm alive," he told his mother.

Before surgery, he had understood the stakes clearly. "Either I wake up," he said, "or I don't." When he did finally wake up, he said, he felt not only gratitude but purpose.

BACK AT TEXAS A&M, CHANUKAH AT CHABAD CONTINUED.

A visitor later described walking into the Chabad center that Sunday afternoon expecting heaviness, grief, and silence. Instead, he found music, movement, and preparation for the campus menorah lighting. Students—and even Leibel's siblings—were asking how they could help others.

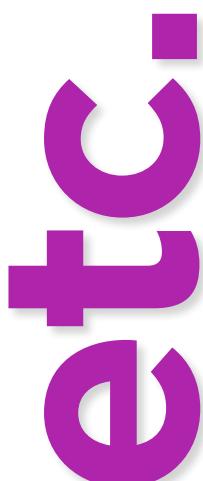
On campus that night, hundreds gathered to light the menorah. One of Manya's sons looked out at the crowd and thought: This is who we are.

Her message is direct. "Fear is immobilizing. It makes our light smaller. And that's exactly what darkness wants." The Jewish response, she says, is not to obsess over every act of hatred but to add light.

"That's what the Rebbe taught us. Darkness isn't chased away by fighting it—it's diminished by light."

For Manya Lazaroff, that idea is no longer theoretical. It has been tested, lived, and chosen again and again.

And it continues to shine.



Chabad Women Leaders Convene for 36th Annual Conference



opened Thursday, February 5, marked its 36th year.

With more than 3,000 community and lay leaders in attendance, it is the largest convention of Jewish female leadership in the world. The five-day conference included scores of workshops and sessions of relevance to their leadership roles in community building, including Jewish education and outreach, and social and spiritual programming.

Workshops were presented in English, French, Hebrew, and other languages, reflecting the many countries these shluchos call home.

FROM THE TALMUD

No two minds are alike, [just as] no two faces are alike (Berachot 58a).



A person's true character is ascertained by three parameters: his cup (i.e., his behavior when he drinks), his pocket (i.e., his financial dealings), and his anger (Rabbi Ilai, Eruvin 65b).



Do not appease a person while he is still angry (Avot 4:18).

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Erev Rosh Chodesh Adar 1, 5733 [1973] It has been often noted that the time element in any event of Jewish life, especially one connected with Torah and Chinuch [Jewish education], has a special relevance and message. This rule also applies to the fact that we are in a leap year, containing two months of Adar. The underlying reason for periodic "leap years" in our Jewish calendar is that our calendar is determined by the lunar year, which is about 11 days shorter than the solar year.

But inasmuch as the Torah requires us to observe our festivals in their due season – Pesach [Passover] in the spring, Succoth in the autumn, etc.– a periodic adjustment is necessary to make up the deficiency between the lunar and solar years. Herein also lies an important lesson. For not only does the extra month fully make up the deficiency, but it usually provides also an advance "on account" of the following year. The lesson is two-fold: A person must, from time to time, take stock of his accomplishments in the past, with a view to ascertain what he has omitted to do.

The first principle to remember is, therefore, that it is never too late to make good past deficiencies. Secondly, it is not enough to make up a deficiency; it is also necessary to make an extra effort as an advance on account of the future, and continue from strength to strength. If this is true in all human affairs, how much more so in matters of Torah and Mitzvoth [commandments] and, especially, in the area of Chinuch – the vital link in the preservation of our eternal Torah and heritage and the continuity of our people.

Moreover, in the present day and age it is quite obvious that Torah-true Chinuch is the only way to ensure that our children, boys and girls, will remain ours, and that they will grow up and flourish like the proverbial tree planted by water, with deep strong roots that can withstand all wind and storms, and will not fail to bear good fruits and the fruits of fruits to all generations to come. With blessings for hatzlacha [success] and Torah-true Chinuch in particular, to the fullest extent of our capacity to meet the challenge of our present critical times. With blessings for hatzlacha [success] and good tidings

10th of Adar 1, 5733 [1973]

Rabbi Hodakov has conveyed to me your telephone messages, and I will again remember you in prayer for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good in all the matter which you mentioned over the telephone. May G-d grant that you should have good news to report, especially now as we are in the auspicious month of Adar.

Which also reminds us that we are in a leap year, with an added month to make up for the deficiency between the lunar year, on which our Hebrew calendar is based, and the solar year, which determines the four seasons, since our festivals must occur in their due season.

This is also a meaningful lesson that a Jew can, and must always strive to, make up for any past deficiencies. It is also significant that the added month is the one of Adar, which is a month of increased joy for Jews since that first Purim, when, as Megilas Esther [the scroll of Esther] tells us, "for the Jews there was light, joy, gladness, and honor."

These words, by the way, are included in the Havdala [prayer marking the end of Shabbat] which we make at the beginning of each week, to which are immediately added the words, "so be it for us." May G-d grant that it should be so also for you and yours in the midst of all our people.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

This week we read: "They shall make for Me a sanctuary" (Ex. 25:8) According to Maimonides, this positive commandment refers not only to the erection of the Sanctuary, but the building of the First, Second and Third Holy Temples as well.

When Moshiach comes and the Third Holy Temple is established, the original Sanctuary built by Moses will also be revealed, for a special connection exists between the two. Just as the Sanctuary was built in the desert, by an individual who himself never set foot in the Holy Land, so will the Third Holy Temple reflect the good deeds we have performed and our service of G-d throughout the present exile.

(Peninei Hageula)

"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

In the verse, "They shall make Me a sanctuary and I shall dwell within them." A grammatical question immediately becomes apparent. If the Jews are commanded to make a sanctuary, why does G-d say He will dwell within "them" and not within "it"?

Within them, as explained by Chasidic literature, means within every Jew. For, within the soul of every Jew is a place devoted and dedicated to G-dliness. On the above point, the previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, explained: The site of the sanctuary remains sacred, even in times of exile and desolation. The Midrash says that the Divine Presence never departs from the Western Wall.

The destruction of the Temple is limited to its building alone. This is true, too, of the personal sanctuary within every Jew. For, the foundation of every Jew is whole. Every form of spiritual desolation found in the Jewish people is only in those aspects of a person analogous to the part of the building above the foundation. The foundation of the individual sanctuary, however, remains in its holy state.

Expanding on this idea, the Rebbe has spoken on numerous occasions about the need to turn our homes into mini-sanctuaries. This is accomplished by turning our homes into sanctuaries for Torah study, charity, and prayer. In addition, we would do well to fill the house with true Jewish furnishings—Jewish books and a charity box attached to a wall so that it becomes part of the actual structure.

Each member of the family, including children of all ages, can also participate by making their own rooms into mini-sanctuaries. Torah study, prayer, and charity can all be practiced in the individual mini-sanctuary, as well as other mitzvot. Within every Jew, within each Jewish home, is that spark of G-dliness which, though it might be dormant, remains totally indestructible. It is the sanctuary that G-d commanded us to make in this week's Torah portion. May we all merit to beautify and enhance our own personal sanctuary.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חייה ימושקה

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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Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev was justly known far and wide for the tremendous hospitality he extended. In his endless kindness, he would take anyone into his home; a poor man felt just as welcome and was honored in the same way as a wealthy man. Whoever crossed Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's threshold left satisfied in body and in spirit. In that town, however, there was a wealthy man whose ways deviated completely from the Rabbi's. He had no time for the common people.

On the contrary, he would accept only the famous or wealthy as house guests. When word came to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak about the rich man's conduct he was horrified, and he set out to remedy his character flaw. When the next Shabbat arrived Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was prepared to deliver his customary sermon, but this time it was pointedly directed to one particular member of his congregation.

The rabbi began: "As is well known, it is a basic tradition that our ancestor Abraham was very hospitable, a trait that has been greatly praised and has been ingrained in the character of the Jewish people in his merit. But wasn't his nephew Lot also hospitable?

Why then is all the credit given to Abraham? The answer is that there was a tremendous difference in the kind of hospitality each of them demonstrated. Lot would allow only angels into his home; simple folk were refused. Abraham, however, led any person to his table with acceptance and even honor. In this merit Abraham earned his reputation and set the example we still follow today." *** During the time when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was serving as rabbi in Pinsk, Reb Shlomo Karliner, a disciple of the Maggid, lived nearby.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak sent a messenger requesting Reb Shlomo to come to him. The two tzadikim sat for many hours looking intently at each other, but saying nothing at all. After hours had passed, they began laughing out loud. Then, suddenly, Reb Shlomo stood up and took his leave. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's aide had been watching the whole time and was completely baffled. Finally he asked the rabbi to explain. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak replied:

"For some time I have known that the Jews of our province have been under the threat of a terrible decree. I had discovered that the great nobles of the region were about to meet in order to confirm this edict. I tried my hardest to bring all their plans to nothing, but to no avail. One day I prayed with such extreme fervor begging G-d to crush the evil plan, that I felt my soul almost depart from my body. But, try as I might, I received no answer to my prayers.

I then received a message from G-d that if Reb Shlomo would join me in my petition, it would surely be granted, for isn't it true that Elijah the Prophet himself often visits Reb Shlomo? "I lost no time in summoning him to me. He arrived at the exact same time the evil noblemen were gathered at their meeting, discussing the final implementation of their terrible plan. We were paralyzed with fear as we observed the meeting in a vision.

The evil nobles were unanimous in their decision to expel the Jews from the entire province, and we were helpless, unable to utter a word. It is

known that, according to the law, if there is even one dissenting vote, the decree becomes annulled. Can you imagine our surprise when we saw Elijah the Prophet enter the meeting? Disguised as a white-haired squire, he sat down unnoticed. The noblemen were passing the document around the great table, and each one signed it in turn. When it was handed to Elijah, he began to object loudly: 'I disagree with this whole idea! I refuse to sign this calumnious paper!' "All of a sudden, their unanimity was destroyed; the verdict was overturned in a flash! A terrible commotion erupted in the hall and in the course of the demonstration, the document was torn up. Elijah vanished and there was nothing for the assembled noblemen to do but leave. This was such a completely amazing turn of events that Reb Shlomo and I both burst into laughter at the sight."



Speak to the Children of Israel, that they may bring me an offering (Ex 25:2)

The word "offering" has two meanings: something set aside for a special purpose and that which is picked up and raised. An offering made to G-d achieves both of these objectives. Setting aside one's money to do a mitzva elevates the actual physical object that is bought with that money, transforming the material into holiness, as it says in Tanya: "G-d gives man corporeality in order to transform it into spirituality." (*Likutei Sichot*)

"The fool gives, and the clever man takes," states the popular expression. What does this refer to? The giving of tzedaka (charity). The fool thinks he is parting with something belonging to him; the clever man realizes that whatever he gives, he actually receives [its reward]. (Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin)

Two and one-half cubits its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height (Ex. 25:10)

The ark was measured in fractions, not whole numbers, teaching us that to achieve spiritual growth, one must first "break down" and shatter one's negative characteristics and bad habits. (*Sefer Hamamarim U'Kuntreisim*)

Of a talent of pure gold shall it be made (Ex. 25:39)

A person's purpose in life is to illuminate his surroundings with the light of Torah and mitzvot. This responsibility holds true no matter what the individual's circumstances or mood may be. The numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for talent, "kikar," is 140 – the same as the numerical equivalent of "mar" (bitter), and "ram" (lofty). No matter what our situation, our task remains the same. (Previous Rebbe)

