



Jerusalem. It was hours before daybreak in the year 1660 and Rabbi Klonimus Hechasid was making his way in the dark to the Kotel, the Western Wall, to pray to the King of the Universe. It was his unvarying custom to pray every morning at that early hour, when the world was completely still and he could meditate on the greatness of G-d and His wondrous creation.

The day seemed like every other day. But as he walked in the darkness, he became aware of some almost indiscernible movement in the surrounding blackness. It was with terror that he saw a street filled with Arabs brandishing knives and swords. They were crying out, “Death to the Jewish murderers!”

Rabbi Klonimus approached them, and their leader told him that an Arab youth had been discovered murdered near the Jewish quarter, and they were going to punish every Jew they could find. He somehow found the right words and convinced them to wait before commencing their bloodthirsty plan.

“Please, allow me to go the Kotel to pray. When I am finished, I will tell you the identity of the killer of the boy.”

Rabbi Klonimus took a quill, a small bottle of ink and a piece of paper. He then proceeded to the Kotel followed by the Arab mob bearing the body of the dead youth in tow. Draping himself in tallit and tefillin, he prayed for a short while and then wrote something on the paper. Then he took the paper and placed it on the forehead of the dead Arab.

To the astonishment of all present, the dead youth opened his eyes, stood up and scanned the crowd. Then he pointed to one of the Arabs in the mob and announced, “That is the one! He is the one who murdered me!”

A loud murmur went up from the mob as the accused man was dragged forward. Trembling with terror, the man admitted his guilt before his resurrected victim. As soon as he had confessed the youth sank to the ground, as dead as before.

The parents of the dead boy ran to Rabbi Klonimus, begging him to bring their child to life again, but he just shook his head. “I am not G-d, that I should be able to either grant or take away life. The miracle that just took place was granted in the merit of the holy Kotel so that you could see that ‘the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.’ He is waiting just behind the Wall to rescue His children.”

The crowd dispersed, bearing the murdered youth to his grave.

After the destruction of the First Holy Temple, many of the Jewish people lived in exile in Babylonia, where they built great Torah academies and established flourishing Jewish communities. Rabbi Zeira was amongst those who lived in exile, learning Torah from the greatest scholars. Though he had a satisfying life, he wanted one thing more--to live in the land of Israel and to study Torah from the great Sages there.

Even though Rabbi Zeira longed to live in the Holy Land, he was torn in making his decision, since his teacher, Rabbi Yehuda ben Yechezkel was opposed to returning to Israel. It was his belief that the Jews were obligated to remain in exile in Babylonia, since they did not yet merit to return. Not only did Rabbi Zeira not want to oppose his teacher, he had doubts as to whether his own personal merits were sufficient to allow him to live in the Holy Land.

One morning Rabbi Zeira woke up feeling assured that he could live in the Holy Land; he had had a dream in which he received Divine assurance of his worthiness. But he still had to solve the problem of his teacher’s opposition. He was afraid that if he went to bid good-bye to Rabbi Yehuda, the Sage would forbid him to leave, so he avoided meeting him. Then, one day, he happened to hear Rabbi Yehuda speaking and he caught a few wise words which made him feel ready to depart for the Land of Israel.

Journeying by foot, Rabbi Zeira came to a river with no bridge. Usually crossed by ferryboat, the boat was nowhere in sight. Rabbi Zeira spied a foot-bridge consisting of a narrow plank secured by ropes. Now, Rabbi Zeira was not a young man, and t his

shaky bridge was used only by nimble workers who had no time to wait for the ferry. Rabbi Zeira felt a great urgency to proceed on his way and he grabbed onto the rope and mounted the slippery bridge. He slipped and slid his way across the plank, occasionally falling into the cold river until he finally reached the other side.

When he mounted the other bank, Rabbi Zeira was greeted by a smirking gentile who said, “You are a rash and thoughtless race! Right from the beginning you acted without consideration. You said, ‘We will do and we will understand.’ That’s not the normal way of approaching a situation. First you find out about something, and only then you make a commitment to it. Why didn’t you have the patience to wait for the ferry? No, you had to cross like a young boy, in spite of the danger.”

Rabbi Zeira explained to the man, “I’m on my way to Israel. To live in Israel was the greatest wish of Moses and Aaron, but they were not permitted to realize their dream. I am no longer a young man and I don’t know if I will live long enough to reach the Land of Israel. Every minute that I will live in Israel is precious to me, and I cannot lose even one minute. How could I lose time waiting for the ferry?”

Rabbi Zeira reached Israel where he settled in Tiberius and learned in the famous yeshiva of Rabbi Yochanan.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

Behold, I have set the land before you...to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give it to them (Deut. 1:8)

This verse does not say that the land will be given “to you,” but “to them”--Abraham, Issac and Jacob--an allusion to the resurrection of the dead. (*Sanhedrin*)

You shall not show favor (lit. “recognize”) in judgment (Deut. 1:17)

This admonition cautions a judge to be fair and impartial, even if he is personally acquainted with one of the parties brought before him for judgment; he must not allow himself to be swayed by his prior association. Rather, both sides in the dispute must be treated as if he had never seen them before. (Ibn Ezra)

For unto Esau have I given Mount Seir as a possession (Deut. 2:5)

Although the Children of Israel fulfilled an express command of G-d when they took over the land Canaan, G-d warned them that their desire to conquer territory should not extend beyond those lands He had explicitly promised to them. (*Rabbi Shimshon Refael Hirsch*)

May the L-rd G-d of your fathers make you a thousand times as many as you are (Deut. 1:11)

When will this blessing be fulfilled? In the World to Come, when, as the Prophet Isaiah states, “The least one shall become a thousand, and the smallest a great nation.” The Jewish people, the “least” and “smallest,” will multiply one thousand times in number, in fulfillment of Moses’ blessing. (*Binyan Ariel*)



7:53 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area
7 Av / August 1
Torah Portion *Devarim*
Shabbat Chazon
Shabbat ends 8:55 PM
Fast begins 8:10 pm

L'Chaim

בס"ד
1884

7 Av, 5785
August 1, 2025

The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

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)

How’s Your Vision?

By Rabbi Mendy Herson

What does it mean to be visionary, to have a vision for your life and pursuits?

In a basic sense, this means conceptualizing goals and objectives; it means considering future potential and focusing on a target for growth. It means recognizing that “now” isn’t all that there is.

“Now”—disconnected from the future and its possibilities—can be stale and aimless.

“Now” is our reality; but vision can breathe commitment, animation and hope into that reality.

Vision brings optimism and direction. It is the North Star which guides the efforts that actually bring our dream to life.

The problem is that with the passage of time it becomes more difficult for the realistic person to continue dreaming. Disappointments eventually take their toll on the human psyche.

Which raises the question: When does one learn to adjust one’s expectations and recognize that that dreams are . . . just dreams?

Never.

While we should always be acutely aware of reality, warts and all, we can never stop believing in—and working toward—a brighter future.

Consider this: Our Holy Temple, along with our entire Jewish commonwealth, was destroyed by the Romans almost two thousand years ago.

It’s been rough ever since, and we’re fully aware of our reality. Every year, on Tisha B’Av, the 9th of Av, we mournfully remember the destruction and recognize the pain of our own times.

Yet, interestingly, the preceding Shabbat is always observed as a “Shabbat of Vision.” The Shabbat’s reading from the Prophets begins with the words Chazon Yeshayahu, the “vision of Isaiah” regarding the destruction of the Holy Temple.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, an eighteenth-century legendary chassidic master, taught a deeper reason for the moniker “Shabbat of Vision.” Every year, he explained, on the Shabbat before our collective day of mourning, G-d shows us a Vision of the Future. We are shown a vision of a rebuilt Temple, a reconstituted people and a better world.

G-d equips us for the mourning by ensuring that hope—the Vision—never dies; this Shabbat ensures that our sobering recognition of “now” doesn’t smother our hope for the future.

I can’t see this divinely granted vision with my physical eyes. But if G-d is showing it to me, it must be resonating somewhere in my soul.

So this Shabbat, I’ll prepare to tackle reality on Tisha B’Av by first searching myself to find G-d’s vision of a beautiful future.

Will you join me?

SLICE OF LIFE

Escaping the Heat and Discovering the Warmth



Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Telsner

In 1960, when I was eleven, a neighbor told my mother that there was a good summer camp that had opened up a few years earlier, called Camp Gan Israel. It was hot in New York City, and so my mother signed me up and spread the word about where I'd be spending the summer. As a result, a lot of my friends also ended up registering for the camp – ten or fifteen boys from the West Side of Manhattan, including the children of Rabbi Aron Soloveichik, a distinguished rabbi and lecturer, then at Yeshiva University.

The buses to the campsite in Swan Lake, New York, would be leaving from Crown Heights. That day, we took a train into Brooklyn – the first time I was ever there. We boarded the buses in front of 770, but they didn't leave right away.

The reason for the delay was because the Rebbe was coming out to see us off. I didn't yet even know who the Rebbe was, but I caught a glimpse of him.

That summer was a very enjoyable one. I liked the excitement, the atmosphere, the songs, the Torah classes – everything.

One Sunday morning, we woke to the news that the Rebbe would be visiting the camp. I realized that it must be something significant, because suddenly the place became spotless. We were all given a special commemorative green yarmulke, and a picture of the Rebbe

was put up in our bunkhouse.

Soon, the Rebbe arrived at the camp, in a beige Cadillac. He went straight to the bunkhouses to inspect every room, while we stood by our beds. When the Rebbe walked into our room, he smiled at us, and you could see that he was taking everything in.

We then went to the campsite's main hall, which was being used as a synagogue. There, the Rebbe held a gathering for us, speaking to us in Yiddish, which I was able to understand a little bit. People had come to see the Rebbe from all over the Catskills, so we were squeezed into that room, with the campers in the middle and yeshivah students and young men on the sides.

It was the 200th year since the passing of the Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the chasidic movement, as well as the namesake of Camp Gan Israel. The Rebbe told a story about a village boy who came to the Baal Shem Tov's synagogue on Yom Kippur.

Although this boy had never gone to school or learned anything about Judaism, he had a warm Jewish heart, and so when he saw everyone praying to G-d, he wanted to join in too. He didn't know how to use a prayerbook, so he decided to express himself in his own way, by mimicking a sound he liked to hear every morning – the cry of a rooster: Cock-a-doodle-do! Later, the Baal Shem Tov said that because this boy's simple cry had come from a place of heartfelt love of G-d and awe of His judgment, it had achieved what the prayers of the rest of the congregation could not.

After the farbrengen, there was Kos Shel Bracha, where the Rebbe gave out wine from his cup, along with a blessing. Mrs. Krauss, an older woman who served as the camp nurse, also went over, in her white nurse's uniform, and the Rebbe gave her a nice blessing too. Everyone also received a pocket-sized "Mincha and Maariv" prayerbook, and we all prayed the afternoon service together with the Rebbe.

Then, the Rebbe went to take a tour of the rest of the campgrounds. He walked very quickly, accompanied by his secretaries. The Rebbe took in the whole place, from beginning to end. The Rebbe asked about adding a basketball court as well as a handball court – of course,

a few weeks later, the camp put up both – but he said there was "no need" for a tennis court.

After an exciting few hours, the Rebbe left and continued to the nearby Camp Emunah girls camp. The whole experience made a tremendous impact on myself and everybody who was there.

I went back to Camp Gan Israel for the next few summers, and although the Rebbe didn't come back to visit, he placed a great emphasis on the importance of camp. There were letters and telegrams, and his secretary Rabbi Hodakov used to call the camp on his behalf to make sure that everything was going well.

Through camp, I got to know more about Lubavitch, its customs, and philosophy. I noticed that some people would drive into Crown Heights every Shabbat, or whenever the Rebbe was expected to have a farbrengen. By 1963, when I was fourteen, I very much wanted to attend one of these farbrengens. Although my father wasn't in favor of my leaving camp, I was adamant, and so he sent a letter to Rabbi Shemtov giving me permission.

That Shabbat was the 20th of Av, the yearzeit of the Rebbe's father. So, in addition to being at my first farbrengen in 770 and hearing him recite a chasidic discourse, I also heard the Rebbe lead all of the prayers that Shabbat. Right after Shabbat, we went back to camp. The whole Shabbat left a great impact on me.

Later I found out that Rabbi Shemtov mentioned to the Rebbe that I had come to this farbrengen. In reply, the Rebbe wrote a note following up on me: "Was there a continuation?" he asked.

And indeed there was. After finishing high school, I had my first personal audience with the Rebbe. Shortly afterward, I transferred to the Chabad yeshivah system in Israel. Over the following years, I attended many more farbrengens with the Rebbe. And all of this began with just a few summers at camp.

Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Telsner served as a Chabad emissary in London for 33 years, working in the field of adult education and as rabbi of the Finchley Central Synagogue. In 2007, he moved to Melbourne, Australia, where he serves as the community dayan. He was interviewed in June 2014.

A Call To Action

People all over the world are reflecting on the great inspiration the Rebbe has given everyone of us. It is important that these feelings be translated into action. The Rebbe's slogan is "The main thing is the deed." In this column we present suggestions from the Rebbe's Mitzvot Campaigns we can do to complete the Rebbe's work of bringing about the coming of Moshiach.

Summer Camp: The Rebbe has always emphasized the impact that a summer in a Jewish day camp can have on a child, specifically a camp where time is set aside for Torah study. Call your local Chabad-Lubavitch Center now to find out about enrolling your child. If you do not have camp-age children, help provide a scholarship for a child who would not otherwise be able to attend camp.

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

PEACE IN THE HOME

Translated from letters of the Rebbe

21 Marcheshvan, 5711 (1951)

It gave me pleasure to hear that you have begun to involve yourself in the subject of Family Purity, which as a result of our many transgressions has been so neglected and abandoned; moreover as a result of misplaced embarrassment there are pious, G-d fearing Jews who are ashamed to talk about this.

How true are the words of my father-in-law that the evil inclination is called "the smart one," because it clothes itself in garments that suit each individual respectively, to make him lose his sensibilities.

As he said in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "The evil inclination is called the animal soul, not because it is necessarily a senseless animal, but because oft times it is a fox, the most shrewd of animals, and one needs great wisdom to understand its tricks. And sometimes it clothes itself in the guise of a righteous, upright, humble person of sterling character. In each individual the animal soul is in accordance with his specific essence."

Thus we see clearly in the case at hand, being that the characteristic of shame is one of the three characteristics of the Jewish people who are compassionate, bashful and kind.

The evil inclination makes use of this trait to hold back vital talk that affects the happiness of husband and wife and their children thereafter until the end of time....

7 Marcheshvan, 5721 (1961)

In answer to your letter in which you write of the relationship between husband and wife, etc., and fitting with the ruling of our Sages about making peace between husband and wife which is from those things that a person reaps the fruits in this world, and the principle remains for the world to come, it is understood that all effort is worthwhile.

It is also understood that in matters such as this it is not possible to set rules because it depends on the personality traits of the

husband and the wife, as well as the condition of the environment in which they find themselves.

However, it is certain that every person has the possibility to exert influence in this matter, with proper thought and consideration for the appropriate method that suits this particular person....

It should not be at all difficult to discuss this with heartfelt feelings, since the subject applies to them directly and to the future generations of their children.

The common factor that is beneficial to all cases such as this is along the lines of what is brought down in Avot d'Reb Natan, chapter 12, about the conduct of Aaron, lover of peace....

If the occupation of the above mentioned couple permits, it is sensible to say that a trip for several weeks of vacation, spent together in a manner of a second "honeymoon" would rectify the entire situation.

28 Menachem Av, 5711 (1951)

.... As I have told you several times, and I repeat again, that you must put the greatest possible efforts into the matter of peace in your home -- between you and your wife -- as my saintly father-in-law has agreed to your marriage....

The saying of our Sages that "A woman's tears are readily found" is well known. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you to be the forebearer, particularly in worldly matters.

If our Sages have expounded on the great virtue of peace in the home at all times, how much more so it is on the eve of Shabbat -- and we, including all of Israel, are now past midday on Shabbat ever -- the end of the Diaspora is close at hand as is the coming of our righteous Moshiach.

It is understood that the greatest concealment (of G-dliness) prevails in relationship to (lack of) peace in the home.

It is known how great peace is, and the ways of the entire Torah are ways and pathways of tranquility and peace; particularly during this last exile which came about as a result of lack of peace.

With the approach of the end of the Exile, the resistance of the forces opposed to holiness increase so as to hold back peace in the world at large and specifically between husband and wife here below who reflect their spiritual counterparts Above.

However, "the load is according to the camel," and certainly the ability to withstand the challenge is given to you.

was destroyed because of Israel's sins which aroused Divine anger. Nevertheless, though the visible aspect of this anger was outright punishment, its ultimate motivation was G-d's intense love of His people. It was precisely this love that caused Him such distress when His children sinne d. If there were no such love, their conduct would be of no consequence to Him.

(Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi)

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 Shabbat, the Sabbath before Tisha B'Av, is called Shabbat Chazon. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev used to note that the name comes from the word machaze, meaning "vision," for

"on that day everyone is shown the future Holy Temple."

The purpose of this vision is to inspire and encourage a Jew: having caught a glimpse of the Third Holy Temple in its heavenly perfection, all that is left for him to do is to bring it down to this world.

Although not everyone actually sees the Third Holy Temple, everyone is intrinsically affected by it. This is similar to the following episode from the Book of Daniel: "And I Daniel alone saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them..."

Our Sages ask why a dread fell upon the men with Daniel if they had not actually witnessed the vision.

They answer: "Though they did not see it, their heavenly soul saw it."

In the same way, on Shabbat Chazon, the soul sees the future Sanctuary; moreover, this perception leaves an impression on the individual, even on his body.

Sunday, Tisha B'Av, is a fast day. On that day we mourn the destruction of the First and Second Holy Temples and other devastating events that took place on that date.

Four years ago, the Rebbe spoke about the comment of our Sages that Tisha B'Av is the birthday of Moshiach. The Rebbe explained that this is true because the moment the destruction began, the potential for the Redemption also began. And, since Moshiach was "born" on Tisha B'Av, his mazal is stronger and shines brighter on that day.

May we celebrate in actuality the birthday of Moshiach this Tisha B'Av at which time we will be reunited with the Rebbe who will lead us all together to the Complete and Final Redemption.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה'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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