בס"ד

L'Chaim

1927

27 Sivan, 5786

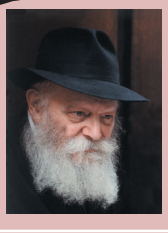
June 12, 2026

The Weekly Publication for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תוך ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

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



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

This week's Torah portion, Shelach, relates the story of the spies sent by Moses to investigate the Holy Land which the Jewish people were to enter. They returned with a slanderous report, thus discouraging the people and weakening their faith. This led to the tragic consequences related in the portion.

Chasidism explains that the spies did not wish to enter the Land of Israel because they did not want to become involved with the materialism of the world. Throughout the duration of the Jewish people's stay in the desert, their food came from heaven (the manna); water they had from the miraculous "Well of Miriam"; they were sheltered by the Heavenly "Cloud of Glory." Thus, they did not wish to leave the desert to enter the Holy Land where they would have to engage in all normative activities for their daily existence.

The spies' motive may have been sincere, but it went counter to the Divine intent. G-d created the world in order to have a Divine abode in this physical world: man is to transform himself and the material world into a worthy abode for G-dliness. This is done by utilizing and interacting with every created substance for its Divinely intended purpose. That is why we were given the Torah and mitzvot (commandments), which enable us to achieve that goal. And that is our mission for the duration of the exile.

The Messianic era is the ultimate purpose of the creation. For then this physical world will demonstratably be a Divine abode, with G-d's Presence fully manifest and experienced. It will be a time of "neither famine nor war, neither envy nor strife, because good will emanate in abundance and all delightful things will be accessible like dust. The singular preoccupation of the entire world will be to know G-d. The Israelites, therefore, will be great sages and know the hidden matters, attaining knowledge of their Creator to the full extent of human capacity, as it is said: "The earth shall be full with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9) (Hilchot Melachim 12:5).

This ultimate perfection of the Messianic era and the time of the Resurrection of the Dead depend on our actions and service of G-d throughout the duration of the exile. The sin of the spies was that they tried to circumvent the process of refining of the physical world.

Mundane entanglements, may be tiresome for one who aspires to spiritual heights. They are, however, an integral part of the Divine plan, and as Chasidism explains: "The ultimate intent of the descent and exile is to prepare for an immense ascent when the light of G-d will radiate in a manifest way!"

From Living with Moshiach by Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet, adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

The Light That Shines Stronger Every Day

This Thursday marks Gimmel Tammuz, the third day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz. Thirty-two years have passed since we last saw the Rebbe physically, yet his influence and impact continue to grow. For many, the date evokes feelings of connection, reflection, and renewed commitment.

One of the central themes throughout the Rebbe's teachings is that the Torah provides guidance for every moment in time. On an even deeper level, the events associated with a particular day reveal the unique energy and message embedded within it.

Two significant events in Jewish history are associated with Gimmel Tammuz, and the Rebbe often spoke about both of them.

The first took place in the days of Joshua. As the people of Israel were in the process of conquering the land that G-d had promised them, daylight was running out before the task was complete. At Joshua's request, the sun stood still, allowing them to finish the work entrusted to them by G-d. The miracle was not an end in itself; it served a purpose. When the mission was unfinished, Heaven granted more time and more light.

The second event occurred on Gimmel Tammuz 5687 (1927). After Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, was arrested by the Soviet authorities for his courageous efforts to preserve Jewish life under communist rule, his death sentence was commuted to exile on this day. The Rebbe explained that this marked the beginning of a process that would ultimately lead to an unprecedented resurgence of Torah and Jewish life.

Although separated by thousands of years, these two events share a striking theme. In both cases, a mission that appeared to be facing an impossible obstacle was given new life. In Joshua's time, more daylight was granted so the task could be completed. In 1927, what appeared to be a monumental threat to Jewish life under Soviet oppression became the beginning of a remarkable revival.

This lesson remains deeply relevant. The Rebbe's teachings, vision, and directives continue to inspire people across the globe, both Jewish and non-Jewish alike. From Chabad centers on every continent to individuals discovering greater meaning, purpose, and responsibility, the impact continues to expand in ways few could have imagined.

In a very real sense, the sun has not set. The light continues to shine, and the mission continues to advance.

Perhaps that is the most enduring lesson of this day. Gimmel Tammuz reminds us that when a mission is rooted in truth and holiness, its light continues to shine an its impact continues to grow. May we be inspired by the Rebbe's vision, his faith in every human being, and his unwavering belief that each of us has the ability to bring more light, purpose, kindness, and G-dliness into the world. And may we merit to see the complete redemption speedily in our days, now.

SLICE OF LIFE

The Man Who Flew Over Mount Sinai



Mordechai Gorelik is an engineer and architect who resides in Nachalat Har Chabad, Israel.

I was born in 1944 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. We managed to maintain a chasidic way of life and to observe every detail of Jewish law, despite the many difficulties we faced in the Soviet Union. The school system made keeping Shabbat particularly difficult and my father spent several years in Siberian exile, on account of his role in helping Chabad chasidim smuggle across the border. When I came of age, to avoid the additional challenges of military service, it was decided that I would instead attend university, and since an artistic streak ran in our family, I studied architecture.

About three years after I completed my studies and got married, in 1971, the government granted us exit visas. My wife and I left for Israel, where I eventually found a job working as an architect for the Ashkelon municipality.

In 1975, a little over a year after the Yom Kippur War, a request came from the Ministry of Defense to the municipality. In Ashkelon there lived the widow of an air squadron commander who had fallen in Sinai during the war, leaving her with four small children. The ministry had allocated funds to expand her small single-story home and asked us to assist with planning and construction.

While working on the project, I frequently met with this widow, an extraordinary woman who was dealing heroically with a very difficult situation. Among other things, she told me that her husband had been an avid photographer, taking pictures whenever he could. The Phantom fighter jets then used by the Israeli Air Force had no cameras, so he would take photos from the cockpit. Some of his photographs adorned the walls of her living room, but some two-thousand of them were in storage.

Interestingly, the Israeli army used some of those photographs in planning "Operation Thunderbolt," the 1976 rescue of the passengers of an Air France flight that had been hijacked to Entebbe, Uganda. When Uganda was still friendly with Israel, the family had spent four years there while the husband trained local air force pilots, and he also took many photos of the very airport where the hostages were later held.

After the extension on her home was completed, we stayed in touch, and I would often speak to her about the Rebbe. Before the Tishrei holidays of 1977, I mentioned that my wife, our infant daughter, and I would be spending the month with the Rebbe. Something struck a chord within her and she immediately said, "I want to write a New Year's greeting to the Rebbe. The children will write too. We love him and want to send a gift."

The gift she chose was one of the photographs from her living room. While flying over the Sinai desert, her late husband had taken the photograph of a mountain claimed by some scholars to be Mount Sinai. I came to her house, and she gave me the picture, beautifully wrapped, together with her letter and the heartfelt letters and drawings her children had made for the Rebbe.

On arriving at 770, I delivered the package, and every few days I would check with Rabbi Binyomin Klein, one of the Rebbe's secretaries, whether the Rebbe had replied. But Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot all came and went and there was still no response. Then, on Simchat Torah, the Rebbe suffered a severe heart attack. As a result, I stopped asking for a response, of course, and we didn't have a private audience with the Rebbe before returning to Israel.

So I returned home without an answer, and since I had nothing for the widow, I didn't rush to call her. One day, the phone rang in my office. "Mordechai, come here right now," I heard her say urgently. Sensing the emotion in her voice, I asked what had happened, but she only repeated: "Come now!"

When I arrived at her home, I found her with red eyes from tears. "Mordechai," she reported excitedly, "we just received five letters from the Rebbe! One for me, and one for each of the children." She had three daughters and a son, who was only a baby when his father was killed.

"The Rebbe is a prophet like Moses!" she exclaimed. "There are things I never told anyone, only thought in my heart – and the Rebbe writes to me about them!"

In a long and remarkable letter, which was later published, the Rebbe encouraged her "to be strong in her trust in G-d, Who watches over each and every individual" and to take care of herself "both physically and spiritually." He blessed her that "from now on you know no pain nor distress, G-d forbid, but only true Jewish nachas from each of your children, and that you raise them to Torah, marriage, and good deeds."

What touched her most were the Rebbe's words, written with extraordinary sensitivity and empathy, about the importance of getting remarried. Prefacing with a kind of apology, the Rebbe wrote: "Although this may seem an intrusion into a private matter… my feeling and sense of responsibility tells me not to withhold my thoughts."

The Rebbe continued: "The pain and sorrow … of losing a husband and father of the family are clear and valid. Yet together with this, especially since G-d blessed you with children, which places upon you a sacred and pleasant mission – though at times a heavy one – regarding their education, it is also clear that you should try to arrange life in a normal manner, in all its aspects. I refer, simply put, to family life through marriage.

"Rather than, as many mistakenly think, hurting the soul of the beloved departed, the opposite is true: When the soul sees, from its place in the World of Truth, that the family life is being built in accordance with the Torah of Truth... this brings true satisfaction to the soul."

The Rebbe acknowledged the "inner struggle, and not an easy one" in making such a step: "But surely G-d, who creates and guides man, does not abandon him even in a situation that requires extra effort and special strength, and before placing a person in such a situation, He gives them all the powers and abilities needed to overcome it."

Regarding the children, the Rebbe added that "the younger they are when this is done, the easier it will be for them to adjust to a new presence in the home." He mentioned that he knew of several similar cases, "and when the widow worked to arrange her life in this way, after a short time she recognized that this was the right path for the children, for herself, and beyond that – for a full and happy life."

The Rebbe concluded his letter with his blessings for the new year. In a postscript, he thanked her for the "precious gift of the photograph taken by your late husband," even suggesting that a public exhibition of his photo collection be arranged. Her husband's photograph of the purported site of Mount Sinai, added the Rebbe, is one that "not only shows his aptitude for photography" but also reflect the choice of a subject that is of "heartfelt significance to every Jew – since all souls were present at Mount Sinai when the Torah was given."

Mordechai Gorelik was interviewed by Jewish Educational Media in his home in December of 2013.

etc.



Century After Frierdiker Rebbe's Arrest, Shluchim Gather in Petersburg

Rabbis and shluchim from across Russia and the former CIS countries gathered in S. Petersburg for a regional convention aimed at strengthening their work on behalf of Yiddishkeit. The convention opened at the Grand Choral Synagogue of S. Petersburg, hosted by Rabbi Menachem Mendel Pewzner, rov and shliach of the city, and organized by Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, director-general of the local Jewish community.

A central highlight of the conference was the gathering led by Rabbi Berel Lazar, Chief Rabbi of Russia, who guides and supports the country's network of rabbonim and shluchim throughout the year.

A particularly significant stop occurred on 15 Sivan, when participants visited the apartment from which the Previous Rebbe was taken to prison for his efforts to spread Yiddishkeit. The visit coincides with the beginning of the centennial year of the Previous Rebbe's liberation from that imprisonment.

ETHICS: CHAPTER 3

He would also say: Beloved is man, for he was created in the image [of G-d]; it is a sign of even greater love that it has been made known to him that he was created in the image, as it says, "For in the image of G-d, He made man" (Genesis 9:6).

Beloved are Israel, for they are called children of G-d; it is a sign of even greater love that it has been made known to them that they are called children of G-d, as it is stated: "You are children of the L-rd your G-d" (Deuteronomy 14:1).

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

By the Grace of G-d
3rd of Tammuz, 5730
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Mr.
London, N.W. 11, England
Greeting and Blessing:

After not hearing from you for a long time, I received your letter.

In order of its contents, I was pleased to receive the good news that your son is attending the Yeshivah ... and also the news about your other children. I reiterate my prayerful wishes, when you and your wife were here, that you should both together bring up your children to a life of Torah, chuppah and good deeds, in good health and happy circumstances.

I was pleased to receive good reports from visitors who came here for Shavuos, and also the reports I receive from London via correspondence, about the Lubavitch activities in London, especially about your own participation in them. And although you write that you had hoped to gain more new students then have been enrolled so far, I am hopeful that inasmuch as there is still time before the beginning of the new school year, the efforts to increase the enrollment will yet be crowned with further hatzlocho. The zechus horabim is on your side.

Especially as we have now entered the month of Tammuz, highlighted by the Chag HaGeula of the 12th-13th of this month, which is directly related to the dedicated activities of my father-in-law of saintly memory in the area of chinuch, without compromise. You surely know the history and background of these auspicious days, which are auspicious for all those who are active in this field, in the spirit of my father-in-law.

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in all above, including also about your personal affairs and parnosso. And may this month, which is called the "Month of Geula" by both Chassidim and many non-Chassidim, bring you, in the midst of all our people, true geulo from all difficulties and obstacles, so as to go from strength to strength in all good things, with joy and gladness of heart.

With blessing, from the Galus [exile] with Divine mercy."

Excerpt from a letter dated Nissan 11, 5716 (March 23, 1956)

From the time that I was a child attending cheder, and even before, there began to take form in my mind a picture of the future redemption—the redemption of Israel from its last exile, a redemption such as would explain the suffering, the decrees and the massacres of galut...

By the Grace of G-d
4th of Adar Sheni, 5744 [March 8, 1984]
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 5th of Adar Bais, with the enclosure. Many thanks for the good news it contained about the outcome of your eleven years old son ----------'s proud stance in regard to Shemiras Shabbos, which has so impressed all the members of the Board.

The above is certainly in the true spirit of Purim, as we read in the Megillah that "Mordecai the Jew" and the "people of Mordecai" "would not bend their knees nor bow down" before anyone or anything which challenged their Yiddishkeit, even though the Jews were "dispersed and scattered among the nations," a small minority. However, it was precisely this dignified stance that eventually brought about the complete reversal from sadness to gladness and from fasting to feasting, so that for all Jews there was "Light, Joy, Gladness and Honor."

Receipt is enclosed for your Tzedoko, and may the Zechus of it stand you and all yours, especially to continue to have true Yiddish and Chasidishe Nachas from each and all of your offspring, in good health and happy circumstances.

Wishing you and all your family a joyous and inspiring Purim,

With blessing,

P.S. I have just received the good news about the printing of the holy Tanya, thanks largely to your personal efforts and generosity in the funding of same. May the Zechus of it stand you and all yours in good stead for a growing measure of generous Divine blessings.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

This is the actual time of the "footsteps of Moshiach."

It is therefore imperative for every Jew to seek his fellow's welfare -- whether old or young -- to inspire the other to return, so that he will not fall out -- G-d forbid -- of the community of Israel who will shortly be privileged, with G-d's help, to experience complete redemption.

(The Previous Rebbe)

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

The third chapter of Pirkei Avot. In this chapter we read, "Rabbi Elazar of Bartota said, 'Give Him what is His, for you and all that is yours is His.'"

Rabbi Elazar is telling us here that we should remember that everything we have comes from G-d. This thought should be uppermost in our minds, especially in the realm of giving charity.

The Rebbe offers a beautiful commentary on Rabbi Elazar's teaching and explains that reflecting the true owner of the money should come only after the charity is given. Of course, when one gives charity, it has to be done in accordance with Jewish law; it must be one's own money, not money acquired in a dishonest manner. But the fact that it is ultimately G-d's money should not be considered until charity has already been disbursed. Why is this?

When a poor person stands in front of you, you must give him the charity immediately. For, it is possible that the person is in dire straits, and if you wait until you have considered and contemplated the mitzva - in all its implications, ramifications, laws and stipulations - the poor person could, G-d forbid, starve to death! Therefore, the consideration that everything truly belongs to Him, to G-d, should come only after you have given the poor individual what he requires.

"For you and what is yours is His" - a person should not object, "It's true that everything is His, but I should also get a pat on the back, since I am giving this charity of my own free will." Rabbi Elazar reminds us that not only does everything that we have belong to Him, but we, too, belong to Him.

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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In the year 1812 Napoleon stood at the pinnacle of his career. He had successfully swept through Europe and his conquests were the conversation of kings and peasants alike.

Finally, his campaign led him to the gates of Russia and the vast, primal giant lay before him. In Russia he would meet a double foe, the huge armies of the Tzar and perhaps, a more dangerous and formidable enemy, the vicious frigid winds and snows.

Opinions of the Emperor were divided: the so-called "enlightened" Jews looked forward to his victory with high hopes for the emancipation of the Jews. The Torah-faithful looked with fear and suspicion upon the man who was regarded as a danger to the survival of their way of life.

In his sweep eastward, Napoleon passed through the town of Volozhin where the tzadik Reb Chaim lived. The town was deserted, the wealthy gentile inhabitants having fled before the approaching troops. Only the Jews remained. Napoleon sent his officers through the town to locate and appropriate lodgings.

Since the finer houses were tightly locked and barred, they made their way into the Jewish quarter.

One of the officers spotted a light in one of the buildings, which, unbeknownst to him, was a study hall. When he entered, he saw a man sitting by the light of a candle, leaning over a large tome, deeply engrossed in his studies.

The officer addressed the man in German: "We have heard very amazing things about the rabbi of your town. The Emperor Napoleon wishes to meet him."

"Reb Chaim is here, sitting before your Excellency," replied Reb Chaim. "However, I do not perform any wonders, I merely spend my time studying our Torah."

The soldier listened politely, but then answered in a stern tone, "Remain here until the Emperor summons you, or else you will pay the consequences."

Not long after, Reb Chaim was escorted to the house where Napoleon had set up command. The Emperor entered and engaged Reb Chaim in conversation: "I do not believe that you are any kind of a miracle worker, but I do believe that you are a man of rare wisdom and insight. On that basis I would like to have your opinion as to how my campaign in Russia will end. What will be the result of my advance into Russia?"

Napoleon could see in Reb Chaim's eyes a distinct unwillingness to respond. Who could know the wrath that could fall upon him? Napoleon reassured him: "Please, speak your mind freely, without fear."

Reb Chaim looked at the Emperor and replied, "Your Majesty, we Jews fear only G-d, for it is His hand that directs the entire world, even the ways of worldly kings. I will answer your question with a story: There was once a nobleman who traveled on a journey in a great carriage pulled by four strong horses.

Suddenly, one of the horses fell in the mud. In his desperate effort to stand, he pulled the other horses down into the mud, and with them, the carriage, driver, and passengers.

"A moment later a peasant farmer happened by in his cart pulled by three skinny horses. When these horses saw the other horses struggling and neighing in the deep mud, they panicked and would have also slipped into the mire, but the farmer quickly whipped them and they righted themselves.

"The nobleman had been watching the whole scene and he cried from his carriage, 'Why is it that your skinny nags pulled your wagon out of the mud, whereas my strong horses are unable to pull out my carriage?'

"'If your Excellency will forgive my asking, where did you get your horses?'

"'Why these are the finest horses money can buy. One is an Arabian, one is a Persian, one is a pedigreed Hungarian and the fourth is from a famous Russian stable.'

"'Well, that explains it. You see, your horses all come from a different part of the world and don't feel any connection to one another. My horses, on the other hand, are just plain horses. But they come from the same family and the same stable, so they're like brothers. When I whip one, the others jump to his side.'

"Sire," continued Reb Chaim, "your army is great and vast, composed of soldiers from many different lands. Princes and kings from the world over have joined your forces. The Tzar's army is nothing by comparison. They lack the weaponry, the fine uniforms and training your soldiers have. The difference is that they are all from one people and one land and their loyalty is entirely to the Tzar and the Motherland."

Reb Chaim had made his point in the gentlest, but clearest way. Napoleon had new food for thought, but the thoughts were disconcerting. The truth of Reb Chaim's words were soon borne out in the terrible, humiliating defeat which Napoleon's troops suffered in Russia, a defeat from which the Emperor never recovered.

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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THOUGHTS THAT COUNT
On the Weekly Torah Portion

And what the land is...where there are trees or not (Num. 13:20)

When the Canaanites living in the Land of Israel heard that the Jews had left Egypt and were on their way, they uprooted and destroyed all the fruit trees in the land so that the Jews would not benefit from them. This was one of the things the spies were sent to investigate. *(Midrash Rabba)*

And G-d spoke to Moses saying: Send out some men to spy out the land of Canaan (Num. 13:1, 2)

According to Rashi, "send out" means "send according to how you see fit." The Hebrew word for send - shelach - implies a sense of mission and purpose. Every Jew is entrusted with a Divine mission to transform his surroundings into a "Land of Israel," by bringing the light of Torah and mitzvot to even the most remote and isolated locations. This mission, moreover, must be accomplished "according to how we see fit." G-d has given man intelligence to be utilized to that end. *(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

That you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of G-d (Num. 15:39)

Why do we need a large tallit (prayer shawl) to pray if we can remember the commandments by looking at the tzitzit, the fringes which are already attached to our tallit katan, the four-cornered undergarment worn under the clothes? A tallit totally envelopes the individual and symbolizes that which cannot be understood or encompassed by the human mind. It reminds us that the 613 mitzvot (commandments) of the Torah stem from a source far greater than mere human understanding. (Likutei Sichot)



8:09 PM *Candle Lighting Time*
NY Metro Area
27 Sivan // June 12
Torah Portion *Shelach*
Blessing of the New Month of Tammuz
Ethics: Ch 3
Shabbat ends 9:18 PM