It was in the beginning of the 1900s in Russia. A group of several hundred leading "Maskilim" (members of the "Jewish enlightenment" movement) planned a scheme to convince the Czar's Minister of Education to close all Jewish religious schools and forbid the study of Jewish mystical teachings (the "soul" of Torah study) in all synagogues. It wasn't long before the Minister agreed to make a special hearing to consider their proposition.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe at that time, Rabbi Shalom Ber (known also as the Rebbe Rashab), took action. He sent his only son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, to Petersburg to see what could be done. In Petersburg, every one that Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak met, every minister that he managed to see, had been poisoned by the Maskilim and openly hated religious Jews. After almost a week of trying, he had accomplished nothing.

With no other choice, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak returned to Lubavitch to tell his father that he had failed. When he entered his father's study, his father was readying himself for the morning prayers and was checking the tzitzit (fringes) on his talit (prayer shawl) as it hung folded on his shoulder. The Rebbe Rashab just looked up at his son without saying a word.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak related in great detail exactly where he went in Petersburg, what he did, with whom he had met, how he continued trying and how he met with disappointment after disappointment until he had no choice but to return home. When he finished, his father told him this story:

"Once, Rabbi Shneur Zalman (founder of Chabad Chasidism) sent his son Reb Dovber to accomplish a certain task with the government in Petersburg. He traveled there and did his best but despite his great talents and determination he failed. And with no alternative he returned to his father.

"When he entered the house his father was standing in the middle of the room with his talit on his shoulder checking the tzitzit before he began the morning prayers. The Alter Rebbe said to his son: 'Do you see? This is a talit. A talit represents "makif" and "makif" blinds the eyes of the chitzonim.'

[This is a Kabbalistic explanation; the commandment of the talit represents and connects to a high, "surrounding," aspect of G-d (Makif) against which no evil (chitzonim) can succeed].

"When Rebbe Dovber heard this he took several of the strings of his father's tzitzit and kissed them. Then he returned to Petersburg and succeeded."

Needless to say, when Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak heard this story he took several of the strings of his father's tzitzit and kissed them. Then he left and returned to Petersburg.

Back in Petersburg, he suddenly got a wild idea. The head of the Maskilim was a clever man by the name of Karpas. He was the one who had written all the papers that would be used to convince the ministers and he happened be staying in a hotel in Petersburg until the hearing. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak had no plan but he had a feeling.... the hearing would be in two days, G-d would help!

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak went to the hotel and knocked at Karpas' door. Karpas opened up, immediately recognized his visitor as the son of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and graciously invited him in. They sat and chatted for a few minutes until the conversation got around to the plans of the Maskilim.

Karpas did not deny anything. Exactly the opposite; he began to brag of how he and his friends had an air-tight case. They were about to wipe out religious observance through logic. They would free all Jews from the superstitions of religion, he boasted. He then produced a portfolio of some 30 finely handwritten pages, all the paperwork he had prepared specially for the hearing, and declared: "This is the end of your archaic religion!!"

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak asked if he could see it for a moment and Karpas, declaring brazenly that it wouldn't help in any case - the fate of Judaism was sealed, all the officials were on his side, etc. - agreed. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak took the papers, walked to a corner of the room as though he wanted to examine them closely, and proceeded to quickly and efficiently rip all 30 pages into shreds.

Karpas let out a scream, but by the time he realized what was happening and ran over to stop him, all that remained of his evil masterpiece were hundreds of small pieces strewn on the floor like confetti.

"What have you done! I'll kill you!" Karpas screamed, as he slapped Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak in the face. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak ran to the door and out of the hotel.

The plans of the Maskilim had been destroyed. It had taken months of political maneuvering and bribery to arrange the hearing and months more to prepare the accusations; now there was no way they could present their case. In fact, the case was never heard as the plot's mastermind, Karpas, came down with a severe throat disease and died a few months later.

From www.ohrtmimim.org, adapted by Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the weekly Torah Portion

And Korach took [a bold step]...together with Datan and Aviram...and Own, the son of Pelet (Num. 16:1)
Own, the son of Pelet, was one of Korach's 250 followers in his insurrection against Moses. Yet when the Torah lists those who were punished, Own's name is omitted. Why? Own was saved by his righteous wife. When she learned of her husband's intentions she persuaded him that it was wrong to go against Moses. Own, however, had a dilemma. He had already promised Korach he would join him. What did she do? Own's wife gave him a large meal and strong wine, causing him to fall asleep. When Korach and his group came looking for him, she pointedly sat in front of her tent, immodestly uncovered her hair and began to comb it. Korach and his followers would not approach her. Because of his virtuous wife, Own's life was spared. *(Midrash)*

And Moses sent to call Datan and Aviram (Num. 16:12)
It states in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 106): "From this we learn that one should not 'hold on' to controversy." Even if several attempts to make peace have been made without success, it is forbidden to throw up one's hands and assume that nothing more can be done. Rather, one must continue one's efforts until peace is attained. Thus despite the fact that Moses had already spoken to Datan and Aviram several times, he attempted one more time to dissuade them. *(Rabbi Yitzchak of Vorky)*

And they shall keep the charge of the Tent of Meeting (Num. 18:4)
From this verse we learn of the mitzva of guarding the Tabernacle, and subsequently, the Holy Temple. This mitzva, given to the Levites and kohanim, was purely ceremonial, to arouse honor and respect for the holy site. Even after the destruction, the sanctity of the site where the Holy Temple stood remains in full force. Why then do we not continue to guard it even during the exile? Until Moshiach comes, speedily in our day, the Jewish people is in constant danger from the nations of the world. This applies not only when non-Jews have sovereignty over the land of Israel, but also when the land is in Jewish hands -- and even when peace treaties have been signed with our enemies. As "saving even one life takes precedence over the entire Torah," for reasons of safety we are unable to perform the mitzva of guarding the site of the Holy Temple today. *(The Rebbe, Parshat Tisa, 5747--1987)*

8:13 *Candle Lighting Time*
NY Metro Area
1 Tammuz / June 27
Torah Portion *Korach*
Ethics Ch 4
Shabbat ends 9:21 PM

Dedicated to the Rebbe
whose teachings and example are a never-ending source of life for all mankind. May we continue in his paths and complete the mission with which he has charged us: to make the world conscious of the imminent Redemption and to prepare the environment where this ideal can be realized.

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נוסד תרך יגי השלישים
Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth" (Psalms 124:8)

LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

The controversy between Korach and Moses was coming to a head. On one side stood Moses, leader of the Jewish people, on the other was Korach and his 250 followers.

G-d told Moses to tell the Jews, "Get away from about the dwelling of Korach, Datan and Aviram." G-d had issued His warning; in a few minutes the earth would split open and swallow up Korach and his entire group.

The Torah describes Moses' actions immediately upon hearing this command. "And Moses rose up and went to Datan and Aviram, and after him went the elders of Israel."

The reaction of Moses was curious. He had already spoken previously to Datan and Aviram and had exhausted every prior opportunity to make peace.

Why did he return? Wasn't it already too late? G-d had issued His decree; their fate was sealed. And if Moses' intent was to bring Datan and Aviram to repentance, why doesn't the Torah say that he spoke to them? Why are we are told only that Moses "rose up and went?"

Rashi, the great Torah commentator, explains that Moses was sure that Datan and Aviram would receive him favorably. Despite the fact that G-d had already rendered judgment, Moses' great love for his fellow Jews, even evildoers such as Datan and Aviram, prompted him to try one last time to set things right.

Mere words may have failed, but Moses had one more tactic he could employ in an effort to move Datan and Aviram to repentance -- utilizing his status as leader of the Jewish people.

"Moses rose up" -- in full kingly splendor, Moses returned to Datan and Aviram, hopeful that they would repent and avert their bitter fate when they beheld his glory.

In this light, the rest of the verse -- "and after him went the elders of Israel" -- is also clearly understood.

The regal appearance of Moses, resplendent in his full spiritual stature as king, was so powerful a sight that the elders were inspired to accompany him.

Unfortunately, however, Korach and his followers were not similarly affected, and their punishment was meted out as planned.

This episode serves to underscore the depth of Moses' love for his fellow Jew and the great lengths to which he was willing to go to bring a Jew back from the brink.

Even after G-d had pronounced judgment and locked the very gates of repentance, Moses, as leader and shepherd, would not give up.

If Moses could feel this way toward such evil people, how much more so must we emulate his behavior today!

In our time, transgressions are committed largely out of a lack of knowledge; each Jew must therefore do all in his power to bring his fellow Jew closer to our Father in Heaven.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 28

Inside/Outside

Rabbi Yossy Goldman

Some arguments are petty affairs between insecure individuals while others are classic differences of opinion between people of stature, where each opinion is worthy of consideration.

This week's Parsha tells the story of the mutiny of Korach, a cousin of Moses who challenged his authority. In the end, Korach and his henchmen were swallowed by the earth in a Divine display of rather unearthly justice.

The Midrash reveals some of the behind-the-scenes dialogue and debate between these men. Remember, Korach was no pushover. Besides being of noble lineage, he was clever, wealthy, and quite charismatic. One of the questions Korach put to Moshe was this: Does a house full of holy books still require a Mezuzah? Moshe answered that it did. Korach scoffed at the idea, ridiculing Moshe. The little Mezuzah contains but two chapters of Torah, the Shema Yisrael. A whole houseful of books with the entire Torah won't do the trick and a little Mezuzah will?

What indeed is the significance of a small parchment on the doorpost in relation to a library inside? The Lubavitcher Rebbe, explained that it all depends on location. The books are inside. The Mezuzah is outside. When there are Jewish texts inside, this indicates that the home is a Jewish home. But what happens when we leave the comfortable confines of our home?

The Mezuzah is at the threshold between our inner lives and outer lives. As we make the transition from private person to public citizen, we desperately need to be reminded of who we are and that we take our identity with us wherever we may go.

One of the many works by the late illustrious author Herman Wouk is an autobiographical novel called "Inside, Outside" in which he portrays his own inner struggles straddling these two worlds. His pious Talmudist zayde had a profound influence on him but so did Hollywood and Broadway.

It took him a long time to find his way and settle into an observant Jewish lifestyle while still writing bestsellers. I remember when Wouk came to the Rebbe to attend a farbrengen in 770.

Being Jewish "Inside" is relatively easy. It's when we hit the "Outside" that we encounter temptation and turmoil.

Moshe rejected Korach's argument. The Mezuzah does not replace the need for Jewish libraries, but as we step out of our home to enter the outside world, it beckons us to take our G-d and our Torah, our values, and our traditions, along with us.

The Rebbe introduced a special Mezuzah campaign, explaining how it brings protection to the Jewish people, and always encouraged us to be proud Jews no matter the environment. It's a message we need to hear today in particular. May our staunch pride and our committed practice of our faith bring spiritual merit to our brave defenders of the IDF, a speedy victory over our mortal enemies, and the revelation of Moshiach Now.

SLICE OF LIFE

How Israel Was Saved from a Nuclear Threat 44 Years Ago

By Esther Scharf / Chabad.org

Sunday, June 7 1981:

Six F-15 escorts and eight F-16 fighter bombers roared off the runway from Etzion Air Force Base in southern Israel. The air was thick and tense. Prior to take-off, Lt. General Rafael Eitan briefed the pilots. "The alternative is our destruction," he said, displaying unusual emotion.

Israel's intelligence had recently confirmed that Iraq had intentions of producing weapons in their Osirak nuclear facility. The atomic bombs which the Iraqi reactor would be capable of producing from enriched uranium or plutonium could be as fatal as the one that landed on Hiroshima. Realizing the mortal danger facing the people of Israel, the Israeli government decided to attack. At 3:55 p.m., while the country innocently bustled about its daily activities, the fighter jets secretly took off.

Every detail of the mission was planned meticulously. The target was distant: 1,100 kilometers from Israel. The courageous group of elite pilots included Ilan Ramon, may his memory be blessed, as well as others selected from the crème de la crème of the Israeli Air Force's fighter corps.

After a tense but uneventful low-level navigational route, the fighter jets reached their target. At 5:35, they identified the reactor's dome, gleaming in the late afternoon sunlight. The enemy defenses, caught by surprise, opened fire too late. One minute and twenty seconds later the reactor would lie in ruins. All six planes returned home safely.

Israel – and the entire world – was saved from mortal danger.

June 7 1981, Day before Shavuot

The grand gathering in honor of the completion of the third Children's Torah Scroll at the Western Wall. The Torah was written specifically in the merit and for the unity of Jewish children worldwide.

An urgent directive from the Rebbe was dispatched from his headquarters in Brooklyn. The Rebbe instructed his emissaries around the globe to stop their usual pre-holiday activities and spend every spare moment "selling" letters in the Torah to Jewish children. The emissaries were then to send back a report on that same day exactly how much was accomplished.

Two months earlier, the Rebbe had explained the importance of writing Torah scrolls in which thousands of Jewish children will be partners through purchasing one letter for the minimal cost of one dollar. Through every child "owning" his own letter, hundreds of thousands of Jewish children around the globe would be united in one joint scroll.

In a public address, the Rebbe stated that "we now live in a world rent with confusion and turmoil . . . Nowadays, even a single deranged, demented, or frustrated individual who has access to a destructive button or trigger can upset an entire region or country. . . Such unprecedented chaos must be countered with unique measures." The Rebbe continued that this new campaign for Jewish unity achieved through the communal children's Torah – in addition to taking the natural steps necessary to achieve piece – would ensure peace in Israel and across the world.

The past two months had been full of activity, as thousands of children participated in this wide-spread campaign. But it was a mystery to all why on the day before Shavuot, amidst the many holiday activities, the Rebbe had suddenly deemed it crucial to obtain as many letters as possible. The emissaries followed his directives, while wondering about the sudden urgency.

At 5:36 that afternoon, the threat of horrific terror against Israel, and its repercussions around the world, was averted.

Could there be any connection between this dramatic miracle and the Rebbe's urgent directive?

You can draw your own conclusion, but let me just add one detail:

The following year, on the holiday of Chanukah, the Rebbe announced that he had received a letter about a certain prophecy in Daniel which was connected to the "Letter-in-the-Torah-campaign." The Rebbe was so enthusiastic about this find that he said it deserved an entire gathering just to share it.

The unique prophecy that so piqued the Rebbe's excitement was a verse in Daniel (12:1), discussing the wars prior to Moshiach's arrival: "Whoever is found in the Sefer [scroll] will be saved."

The children's Letter-in-the-Torah Campaign is still active, and has since been broadened by the Rebbe to include adults too.

Rabbi Shmuel Greisman from the Ois B'Sefer Torah campaign adds:

"As Israel once again strikes the nuclear infrastructure and regime of those who seek to annihilate the Jewish people, it is a most fitting time to encourage as many Jews as possible to sign up for a letter in the Sefer Torah, and 'Whoever is found in the Sefer [scroll] will be saved.'

"May we merit to witness the fulfillment of the prophecy in Daniel, with the coming of Moshiach and the salvation of the Jewish people."

To buy a letter in the children's Sefer Torah, please visit: www.kidstorah.org

etc.

Jewish Passengers Stranded in Cyprus, Rome as Ben-Gurion Airport Closes

Ben-Gurion International Airport was closed after Israel launched a massive preemptive military offensive against Iran. At least 32 flights from the United States and Europe were diverted to Cyprus, with 29 flights carrying 2,427 passengers landing at both Larnaca and Paphos airports on Friday.

When word of the diversions reached Chief Rabbi of Cyprus Rabbi Arie Zeev and his wife Shaindel Raskin they were ready for the challenge. Chabad estimated that some 400 to 500 people gathered at the Chabad center for the main Shabbat meal.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Jews were facing a similar situation elsewhere in Europe. An El Al flight from New York was rerouted to Rome along with various flights from Milan, London, Barcelona and Tbilisi. In coordination with the local Jewish community, the Chabad center in the Jewish quarter began offering full-service Shabbat meals and serving as a meeting and rest location for the hundreds of stranded passengers.

Ethics of the Fathers: Chapter Four

Ben Azzai would say: Run to pursue a minor mitzvah, and flee from a transgression. For a mitzvah brings another mitzvah, and a transgression brings another transgression. For the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah, and the reward of transgression is transgression.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Shavuot eve, 5734 (1974)

To All Boy Students and To All Girl Students

Summer vacation is approaching, and no doubt you are all looking forward to making the most of it. I would like to make a suggestion to you in this connection.

The summer recess is meant to give you an opportunity to strengthen your health of body and soul, which, of course, go hand in hand together. For Jewish boys and girls to be truly healthy means, first of all, to have a healthy neshama (soul). And a Jewish soul derives its health from the Torah and mitzvot, which are "our life and the length of our days," as we say in our prayers.

Needless to say, life and health must be continuous, and one cannot take a "vacation" from them.

The Torah and mitzvot are to the Jewish soul what breathing and nourishment are to the body. A healthy person seldom thinks about the vital necessity of breathing and food. However, on certain occasions one becomes acutely aware of these things. For example, when one swims under water and holds his breath, then comes up and feels the urge to fill his lungs with fresh air. Or, after a fast-day, when the body has been temporarily weakened from lack of food and drink -- one immediately feels the invigorating effect of food and drink.

Now, during the school year, when a great deal of time that could be spent in studying the Torah and doing mitzvot is taken up with other unavoidable occupations, such as the study of English and arithmetic, etc., the soul gets somewhat undernourished. At such times, your soul "holds its breath," so to speak, which makes it more eager to get back to Torah and mitzvot whenever time is available.

Comes the summer recess, and your soul can now breathe more freely and more fully, for you are then released from those other unavoidable studies and occupations.

Thus, the summer vacation gives you an opportunity to apply yourselves to Torah study and Torah activities with the utmost eagerness and enthusiasm -- not only to make good use of your free time, but also to make up for lost time during the past school period, and, what is not less important, to give your soul a chance to fortify herself and "take a deep breath" for the school period ahead.

As a matter of fact, the summer vacation seems to be so well planned for this purpose, for it is a time when you can devote yourselves to Torah study and Torah activities in particularly agreeable circumstances: in a relaxed frame of mind and in pleasant natural surrounding of sunshine and fresh air.

Moreover, it comes soon after the Festival of Shavuot, the Season of Receiving Our Torah at Sinai.

As you know, this Festival comes after the days and weeks of Counting the Omer, in memory of the eager anticipation of our ancestors, from the day after they left Egypt until receiving this greatest Divine gift -- the Torah and mitzvot -- seven weeks later. This should provide an added measure of inspiration to last through each and every day of the summer vacation and, indeed, through the year.

I urge you, dear children, to make the most of your summer vacation in light of all that has been said above. Think about it, and put it into effect -- in the fullest measure, and G-d will surely bless you with a happy and healthy summer, happy and healthy both spiritually and physically.

16th of Tammuz, 5715 (1955)

I was gratified to receive your report of your Mesibos Shabbos [groups for children on Shabbat] work, which I trust will continue to grow, like all things living where the sign of life is to be seen in growth and development.

At this time of summer, I trust you and your co-workers in the Mesibos Shabbos have not overlooked the possibilities of Mesibos Shabbos work during the school vacation time. For although, on the one hand, many children are away in camps, etc., those remaining in the city have so much more time on their hands and the responsibilities as well as opportunities are correspondingly increased to give them good influence and instruction in matters of Yiddishkeit.

If you have not yet worked out a summer program of activity, it would be well to call a special meeting of this purpose, and I will be glad to hear what plans you have made, and may G-d bless you with success.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

As both a genius and tzadik, the Moshiach will see through the sham and hypocrisy of this world.

Thus, the prophet foretold (Isa. 11:3), "He will sense the fear of the L-rd, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor decide after the hearing of his ears."

(The Real Messiah, by Aryeh Kaplan)

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

This Sunday will be Gimmel Tammuz. The date itself, while ingrained in the minds of Lubavitcher Chasidim around the globe, has significance for all Jews and, indeed the entire world population.

Although we have not seen the Rebbe with our physical eyes since Gimmel Tammuz 5754, his presence in the lives of his hundreds of thousands of Chasidim and millions of admirers is evident. And the Rebbe's involvement in the thousands of institutions he established, and the dozens of institutions set up since Gimmel Tammuz, is palpable.

Gimmel Tammuz is the third day in the Hebrew month of Tammuz.

The number three has much significance in Jewish teachings. Our Sages teach that the world stands on three pillars: Torah study, prayer, and acts of kindness. In addition, they teach that the Tzadik is the foundation of the entire world.

What has been the thrust of the Rebbe, the foundation of his work, in his decades of leadership? As is well-known to our readers, since the Rebbe's acceptance of the mantle of leadership he stated clearly the purpose of our generation, the seventh generation, is to bring the Redemption.

In hundreds of public addresses, the Rebbe elucidated how we can accomplish this in a three-fold campaign: through Torah study, prayer, and acts of kindness.

Our Torah study should be increased in all areas of Jewish knowledge in general, Chasidic philosophy in particular, and specifically those matters found everywhere in Jewish teachings that deal with Moshiach and the Redemption.

Our prayers should be suffused with heartfelt requests of G-d to bring the Redemption, crying out "How much longer?" and even to the point of demanding the Redemption (as explained by the Chofetz Chaim).

Lastly, through love of our fellow Jew in general and even simple acts of kindness and good deeds, we can prepare ourselves for the Redemption and hasten its inception.

May we be together with the Rebbe this year on Gimmel Tammuz, not just "feeling" his presence but actually seeing the Rebbe, leading us to the Holy Land and ushering in the complete and eternal Redemption.

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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