

Living Jewish



Tell your Children

The Treasure Room

Yishaya Shlomo, a chassid of the saintly Rabbi Yechiel Michil of Zlotchov, used to complain about his poverty to his Rebbe. The *tsaddik* always responded by encouraging him to have greater reliance on G-d. This response never quite soothed the chassid; he felt the Rebbe was pushing him off without getting involved. Once, when Shaya lamented on his economic straits another time, R. Michel told him to travel to Berdichev, and there to seek out a certain rich person and ask to stay in his house for a while. "Observe his conduct," said the *tsaddik*. "From this man you can learn what it means to genuinely trust in G-d."

Shaya borrowed some money and made the journey. The rich man welcomed him, and told the chassid he could stay for as long as he liked. Shaya settled in and obeyed the Rebbe's instructions.

His wealthy host's business involvements were extensive. Huge sums of money flowed through the house as deals were struck, merchandise was bought and sold, and debts were paid and collected. Shaya couldn't understand why the Rebbe sent him here. What could he learn from such a wealthy man that could apply to his life?

What amazed Shaya most about his host was how he gave *tsedakah*. He had never seen anything like it in his life. Not once did he ever turn down a person in need, and the amount of money that he gave away on a regular basis was enormous.

Finally, Shaya asked the rich man to speak to him privately. He then told him the "mission" upon which the Rebbe had sent him. "I've observed the high-level business matters you are involved in and the extraordinary deeds of kindness that you do," he continued, "but I must confess I am stymied in relation to what the Rebbe expected of me. How can a poor man like me learn from a rich man like you about total trust in the One above?"

His host burst into amicable laughter. "No doubt you've noticed," he said, "that whenever I have to pay out a significantly large sum of money, I retreat into a certain room and stay there all alone. What do you suppose is in that room?"



"I presume it is your 'treasure room,'" answered Shaya innocently. There you store your money and take however much you need whenever required."

"That's right!" the wealthy man approved delightedly. "That room is where my treasure is to be found. So how about you come there with me this one time?" Shaya followed his host into the room and his jaw dropped in surprise. The room contained a table, a chair, and four bare walls. That was all. "Yes," said the rich man, "in this room is hidden all my wealth." He went on to explain. "I have no reserves. Whenever I have to pay an obligation or donate a significant sum to *tsedakah*, I come here. I sit on the chair and plead and cry to G-d Al-mighty that he should rescue me. As you have seen for yourself, He never fails me."

While they were talking, a servant presented his master a bill for 1000 rubles that he had obligated himself to pay before nightfall. The wealthy man closed himself in the room alone for a while. Almost as soon as he emerged, a Jewish military officer came to the front door and asked to speak with him privately. He told that he was about to go off to war, so he had brought his life-savings of 10,000 rubles which he requested the rich man to hold for him and invest as he saw fit, and "keep 1,000 for yourself as payment for the responsibility."

"See how G-d's salvation can happen in an instant," the rich man said to his guest. "Go home and trust G-d completely. Don't worry about anything."

"But I don't have the money to get home with," whined Shaya plaintively.

"Aha! I see you still haven't learned anything," said his host, and gave him a generous 200 rubles for travel expenses.

Yishaya Shlomo set out on his way. Although he had been a guest for only a week, he realized that he was strongly affected. As he thought about the remarkable deeds of his host, he felt himself changing. His worries about his economic situation were being peeled away by the powerful new thoughts that were bubbling in their place. He felt a wave of simple trust in G-d coursing through him, and made a firm decision to flow with whatever Divine Providence had in store for him. At that moment, he felt as if a heavy burden had slipped off him.

Lost in thought, he looked up and saw two women being pulled in chains by armed guards. A number of children were running behind them and crying. He inquired and was told that the women were going to be thrown in prison; their husbands had failed to pay their debts to the lord of the village. He felt so sorry for them. Suddenly, he thrust out the 200 rubles that his wealthy acquaintance had provided him and paid the debts of the two suffering families. The women barely managed to thank him before he already continued on his journey.

Again he was without a kopeck to his name, but he had no complaints. Instead he basked in the joy of the big mitzvah he had been given the opportunity to do, and felt even more deeply committed to completely trusting in G-d.

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Shabbat Times

| | Candle Lighting | Motzei Shabbat |
|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Jerusalem | 5:30 | 6:41 |
| Tel Aviv | 5:45 | 6:42 |
| Haifa | 5:35 | 6:41 |
| Beer Sheva | 5:48 | 6:43 |
| New York | 5:55 | 6:53 |

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Every Second Matters

The first portion of the Five Books of Moses, Bereishit, gives us an account of the creation of the world, and concludes with the words, "And G-d finished on the seventh day the work which He had made."

How does this verse fit in with the prohibition against labor on the Sabbath? If G-d completed the creation of the world on the seventh day, does it not imply that some labor was done on that day too?

G-d's "Clock"

Rashi solves our problem by explaining that G-d's clock is more precise than our own. Human beings, who cannot measure time as accurately as G-d Himself, must cease from work several minutes before nightfall to make sure we do not violate Shabbat.

G-d, however, knows exactly when "the seventh day" begins, and He went on creating the world right up until the last moment. To us, whose vision is not so perfect, it would have appeared as if G-d ceased to work on Shabbat itself.

Every letter, word and sentence in the Torah is precise, and included in order to teach us something positive. What then are

we to conclude from the fact that G-d continued His labor right up until the very last possible second, something which we must be careful not to do?

Nothing Superfluous

We are taught by our Sages that "G-d created nothing superfluous in His world," including the creation of time itself.

Every organism, every object, and every minute has been created with a Divine purpose in mind, and must be fully utilized and not squandered. Even one second can make a difference.

Every person in the world is created with his own individual talents and abilities, and each of us is given the right circumstances in which we may use them to the fullest.

Tipping the Balance

At this time in history, the end of the sixth millennium since the creation of the world, we stand at the threshold of the Messianic Era.

We can counter the claims of a person who says that his actions hold no importance, as our exile is almost over and that only a few minutes remain.

He may ask: How can an insignificant individual possibly add to the accumulated good deeds of the generations who went before us, including our forefathers, Moses, the Prophets and the Sages of the Talmud, who were spiritually superior to us in every way?

The Torah, however, teaches us that the opposite is true. Every minute we are allotted is precious, and indeed, the whole of creation may hinge on a single second.

Even a tiny good deed can tip the balance and bring Moshiach now, the culmination of the entire creation.

Adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe. Shabbos Table, From our Sages and Moshiach Now! reprinted from LchaimWeekly.org - LYO / NYC

From our Sages

After the fair

It was the custom of most merchants years ago to obtain their goods by periodically attending a great fair where all kinds of merchandise were sold wholesale and in bulk. The merchants would take the large packages home, sort through the contents and then use them as they saw fit.

The month of Tishrei is similar to such a wholesale fair, during which we obtain huge portions of holiness and joy in doing mitzvot--enough to last us the whole year.

The only condition is that we actually open the bundles and use their contents. These bundles are opened up and used for the first time on Shabbat Bereishit.

(Lubavitcher Rebbe)

And G-d created man (Gen. 1:27)

Why doesn't the Torah state after the creation of man, "and it was good," as it does after all the other things created during the six days?

Every other creature was created com-

plete, with its nature and instincts ready to be applied to the world. Man, however, was created incomplete, and it is his purpose in life to perfect himself. Human beings are given free will and the responsibility for their own development and improvement. That is why it doesn't immediately state, "and it was good"--we must wait and see how man behaves before passing judgement.

(Klai Yakar)

And he put him into the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it (2:15)

In the "Seven Blessings" of the marriage ceremony, the bride and groom are blessed with the following: "Happy and joyous may you be, O loving companions, like the joy of your progenitor in the Garden of Eden many years ago."

May the young couple, just embarking on a life together, be as true and faithful to each other as Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, when they were as yet the only two people in the world.

(Otzarenu Hayashan)

A Limit to Self-Sacrifice?

Reb Yona Kahn of Poltava came from a frum family, though they were not chassidim. As a young yeshiva student, the local shochet Reb Pinke Rakshiker advised him to go learn in Lubavitch, where he studied diligently, especially the Chassidic discourses of the Rebbe Rashab. In 5696 (1936) he was appointed by the Previous Rebbe (then in Riga) to be in charge of all the underground branches of Tomchei Temimim (the Chabad yeshiva network) in Russia. Where each bochur should learn, the teachers, the fundraising — everything was on his shoulders. He was arrested on 19 Kislev 5708 (1947), and a short time later he passed away in prison.

Reb Mendel Futerfas was very involved in arranging the rescue of Lubavitcher chassidim from Russia after World War II using forged Polish passports. He once related: During the escape of Lubavitcher chassidim from Russia after the war, we were in the city Lvov and the work was very hard. Things were tense and I had no more strength left physically. In addition, I feared for my safety and the safety of my family. Because of the situation, I decided to leave with my family on the next train, together with the big group that was planned to depart to Poland.

I turned to my good friend Reb Yona Kahn and told him about my thoughts and my decision. Reb Yona listened and then said, "Look me in the eyes, Mendele, look at my eyes very well. Does that mean that mesirus nefesh (self-sacrifice) has a limit?" His words pierced my heart.

Reb Mendel ended up sending his family out, and he himself remained in Russia for another 17 years.

Chassidus page

Jewish Conduct in the Workplace

The Previous Rebbe related: After the seuda on Simchas Torah, it was the custom of my father, the Rebbe Rashab, to announce: "Now is the time for veYaakov halach ledarko ('and Yaakov took to the road'). After the service of Tishrei, Yidden hit the road and take the path of Torah and mitzvos throughout the entire year.

Setting Priorities

Reb Elye Abeler, a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash, was a businessman, and not particularly learned. One day the Rebbe told him: "Elye, I envy you! You travel to fairs, meet many people, and in the course of your business dealings, you share a Torah thought and inspire the folk around you to study nigleh and Chassidus. This arouses joy Above, and HaShem rewards such 'business deals' with the blessings of children, health and sustenance. The larger the fair, the more work there is, and the greater the livelihood earned."

In his early years, the Baal Shem Tov would travel from one Yiddisher township to the next, gather a crowd in the marketplace, and speak to them about ahavas Yisroel. Once, he explained his message with an analogy:

Reb Yaakov was expert in the entire Talmud, and thanks to his studious concentration, was able to recite fluently all of Rashi and Tosafos by heart. Once while engrossed in a weighty passage of Tosafos, his young son interrupted him to relate a clever thought. Though the thought was not profound relative to his father's level of scholarship, the father nevertheless stopped to listen.

Similarly, HaShem is occupied with lofty matters, to the point that the angels objected to His creating mortal man who is involved in mundane activities. Yet, when a Yid rises in the morning and hurries off to daven with a minyan, and then, in the midst of his workday, even though he is busy and preoccupied, he drops everything and runs to shul to daven Mincha, then listens to a class in Ein Yaakov and later shares it with his family, – HaShem then says to the angels: "You angels have no challenges. But just look how man, who unwillingly has the burden of livelihood, lives his life!" And so HaShem continues to pride himself before the angels with the conduct of a Yid.

Learning Before and During Work

The Rebbe describes how a Yid must go about his business. First thing in the morning must be the service of davening, followed by a session of learning, and only after being steeped in spirituality can he – unenthusiastically – go to work. At work he must be distinguishable as a Yid, thinking or saying words of Torah, and going about his business with the intention of serving HaShem.

The Rebbe made it clear that in order for a Yid to be capable of elevating the world through his work, it is imperative that he elevate himself through studying Torah before and during his work.

The Above and A Limit to Self-Sacrifice? reprinted from The Weekly Farbrengen by Merkaz Anash, on-line at TheWeeklyFarbrengen.com

The Treasure Room

Continued from page one:

While looking for lodgings, Shaya joined up with a traveling businessman. After a while his companion said to him, "You could do me a favor! I just came into a major inheritance and I have to split it with a relative of mine that lives in your town, in Zlotchov. If you would deliver his half to him, you will save me a lot of time and trouble." Shaya agreed readily.

As soon as he was back in Zlotchov, he enquired about the man to whom he was supposed to deliver the large amount of money, but was unable to find him. People insisted that no such person had ever lived there. The chassid felt confused. He decided to consult the Rebbe, R. Michel. When he was able to get in to see the tsaddik, Shaya told him all that had happened: what he had witnessed and learned at the rich man's house, how he had been privileged to rescue the two women from a terrible fate, and the mission the stranger had entrusted him with yet he seemed to be unable to fulfill.

"Please relax," smiled the Rebbe. "What everyone was telling you today is correct; the man to whom you were supposed to deliver the inheritance has never lived here. Not only that, the businessman you met who entrusted you with the money was not a flesh-and-blood human! He was an angel created by the great mitzvah you did of ransoming Jewish lives. You can keep the money in good conscience, for that was his intention. You earned it honestly! You should know," the tsaddik ended, "the Baal Shem Tov taught that it is impossible for a man who trusts absolutely in Heaven to be punished by Heaven. All that can be done is to take away some measure of his trust—that is the only form of punishment possible for a person with genuine trust."

Translated-adapted by Yrachmiel Tilles (and first published in Kfar Chabad Magazine - English) from Shemu V'tchi Nafshechem #9. Rabbi Tilles of Tsfat is a co-founder of ASCENT. His email list for stories is in its 24th year. To join the list a/o his WhatsApp group for Saturday night Audio, Video and Zoom stories, go to AscentOfSafed.com or WhatsApp +972-526-770-137.

Moshiach Now

In the Beginning

In the very beginning of the Torah, we learn about the creation of the world.

There it is stated, "And the spirit of G-d hovered over the surface of the waters." The Midrash explains that this "spirit" is "the spirit of King Moshiach."

From this we learn that G-d's objective in creating the world, mentioned in the Torah before the creation of man, is the Messianic Era.

We must yearn, therefore, for the complete fulfillment of the realization of G-d's Divine Plan.

(The Rebbe, Parshat Acharei, 5746 - 1986)

Human Interest

Akeda Shul in Lubavitch

When the Rebbe Rayatz (the Previous Rebbe) was 15 years old, his father the Rebbe Rashab brought him to the shul that stood at the historic Jewish cemetery in the Russian town of Lubavitch.

Interred alongside the shul are the 3rd and 4th Rebbes of Chabad-Lubavitch, the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash. It was built in the summer of 5626.

Before arriving at the shul, the Rebbe Rayatz went to the nearby river to toivel as a mikvah. Once in the shul, his father brought him to the Aron



Kodesh and opened it. "I am bringing my son today for an Akeda," the Rebbe Rashab said, alluding to the Akeda when Avrohom Avinu placed his son Yitzchok Avinu on an actual alter as told in the Torah.

"In the matter of the Akeda, there is binding and being bound," the Rebbe Rashab continued. "Avrohom Avinu bound his son Yitzchok so that there won't be any wrong (p'sul), Heaven forbid. I wish that this Akeda shall be as desired. I am making a covenant with you. From today, I will hand over to you the work of public affairs in material and spiritual matters."

From that day on, the shul was called by Chassidim, the Akeda Shul where many davened during the week, Shabbos and Yomim Tovim.

During the first World War, the Rebbe Rashab and chassidim relocated from Lubavitch. Non-Jewish locals destroyed and burned down the shul and the Ohel.

The shul has now been fully rebuilt for the use of visitors to the town. Part of the new floor was made of glass to show the original flooring under it.

Adapted from COLlive.com

Cooking Tip of the Week

Gluten-Free Almond Cookies: An easy sugar-free gluten-free cookie. I made 20 cookies with this recipe. One jar almond butter (approximately 300 grams); one cup stevia, Splenda or coconut sugar; and one large egg. Mix together (no mixer needed). Preheat oven to 180C. Make little balls of the dough (I used a cookie sheet and covered it with baking paper) Make an indentation on each ball and place a Holy Cacao chocolate nib in the middle. Sprinkle with Himalayan Salt, bake for 14 minutes and cool.

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Halacha Corner – Greeting a Mourner

The issur (prohibition) of she'ilas shalom (extending a greeting) to an avel (mourner) who lost a sibling, spouse, or child, is in effect until the shloshim (thirty days from the day of burial); for one who lost a parent, the issur is in effect for twelve months. Some poskim are lenient and say that the greetings we commonly use nowadays, such as "Good morning", or the like, are not considered she'ilas shalom. Therefore, if one meets a friend who is in mourning, instead of saying the traditional "Shalom aleichem", they should use a different form of greeting such as "Baruch haba" (Welcome).

It should be noted that some poskim say that even "Shalom aleichem" is permitted nowadays. On the other hand, other poskim disagree, and say one may not greet a mourner in any way at all, even if using words other than "Shalom aleichem". However, when one meets their father or mother the mitzvah of kibbud av va'eim (honoring one's father and mother) applies, and one may be lenient. The halachah is the same when meeting one's teacher, since the mitzvah of derech erez (showing respect) applies.

Rav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita, member of the Badatz of Crown Heights, One Minute Halacha, #407, reprinted from crownheightsconnect.com

Farbrengen

Question: When boys receive money as gifts upon their Bar Mitzva to whom should the money go? It seems to me that the money should either go to a savings account available later for education purposes or such, or should go to the parent(s) who spent money for the Bar Mitzvah expenses, such as a kiddush or a party. At the least this money should be part of a money management plan that will educate the 13 year old rather than be blown away upon immature desires. What do you say to a boy who says "It is my money, to do as I please"?

Answer: There is not one rule in that it depends on family dynamics, finances and factors unique to each family. However, after consulting several Rabbis and parents with experience in education, the below ideas provide direction.

The money can be divided in parts. A part can be given to the boy to buy something he would like. Kids are kids and they also want to feel happy. A part can be set aside to be used for the future. And/or, in consultation with the parents, used for something in the realm of kedusha, i.e. books, shofar, menorah, trip to 770 (with parental supervision) or other ideas. It also an opportunity to learn about giving maaser (tzedakah) on the money he receives.

Whether the money should be used to pay for the Bar Mitzvah party provided a variety of opinions. Some felt that the child should not pay. Other opinions were that, if necessary, given the parent's financial circumstances, up to 50% should go to pay for the party. According to Rabbi Namdar, Head Shliach of Sweden, the key is balance, i.e. that nobody should feel neglected and everyone should feel happy. In Chassidic terminology, lights in vessels. It is very individual and depends on the financial needs and dynamics of each family. However, for clarity, everything should be written down and agreed upon from the outset.

In regards it is "my money to do as I please", a 13 year old that talks like this to his parents is exhibiting an issue that's deeper than what to do with the money. This is an important issue that needs to be addressed. For the short term, when speaking with the child, focusing on negative will bring more negative. Say something such as, "yes, it was given to you in honor of your Bar Mitzvah and as parents we are here to help you." Have an open conversation of how to spend money where the child feels they have a voice and you can guide the child. When parents are emotionally regulated, confident and secure, the guidance will usually be accepted.

Aharon Schmidt - marriage, family & individual coaching. Video and telephone sessions available. For an appointment contact: coachingandcounseling1@gmail.com



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