Weekly Publication
News and Views on the Redemption

1045

B"H



Terumah
Parshat Shekalim
Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5785
February 28, 2025

	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends
Brooklyn	5:28	6:28
Chicago	5:20	6:23
Cincinnati	6:10	7:11
Los Angeles	5:31	6:27
Miami	6:04	6:57
Montreal	5:22	6:26
Philadelphia	5:34	6:33

Long Live the Rebbe King
Moshiach Forever and Ever!

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Published By:
Chabad World Center to Greet Moshiach

Spiritual Folly

In this week's Torah Portion, we find G-d's commandment to the Jewish people to contribute to the construction of the Mishkan, the portable Sanctuary in the desert.

The Midrash states, "When the Jewish nation said *naaseh* – 'we shall do,' before *nishma* – 'we shall listen,' G-d said, 'They shall take for Me an offering.'"

What was the connection between their enthusiastic acceptance of the Torah — mentioned at the end of last week's parsha — and G-d's commandment to contribute to the building of the Mishkan?

Inspiration comes often to each and every one of us. The question is: What can we do to make the inspiration endure? When the Jewish people expressed such exuberant acceptance of the Torah, it was necessary for them to quickly translate their excitement into something concrete. The Midrash's approach here is simple: Take your life and turn it into a sanctuary for G-d.

This concept is elaborated on in a Chassidic discourse entitled *Basi L'Gani,* which the previous Rebbe issued to be studied on the day of his passing. Since 1950, the Rebbe has devoted at least one discourse per year elucidating the landmark discourse of his predecessor.

One of the central themes of these discourses is that there are two forms of folly. There is a median level of rational behavior and logic. Deviating in any direction from this mean is called *shtus* – folly in Hebrew. Deviating below the line of normality is referred to as *Shtus D'Klipa*, or negative folly, or that which is generally associated with immoral behavior. A positive form of foolishness is when a person goes beyond the limits of their rational mind to do good. This is called folly *Shtus D'kedusha* – holy folly.

At Sinai, the Jewish people were under the "spell" of G-d's unprecedented revelation. Our Sages tell us that G-d covered them with the mountain, and threatened to bury them if they did not accept the Torah. Chassidic thought explains that this is a metaphor for the overwhelming G-dly love that was showered upon them, and which smothered them to such an extent that they could not possibly refuse to unconditionally embrace all of the Torah. G-d's passionate love for them elicited a reciprocal feeling of love for G-d and His Torah, which transcended the bounds of logic — *Shtus D'kedusha* – holy folly.

This clearly was not good enough. There were two dangers that had to be addressed: The first is that when the mountain (read: G-d's passionate love for them) were to cease hovering over them, their enthusiasm would fizzle out. The second, and, perhaps an even greater danger, was that they might take their supra-rational love and the impulsive behavior it would engender and channel it away from a *Shtus D'kedusha* and convert it into *Shtus D'Klipa* – from holy folly to its negative counterpart.

In order to forestall these two potential problems, G-d instructs them to contribute towards the construction of the Mishkan. First, as stated above, it gave them an opportunity to channel their passion into concrete action, so that the energy would not dissipate. Secondly, it reinforced the idea that their supra-rational passion should remain above the line, and not be diverted into irrational and negative impulsiveness.

The Chassidic classic Tanya teaches us that the future Messianic Age is the time when the spiritual effects of the Sinai experience will become permanent, and will permeate the entire world.

In recent years, due to all of the incredible changes that have occurred, both positive and negative, the Jewish people have been inspired with the realization that Moshiach's coming is imminent. The miracles that we have witnessed have left us awestruck and profoundly moved. However, all of this does not suffice. We must take this inspiration and translate it into concrete action. By doing one more Mitzvah, we will succeed in internalizing that inspiration, perpetuate it, and hasten the process of Redemption. ■

Miracle in the Mail

Yishai Ben-Rachamim was born and raised in the Galilean settlement of Yavniel, located near the holy city of Tiberias.

"We were married in 1980," recalls Yishai. "However, to our great regret, months and years passed, and we still hadn't merited having children. After four years of marriage, my wife and I began to be quite concerned that we might never become parents. This concern of ours intensified, in light of the fact that we had gone to prominent doctors for fertility examinations and treatments, and yet the results showed little or no hope of success. The doctors were unable to give a professional diagnosis for our situation. 'Everything is functioning normally,' they told us, and this just distressed us even more."

"Our primary physician, Dr. Blanca, told us that he saw no apparent cause that he could treat with conventional medicine. At that point, we turned to more spiritual channels.

"In the meantime, I began to learn about Chabad Chassidus. During my childhood, Chabad had not yet arrived in Yavniel, and my knowledge about the Rebbe and Chabad was a bit vague, primarily obtained from newspapers. In contrast, my wife, Shulamit, grew up and was educated in Safed, where she had quite a bit of exposure to Chabad through the local community."

"In the synagogue where I prayed, they brought in Chabad brochures. We heard about the spiritual salvations that took place with the Rebbe's blessings, and we decided to write to the Rebbe and request his blessing."

"The person who helped us was Rabbi Baruch Menachem Mendel Kumer from Kiryat Chabad in Safed. At the first time we wrote, we were certain that the Rebbe would give us a reply within a day or two. However, this was not the case. Months passed, and we had not received an answer.

"When we wrote a second time, we still failed to get a reply. Chassidim explained to us that we have already received our blessing, but this rationalization did not satisfy us. We obtained the phone number of the Rebbe's secretariat in 770, and I explained our plight to the secretary. He told me that the Rebbe chooses the right time to answer, and one can't get blessings by force. After he said that, we simply had to be patient. Nevertheless, he then suggested, 'If you want, write to the Rebbe a third time.' Many years had now passed; however we refused to yield to desperation, and we did not lose hope."

"One morning, my wife woke up in a state of great excitement. She told me that she had dreamt that night about the Rebbe, and when I heard this, it almost took my breath away. I too had dreamt about the Rebbe that same night! My wife said that in her dream, she saw the Rebbe in our home sitting in the living room, his face shining with a unique sparkle. She felt that the Rebbe was bestowing a sense of tranquility and hope that everything would be fine for us, and this difficult period in our lives would soon end. In my dream, I saw the Rebbe waving his hand. We felt that there was a special meaning to all of this; and it was not just some coincidence.

"When my wife returned home from work the following day, she passed by the mailbox, and to her shock, among the letters was one sent to us by the Rebbe. I was at work at the time when I received an urgent phone call from her. 'Yishai, you won't believe it. The Rebbe sent us a letter!' I never felt anything like I did on that day.

My wife was so overcome that she slipped on the steps on her way into the house. I asked her to wait until that evening, and we would open the letter together. What did the letter say? We didn't understand a thing."

"The next day, we met with Rabbi Kumer to get an explanation."

"The Rebbe had written as follows: **I confirm receipt of his letter, including a request for a blessing…, and it will be read at a befitting time at the gravesite of my holy and revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, of righteous memory, his soul rests in the hidden treasures of Heaven, may his merit protect us."**

"For me, these words were merely a riddle. I didn't understand what the Rebbe meant. However, Rabbi Kumer was positively ecstatic. 'You have the Rebbe's blessing. Remove all worry from your hearts,' he reassured us."

And so it was. That month, my wife went back to Dr. Blanca, who saw that we had already done all the possible examinations. He suggested that she fill a new

Moshiach in the Parshah



Three Pillars

In this week's Torah portion, we find the commandment, "And you shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst." Our sages say, "Any time [the Torah] says the words 'for Me,' it lasts forever." The question is how to understand this statement, in light of the fact that the Holy Temple no longer exists during exile.

One explanation is based on a verse in Ezekiel (11:16), "And I will become for them a minor sanctuary," which our sages say refers to all synagogues and houses of study. G-d dwells in all places where we gather to pray or study Torah. In this way, the Holy Temple is everlasting.

The verse in Parshat Terumah says, "I will dwell in them," not "I will dwell in it." Based on this, our sages say that it means "within each and every Jew." In other words, we are to make ourselves and our homes into a sanctuary for G-d. We must set aside a time and a place in our home for Torah study and prayer, and in this way, G-d will dwell in our midst constantly.

In the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, we found the three pillars on which the world stands: Torah (the Ark of the covenant); Divine service — the offerings and prayers; and acts of kindness — the "discreet chamber," where funds were quietly disbursed to the poor.

So, too, our personal Holy Temple must contain these three elements. We need to set time in our homes to study Torah, to pray, and to perform acts of kindness — by putting a few coins into a charity box, and inviting guests, etc. In this way, we hasten the revelation of the third Holy Temple, which will be eternal. ■

(The Rebbe, Likutei Sichot vol. 36, p. 123)

prescription of capsules, which my wife should take on a daily basis, although his pessimism was quite evident."

"There's no chance that you'll get pregnant during the coming year," he told her. But the reality proved otherwise… Within two months, the Rebbe's blessing had been realized, and we were given the good news. One can just imagine the tremendous joy that engulfed us at that moment. Our feelings were simply indescribable. This was a miracle above and beyond nature."

"When we came to Dr. Blanca to inform him that my wife was going to have a baby, he was positively stunned. He said that since he had given up on all the pills, tests, and other treatments, he had decided to follow another course. The capsules he had given my wife were only vitamins… He didn't expect that they would bring about any change in the situation."

"Nine months later, we welcomed the arrival of our first child, a sweet and beautiful baby girl, born through a totally normal and easy birth. We gave her the name Rachel – after our matriarch Rachel. Today, Rachel is married, has completed her degree in economics and business administration, and she is also the mother of three wonderful girls – our granddaughters. Later, we were blessed with the birth of another daughter."

"They too are quite aware that without the Rebbe's blessing, who knows if we ever would have been privileged to have them…"

"Naturally, ever since then, our family has given a place of honor to the Rebbe and Chabad Chassidus as a sign of our ever-growing appreciation and admiration." ■

A Joyous Heart



Optimistic people may have much healthier hearts. A new analysis published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* suggests that individuals who are content with their lives and have a higher sense of well-being are less likely to develop heart diseases or strokes.

The study reviewed data from over 120,000 participants in the UK Biobank, assessing well-being based on factors like family satisfaction, friendships, health, finances, and general happiness. The research found that people with higher well-being had a significantly lower risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, including coronary artery disease, stroke, heart failure, and a heart attack.

Further analysis suggested that individuals with higher well-being tended to adopt healthier lifestyles, and had lower inflammatory markers, supporting a potential cause-and-effect relationship between well-being and reduced cardiovascular risk. These findings underscore the profound connection between emotional and psychological health and physical well-being

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We are now entering the Hebrew month of Adar, and our sages say, "When Adar enters, joy increases."

Adar is a happy month, not only because the Jews experienced a miraculous salvation during that month, on the holiday of Purim. There are other months in which Jews experienced salvation, yet are not significantly known for those months being happy ones. What makes Adar so happy is the transformation. It was initially considered an inauspicious time, which is why Haman selected a day within it to carry out his evil plot. But at the last minute, G-d intervened and turned over his plan. Instead of murdering the Jews, the Jews turned on Haman and his ilk.

There's no trick to being happy when things are going well. An optimist is one who is able to maintain a positive attitude even when things are not going so well — under conditions that other people typically would fall prey to anxiety and stress.

"One who has a cheerful heart has a continuous feast" (Proverbs 15:15). We all know that feasting on too much of the wrong things leads to heart disease. We can have the pleasures of a feast without the calories and high cholesterol. Make joy a constant part of your life, and invite others to share in the benefits!

The Baal Shem Tov, founder of the Chassidic movement, made serving G-d with joy into a core principle. Now we know that joy does not only have spiritual benefits, it has physical benefits as well.

In 1988, the Lubavitcher Rebbe wondered at what more could possibly be done to hasten the Redemption. His conclusion was, "What has not yet been done to bring Moshiach is the proper service of joy for the purpose of bringing Moshiach. Joy is known to break all boundaries, including the boundaries of exile; joy also has a special quality that brings the Geula." The Rebbe clarified that he did not mean only to do mitzvos joyously, but rather "Joy in and of itself, pure joy, the service of joy for the purpose of bringing Moshiach. Joy will bring Moshiach." ■

How do we know that all Jews will be redeemed in the final Redemption?

Rabbi Schneur Zalmen of Liadi, the founder of the Chabad Chassidic movement, rules: "Each and every Jew will certainly do Teshuvah in the end, in one incarnation or another, since no Jew will be lost." What is the meaning of this promise that every Jew will eventually do Teshuvah?

One aspect of this promise is that when G-d gave the Torah on Mount Sinai, He chose each and every Jew to be part of His nation. G-d made a connection between Himself and the Jewish People, and as explained in the teachings of Chassidism, this connection is even stronger than the natural bond between a father and a son.

Another aspect is that the Jewish People also bonded to G-d at Mount Sinai. The Jews chose to attach themselves to G-d as His servants. On the first verse of the Ten Commandments, "I am G-d your G-d Who took you out of the Land of Egypt," Rashi comments: "By taking you out of Egypt, this is sufficient for you to become subjugated to me." At Mount Sinai, not only did G-d choose the Jewish people, but they also chose G-d, and committed themselves to following His will and remaining loyal to Him, despite hardships and challenges.

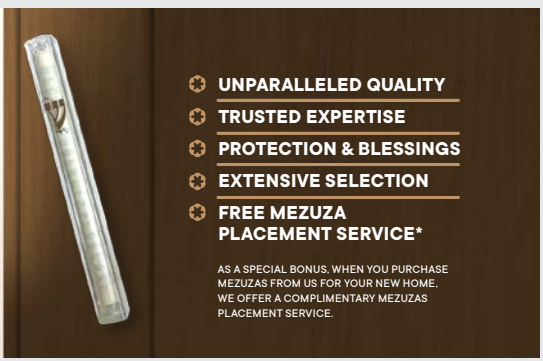
All of us were partners to this agreement, as the Midrash relates that the souls of the entire Jewish nation, including all those who would ever be born, were present at Mount Sinai. Therefore, every Jew, without exception, "wants to be part of the Jewish people, and wants to fulfill all the mitzvot and avoid all the *aveirot*." A Jew who acts differently has only temporarily fallen prey to his *yetzer hara*, his evil inclination, but this does not represent his true will or desire.

Therefore, even in the event that a Jew denies his relationship with G-d, he is unable to escape from it. Sooner or later, "in one incarnation or another," it will reveal itself. The Jew will return in complete Teshuvah, and will thus merit the Redemption, together with the entire Jewish people. ■

(Hilchos Talmud Torah, 4:3. Tanya, chapter 39. Likutei Sichos vol. 11, p. 1).

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