Dear Family

Gut Shabbos

The Weekly Divrei Torah of Baruch Davidoff

דברי תורה על פרשת השבוע

✦ ✦ ✦

556 letters on the weekly parsha and Yomim Tovim

13 Jan 2016 – 29 Oct 2026 · 5776–5787

Arranged by parsha, then by year

Dedicated in honour of

Baruch Davidoff

לכבוד אבינו

who, week after week, sat down (usually on a Thursday night) and wrote to the whole family:
"Dear Family, I hope everyone is well."

Into each letter went a thought on the parsha, a story or teaching of the Rebbe, and every birthday, anniversary, birth, wedding and yahrzeit in the family, remembered by name.

These 556 letters, from 5776 to 5787, are gathered here so that his Torah and his love for the family can be read, reread, and passed on.

About this book

Each letter was placed under the parsha of the Shabbos on or after the day it was sent (UK time, diaspora reading schedule, computed with a Hebrew calendar). Letters written for a Shabbos that fell on Yom Tov are in the Yom Tov section. Letters that greet a Yom Tov during a regular week are listed under both. Each letter is labelled with the year of that Shabbos, secular and Hebrew, and keeps its family greetings exactly as written; quoted replies and signatures are removed.

Letters	**556**
Years	**11 (2016–2026 · 5776–5787)**
Parshiyos with at least one letter	**53 of 54**
Yom Tov and special-day letters	**80**
Mazal tov wishes indexed	**1108**
Yahrzeit mentions indexed	**208**

This week: Parshas Vayeira וירא · Shabbos 31 October 2026 · 20 Cheshvan 5787
11 letters on Vayeira, the latest being *HOPE AND EFFORT* (sent 29 Oct 2026).

Vezos Haberachah is read on Simchas Torah, so its letters are with Sukkos.

Contents

Bereishis · בראשית

Bereishis בראשית

2016 / 5777 — JACOB GOES ON HIS WAY 25
2017 / 5778 — THE HUG 27
2018 / 5779 — THE FOOLISH KING 30
2019 / 5780 — JOY CONTINUED 32
2020 / 5781 — THE LAND OF ISRAEL 34
2021 / 5782 — RESOLUTIONS AND RESOLVE 37
2022 / 5783 — THOUGHTFUL ACTION 39
2023 / 5784 — OUR BEAUTIFUL ERETZ YISRAEL 41
2024 / 5785 — SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH 44
2025 / 5786 — BOUNDLESS KINDNESS 46
2026 / 5787 — THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT 48

Noach נח

2016 / 5777 — 1,064,340,000,000,000,000 51
2017 / 5778 — BEGINNINGS 54
2018 / 5779 — TRUST (BITACHON) 57
2019 / 5780 — KNOWLEDGE ROM THE HEIGHTS AND THE DEPTHS 59
2020 / 5781 — THE VALUE OF EARNING A LIVING 61
2021 / 5782 — THE RAINBOW 63
2022 / 5783 — BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY 65
2023 / 5784 — THE POWER OF ACTION AND FAITH 67
2024 / 5785 — TO WORK OR NOT TO WORK? 69
2025 / 5786 — RECONCILING TURBULENT AND SERENE 72
2026 / 5787 — POWER OF THE WORD 74

Lech Lecha לך לך

2016 / 5777 — FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH CONFUSION 77
2017 / 5778 — THE PATH 79
2018 / 5779 — TRANQUILITY 81
2019 / 5780 — POWERUL SIMPLICITY 83
2020 / 5781 — SEPARATION 86
2021 / 5782 — HAIR CUTTING 89
2022 / 5783 — ANALYSING WORK 91
2023 / 5784 — HUSBANDS AND WIVES 94
2024 / 5785 — THE STARS 96
2025 / 5786 — A PARABLE 97
2026 / 5787 — TAKING CHARGE OF OUR DESTINY 99

Vayeira וירא

2016 / 5777 — ANGELS, PLANETS AND MOONS 102
2017 / 5778 — AGONISING 106
2018 / 5779 — BITACHON, YOSEF AND RAHEL 110
2019 / 5780 — CONGRUITY BETWEEN OUR INNER AND OUTER SELVES 113
2020 / 5781 — MARRIAGE FORMULA 115
2021 / 5782 — SWEET DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINED LOVE 117
2022 / 5783 — ESHES CHAYIL (WOMAN OF VALOUR) 120
2023 / 5784 — ADDRESSING DIFFICULTY WITH JOY 122
2024 / 5785 — DEVELOPING ENTHUSIASM 124
2025 / 5786 — EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH 127
2026 / 5787 — HOPE AND EFFORT 129

Chayei Sarah חיי שרה

2016 / 5777 — A DUAL MANOEUVRE 132
2017 / 5778 — AGONISING ??? 134
2018 / 5779 — PEOPLE 137
2019 / 5780 — SONS (AND DAUGHTERS) 139
2020 / 5781 — MARRIAGE AND LOVE 141
2021 / 5782 — ETERNAL GENERATIONS 143
2022 / 5783 — WEALTH 145
2023 / 5784 — AM YISRAEL CHAI 147
2024 / 5785 — DEVOTION 150
2025 / 5786 — ORDER AND PEACE 153

Toldos תולדות

2016 / 5777 — HIDDEN MESSAGES 156
2017 / 5778 — BIRTH 159
2018 / 5779 — LAUGHTER AND LIGHT 161
2019 / 5780 — HOLINESS AND LAUGHTER 163
2020 / 5781 — FROM MUNDANE TO INSPIRATION 165
2021 / 5782 — MARRIAGE - A STORY 168
2022 / 5783 — UNDERSTANDING PRAYER 170
2023 / 5784 — STRETCHING TIME 172
2024 / 5785 — EDUCATION - A STORY 174
2025 / 5786 — METICULOUS AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE TALK 177

Vayeitzei ויצא

2016 / 5777 — THE LAME BRIDE 180
2017 / 5778 — BELOVED 184
2018 / 5779 — THE SOURCE OF CONFIDENCE AND JOY 187
2019 / 5780 — LADDER 189
2020 / 5781 — HE WHO IS SMALL IS GREAT, AND HE WHO IS GREAT IS SMALL 191

2021 / 5782 — THE BLESSING OF CHILDREN ... 193
2022 / 5783 — BIRTHS AND EDUCATION ... 195
2023 / 5784 — SINGING AS WE GO INTO BATTLE ... 197
2024 / 5785 — THE WELLSPRING OF MARRIAGE ... 199
2025 / 5786 — FREE CHOICE ... 202

Vayishlach וישלח
2016 / 5777 — CONNECTING ... 205
2017 / 5778 — KABBALAH, GEMATRIAS, AND BROTHERS ... 207
2018 / 5779 — CONVERTING CHAOS TO SERENITY ... 209
2019 / 5780 — THOUGHTFUL PONDERING ... 212
2020 / 5781 — FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT ... 214
2021 / 5782 — HISTORY ... 217
2022 / 5783 — HOW TO BE A MAN ... 220
2023 / 5784 — THE BATTLE OF EDUCATION ... 222
2024 / 5785 — SMALLNESS ... 225
2025 / 5786 — STRENGTH ... 227

Vayeishev וישב
2016 / 5777 — RELEASE ... 231
2017 / 5778 — YERUSHALAYIM ... 233
2018 / 5779 — LIVING IN THE MOMENT ... 236
2019 / 5780 — LIGHT AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT ... 238
2020 / 5781 — A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS ... 241
2021 / 5782 — THE ORAL LAW ... 244
2022 / 5783 — LISTENING TO THE FLAME ... 246
2023 / 5784 — A PIT FULL OF WATER ... 249
2024 / 5785 — GOOD ATTITUDE ... 251
2025 / 5786 — WATER AND LIGHT ... 254

Mikeitz מקץ
2016 / 5777 — OLIVE OIL ... 257
2017 / 5778 — FACETS OF LIFE ... 260
2018 / 5779 — THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY' ... 262
2020 / 5781 — CHALLENGE ... 264
2021 / 5782 — LIGHT ... 266
2022 / 5783 — SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO ... 268
2023 / 5784 — OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE ... 270
2024 / 5785 — FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES ... 273
2025 / 5786 — A RARE OPPORTUNITY ... 276

Vayigash ויגש
2017 / 5777 — LONG - SIGHTED ... 279
2017 / 5778 — PERSISTENT PRAYER ... 282
2018 / 5779 — INSULAR V WORLDLY JUDAISM ... 285

2020 / 5780 — EFFORT AND SWEET FRUIT 287
2020 / 5781 — TWO KINGS, TWO GIANTS 290
2021 / 5782 — MIRACLES CONTINUED 293
2022 / 5783 — WEEPING? 295
2023 / 5784 — ART OF ELEVATION 297
2025 / 5785 — OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST MIRACLES 299
2025 / 5786 — SIMPLE SINCERITY IN ACTION 301

Vayechi ויחי

2017 / 5777 — BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS 303
2017 / 5778 — SUBLIME GREATNESS 305
2018 / 5779 — REAL LIVING 309
2020 / 5780 — TORAH STUDY 311
2021 / 5781 — OUR DEEP TORAH 314
2021 / 5782 — FISH 316
2023 / 5783 — LEFT AND RIGHT HEART 318
2023 / 5784 — LIFE 321
2025 / 5785 — THE BRIDGE 323
2026 / 5786 — THE POWER OF STORIES 325

Shemos · שמות

Shemos שמות

2017 / 5777 — NEVER GIVE UP 330
2018 / 5778 — NAMES, LETTERS, HUGS, AND KISSES 333
2018 / 5779 — A FREUDIAN SLIP 336
2021 / 5781 — CONTROLLING UNWANTED URGES 339
2021 / 5782 — SECRET OF SURVIVAL 342
2023 / 5783 — OUR GIANTS 344
2024 / 5784 — GENTLE MIGHT 346
2025 / 5785 — THE SWEET WAR 348
2026 / 5786 — THE BURNING BUSH 350

Va'eira וארא

2017 / 5777 — HOW MUCH POWER DOES MAN (OR WOMAN) HAVE? 353
2018 / 5778 — CHASSIDIC MELODY 355
2019 / 5779 — SONG AND JOY 357
2021 / 5781 — ASTOUNDING! 359
2022 / 5782 — GIANTS 361
2023 / 5783 — GRATITUDE 363
2024 / 5784 — ACTIONS and FEELINGS 365
2025 / 5785 — HUMAN CAPACITY FOR RENEWAL AND GROWTH 367
2026 / 5786 — SHOWING APPRECIATION 369

Bo בא

2016 / 5776 — ROOTS 372
2017 / 5777 — A STORY OF HOPE, FROM AUSTRALIA 375
2018 / 5778 — FOLLY AND MARRIAGE JOY 378
2019 / 5779 — HOLY LETTERS 381
2020 / 5780 — AN AMAZING STORY 385
2021 / 5781 — DIVINE PROVIDENCE 389
2022 / 5782 — REDEMPTION 391
2023 / 5783 — DYNAMICS OF FREEDOM 393
2024 / 5784 — VICTORY 395
2025 / 5785 — A TOUCHING STORY ABOUT RAMBAM 398
2026 / 5786 — PERSONAL FREEDOM 401

Beshalach בשלח

2016 / 5776 — SPLITTING WATER 404
2017 / 5777 — SINGING AND DANCING BIRDS 407
2018 / 5778 — LETTERS WITH A STORY - APPROPRIATE ACTION 409
2019 / 5779 — FLOWERS WITH EARS 412
2020 / 5780 — TRANSFORMING BITTERNESS TO SWEET 414
2021 / 5781 — OUR ENEMY AMALEK 416
2022 / 5782 — SONG 419
2023 / 5783 — UNCLE MORRIS AND REB YISROEL MEIR LINKED TO YUD SHVAT 422
2024 / 5784 — HIDDEN TREASURES 424
2025 / 5785 — SELFLESSNESS 426
2026 / 5786 — ACACIA WOOD 429

Yisro יתרו

2016 / 5776 — 5 MINUTES PER WEEK 433
2017 / 5777 — A BEAUTIFUL HOME 437
2018 / 5778 — GRATITUDE 439
2019 / 5779 — THE CURE FOR ENVY 441
2020 / 5780 — HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS HASHEM 442
2021 / 5781 — PEACE 445
2022 / 5782 — BURIED TREASURE 448
2023 / 5783 — PRACTICAL FREEDOM 450
2024 / 5784 — POWER OF SPEECH 453
2025 / 5785 — WHO NOURISHES ALL 455
2026 / 5786 — SOME GIANTS OF OUR PEOPLE 459

Mishpatim משפטים

2016 / 5776 — AN ESSAY RECEIVED FROM CHAVA 463
2017 / 5777 — JOY IN DARKNESS 468
2018 / 5778 — THE WAY OUT 470

2019 / 5779 — THE GREATNESS OF WOMEN ... 472
2020 / 5780 — WORK SLAVERY AND FREEDOM ... 475
2021 / 5781 — A STORY ... 477
2022 / 5782 — ASPECTS OF JOY ... 480
2023 / 5783 — LAWS ... 482
2024 / 5784 — VICTORY OF JOY ... 484
2025 / 5785 — GUARDIANS OF OUR SOULS ... 486
2026 / 5786 — GIVING ... 488

Terumah תרומה

2016 / 5776 — DONKEY ... 491
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF THE PRESENT ... 493
2018 / 5778 — BEARDS ... 496
2019 / 5779 — PROACTIVE HAPPINESS ... 497
2020 / 5780 — JOY OF ADAR ... 499
2021 / 5781 — JOY ... 501
2022 / 5782 — FURTHER ASPECTS OF JOY ... 502
2023 / 5783 — STRIVING FOR TRUTH ... 504
2024 / 5784 — 60 DAYS OF JOY ... 507
2025 / 5785 — AMAZING STORY FROM THE WAR ... 509
2026 / 5786 — DEVELOPING THE EMOTION OF LOVE ... 512

Tetzaveh תצוה

2016 / 5776 — THE JOY OF HOLY MUSIC ... 515
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS' ... 518
2018 / 5778 — JOY ... 520
2019 / 5779 — JOY - MUSIC OF THE TEMPLE - THE HARP OF DAVID HAMELECH ... 522
2020 / 5780 — THE MONKEY ... 525
2021 / 5781 — LECHAIM ... 527
2022 / 5782 — A JOYOUS FAST DAY ... 528
2024 / 5784 — EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE ... 532
2025 / 5785 — LESSONS FROM PURIM ... 534
2026 / 5786 — DRESSING UP ... 536

Ki Sisa כי תשא

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED ... 539
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF APPRECIATION ... 540
2018 / 5778 — COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE ... 542
2019 / 5779 — HIDDENESS ... 543
2020 / 5780 — JOY CONTINUED ... 548
2021 / 5781 — CONSTRUCTIVE FIRE ... 550
2022 / 5782 — COUNTERING NEGATIVE FORCES ... 552

2023 / 5783 — A STORY "IT TOOK YEARS, AND I AM FINALLY PROUD TO BE JEWISH" 554
2024 / 5784 — JOY IN BATTLE 556
2025 / 5785 — PURIM 557
2026 / 5786 — JOY CONTINUED 559

Vayakhel ויקהל

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - CHASSANAH AND TRUE LOVE 562
2017 / 5777 — EMUNAH INTRODUCTION 565
2018 / 5778 — JOY CONTINUED 569
2019 / 5779 — THE ZODIAC OF ADAR 571
2020 / 5780 — ADAR IS NOT YET OVER 574
2021 / 5781 — THE FENCE 576
2022 / 5782 — HUMOUR 578
2023 / 5783 — JOYFUL APPROACH 580
2024 / 5784 — JOY OF SHABBOS 582
2025 / 5785 — DAVIDOFF ROOTS? 584
2026 / 5786 — BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY 586

Pekudei פקודי

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - THE JOY OF STRENGTH 590
2019 / 5779 — AND SHE LAUGHS AT THE FINAL DAY 593
2022 / 5782 — LESSONS FROM FISH 595
2024 / 5784 — THE JOY OF OUR HERITAGE 597
2025 / 5785 — FRENCH ROOTS 600
2017: read together with Vayakhel — EMUNAH INTRODUCTION (p. 565)
2018: read together with Vayakhel — JOY CONTINUED (p. 569)
2020: read together with Vayakhel — ADAR IS NOT YET OVER (p. 574)
2021: read together with Vayakhel — THE FENCE (p. 576)
2023: read together with Vayakhel — JOYFUL APPROACH (p. 580)
2026: read together with Vayakhel — BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY (p. 586)

Vayikra · ויקרא

Vayikra ויקרא

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - THE RIDICULOUS AND THE SUBLIME 604
2017 / 5777 — EMUNAH - MIND VS HEART 606
2018 / 5778 — DOES EATING MATZAH HELP? 612
2019 / 5779 — PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK? 615
2020 / 5780 — REDEMPTION 619
2021 / 5781 — THE LITTLE ALEPH 620
2022 / 5782 — FUN WITH VOICES 622
2023 / 5783 — PRECIOUS MATZAH 624

2024 / 5784 — JOY OF PURIM 627
2025 / 5785 — THE SMALL ALEPH 629
2026 / 5786 — THE ART OF SACRIFICE 631

Tzav צו

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - A REFLECTION ON AN OBSTACLE 634
2017 / 5777 — 3 + 4 = FREEDOM 637
2018 / 5778 — MATZAH CONTINUED 641
2019 / 5779 — AND WHAT AFTER PURIM? 644
2020 / 5780 — MATZOS - BREAD OF EMUNAH AND HEALTH 646
2021 / 5781 — FAITH AND HEALING 649
2022 / 5782 — ANTITHESIS TO AMALEK 651
2023 / 5783 — SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION 653
2024 / 5784 — THE JOY OF CHASSANAH 655
2025 / 5785 — FAITH AND HEALING 657
2026 / 5786 — A FORMULA FOR FREEDOM 659

Shemini שמיני

2016 / 5776 — SIMPLE JOY AND MAZAL TOV 662
2017 / 5777 — THE PATH OF THE KING 664
2018 / 5778 — WEALTH 666
2019 / 5779 — HALFWAY MARK 668
2020 / 5780 — OUR ARMY OF HASHEM 669
2021 / 5781 — LASER BEAM 675
2022 / 5782 — CONQUERING WITH JOY 677
2023 / 5783 — LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE 679
2023 / 5783 — ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT 682
2024 / 5784 — CHASSANAH JOY OF DANCING, JUGGLING AND SINGINGING 684
2025 / 5785 — THE LABOUR OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE 687
2026 / 5786 — ALL OF ISRAEL HAVE A SHARE IN THE WORLD TO COME 689

Tazria תזריע

2016 / 5776 — MAZAL TOV MAZAL TOV 692
2017 / 5777 — HEALTH - GENERAL 693
2018 / 5778 — ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS? 696
2020 / 5780 — LOVE WORK 698
2021 / 5781 — THE DIRECT APPROACH 700
2022 / 5782 — CLEAN SPEECH 702
2023 / 5783 — CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD 704
2024 / 5784 — THE POWER OF FAMILY 707
2025 / 5785 — LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS 709
2026 / 5786 — CAREFUL SPEECH 713

Metzora מצורע

2016 / 5776 — THE POWER OF A WOMAN 717
2019 / 5779 — LIGHT INSIDE THE DARKNESS 719
2022 / 5782 — MARITAL AND GENERAL HARMONY 721
2024 / 5784 — THE CURE FOR SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION 723
2017: read together with Tazria — HEALTH - GENERAL (p. 693)
2018: read together with Tazria — ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS? (p. 696)
2020: read together with Tazria — LOVE WORK (p. 698)
2021: read together with Tazria — THE DIRECT APPROACH (p. 700)
2023: read together with Tazria — CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD (p. 704)
2025: read together with Tazria — LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS (p. 709)
2026: read together with Tazria — CAREFUL SPEECH (p. 713)

Acharei Mos אחרי מות

2016 / 5776 — THE WORLD IS ONE DAY OLD 726
2017 / 5777 — HEALTH CONTINUED 729
2018 / 5778 — HOLY SHABBOS 734
2019 / 5779 — LOVE OF A FELLOW JEW 737
2020 / 5780 — BREINA 739
2021 / 5781 — THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL 745
2022 / 5782 — EMUNAH 747
2023 / 5783 — OUR HOLY NATION 749
2024 / 5784 — TZEDAKAH AND KINDNESS 751
2025 / 5785 — GOOD HEALTH 754
2026 / 5786 — LOVE 757

Kedoshim קדושים

2016 / 5776 — HEALTH 760
2019 / 5779 — REFINING PROCESS 763
2022 / 5782 — GOOD HEALTH 765
2024 / 5784 — TIFERES AND NETZACH EMOTIONAL ATTRIBUTES 767
2017: read together with Acharei Mos — HEALTH CONTINUED (p. 729)
2018: read together with Acharei Mos — HOLY SHABBOS (p. 734)
2020: read together with Acharei Mos — BREINA (p. 739)
2021: read together with Acharei Mos — THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL (p. 745)
2023: read together with Acharei Mos — OUR HOLY NATION (p. 749)
2025: read together with Acharei Mos — GOOD HEALTH (p. 754)
2026: read together with Acharei Mos — LOVE (p. 757)

Emor אמור

2016 / 5776 — SOME HISTORY AND BIOLOGY 771
2017 / 5777 — HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE 774

2018 / 5778 — 7 = 5 + 2 ... 776
2019 / 5779 — SOFT SPEECH ... 779
2020 / 5780 — ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATION ... 781
2021 / 5781 — RASHBI ... 783
2022 / 5782 — LAG BAOMER ... 786
2023 / 5783 — AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE ... 788
2024 / 5784 — SERVANT WITH STATUS ... 790
2025 / 5785 — GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT ... 793
2026 / 5786 — TIMES AND TIME ... 795

Behar בהר

2016 / 5776 — A WATCHING EYE ... 800
2017 / 5777 — PROMISING ... 802
2018 / 5778 — CHAYENU ... 804
2019 / 5779 — HOD ... 807
2020 / 5780 — STRENGTH OF HUMILITY ... 811
2021 / 5781 — PLEADING ... 813
2022 / 5782 — MODESTY ... 814
2023 / 5783 — COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY ... 816
2024 / 5784 — WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG ... 818
2025 / 5785 — THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM ... 820
2026 / 5786 — HUMILITY AND GREATNESS ... 822

Bechukosai בחוקותי

2016 / 5776 — UNDERSTANDING THAT WHICH CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD ... 825
2019 / 5779 — LEARNING FROM CHILDREN ... 828
2022 / 5782 — HARD WORK ... 830
2024 / 5784 — THE LEVIATHAN ... 832
2017: read together with Behar — PROMISING (p. 802)
2018: read together with Behar — CHAYENU (p. 804)
2020: read together with Behar — STRENGTH OF HUMILITY (p. 811)
2021: read together with Behar — PLEADING (p. 813)
2023: read together with Behar — COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY (p. 816)
2025: read together with Behar — THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM (p. 820)
2026: read together with Behar — HUMILITY AND GREATNESS (p. 822)

Bamidbar · במדבר

Bamidbar במדבר

2016 / 5776 — STRENGTHENING INTELLECT ... 836
2017 / 5777 — THE EARTH TREMBLED ... 838

2018 / 5778 — TRIPLE PREPARATION 840
2019 / 5779 — AMAZING TORAH AND TEHILLIM 842
2020 / 5780 — EXCUSES? 845
2021 / 5781 — HIDDEN POWER 847
2022 / 5782 — RENEWED COMMITTMENT 850
2023 / 5783 — REDEEMING OURSELVES 853
2024 / 5784 — PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS 856
2025 / 5785 — THE BURNING CANDLE 859
2026 / 5786 — THE BOUNDARY THAT SET ME FREE 862

Nasso נשא

2016 / 5776 — THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS 865
2017 / 5777 — ETERNAL BOND - YESHAYEH 867
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION, GRADUATION, ETHICS OF THE FATHERS 869
2019 / 5779 — RAMBAM 872
2020 / 5780 — TIMES OF TURMOIL? 876
2021 / 5781 — HANDS AND BLESSING 878
2022 / 5782 — CONNECTIONS 880
2023 / 5783 — DEVELOPING OUR INTELLECT 882
2024 / 5784 — WHAT WE GIVE BELONGS TO US 884
2025 / 5785 — CHOICE 886
2026 / 5786 — TORAH TEACHER, MENTOR AND FRIEND 888

Beha'aloscha בהעלותך

2016 / 5776 — SUMMER 892
2017 / 5777 — DEDICATION 894
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION CONTINUED - PREVENTION 897
2019 / 5779 — FATHERS 899
2020 / 5780 — SOULS ON FIRE 901
2021 / 5781 — A LITTLE BEND 904
2022 / 5782 — OUR PRIVILEGED GENERATION 906
2023 / 5783 — HEALING 908
2024 / 5784 — RESUME OF A PROPHET 910
2025 / 5785 — BITTERNESS TO SWEET, DARKNESS TO LIGHT 912
2026 / 5786 — HUMILITY, ANTIDOTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM 915

Shelach שלח

2016 / 5776 — EYE SPY.....? 918
2017 / 5777 — IMPOSSIBLE? 920
2018 / 5778 — ANOTHER FACET OF EDUCATION 923
2019 / 5779 — 40 YEARS 925
2020 / 5780 — WORK ON FAITH 929
2021 / 5781 — WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT 932
2022 / 5782 — EFFORT AND OPTIMISM 934

2023 / 5783 — TESHUVAH 936
2024 / 5784 — NEVER TOO LATE FOR TESHUVAH 939
2025 / 5785 — AN OPPORTUNE TIME 941
2026 / 5786 — MITZVOS BEYOND UNDERSTANDING 944

Korach קרח

2016 / 5776 — SOULS ON FIRE 947
2017 / 5777 — BITTER - SWEET 950
2018 / 5778 — CLINICAL 952
2019 / 5779 — INNER JOY 955
2020 / 5780 — GIMMEL (THIRD) of TAMMUZ AND RAMBAM 958
2021 / 5781 — CONQUEST 961
2022 / 5782 — CLIMBING MOUNTAINS 964
2023 / 5783 — A COMMON PREDICAMENT 967
2024 / 5784 — JOY AND TRAGEDY, WEALTH AND POVERTY 970
2025 / 5785 — LOVE AND LIGHT 973
2026 / 5786 — IMPOSSIBLE? 975

Chukas חקת

2016 / 5776 — HAPPINESS 979
2017 / 5777 — DIVINE PROVIDENCE 981
2018 / 5778 — CORRECTION 984
2019 / 5779 — HISTORY AND EGO 986
2020 / 5780 — MYSTERY 990
2021 / 5781 — ONE G-D AND TWO WORLDS 993
2022 / 5782 — PURIFYING WATERS OF KNOWLEDGE 995
2023 / 5783 — TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES 998
2024 / 5784 — PEACE IN THE HOME 1000
2025 / 5785 — SWEET WELL WATER 1002
2026 / 5786 — CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY 1004

Balak בלק

2016 / 5776 — IMPRISONMENT ? 1007
2017 / 5777 — OUR ENEMIES AND A SOLUTION 1010
2018 / 5778 — FINE BALANCE 1013
2019 / 5779 — KING 1016
2021 / 5781 — INTRIGUE 1018
2022 / 5782 — NOT TO BE FOOLED 1020
2024 / 5784 — ALONE BUT NOT LONELY 1023
2025 / 5785 — DYNAMICS OF OUR JOURNEYS 1025

2020: read together with Chukas — MYSTERY (p. 990)
2023: read together with Chukas — TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES (p. 998)
2026: read together with Chukas — CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY (p. 1004)

Pinchas פינחס

2016 / 5776 — LONLINESS? 1029
2017 / 5777 — A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE 1031
2018 / 5778 — THE POWER OF DIFFICULTY 1034
2019 / 5779 — STONES AND BRICKS 1037
2020 / 5780 — 'FROM MOSHE TO MOSHE THERE NEVER AROSE ONE AS MOSHE' 1040
2021 / 5781 — REPAIRING BREACHES 1042
2022 / 5782 — LASTING CHANGE 1044
2023 / 5783 — HISTORY OF PRAYER 1047
2024 / 5784 — LUNAR LESSON 1049
2025 / 5785 — LOVE AND HARMONY 1051
2026 / 5786 — MODESTY 1053

Mattos מטות

2016 / 5776 — A PARADOX 1056
2017 / 5777 — SILK WORMS 1058
2018 / 5778 — HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE. 1062
2019 / 5779 — RAMBAM 1064
2020 / 5780 — LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS 1067
2021 / 5781 — AHARON 1069
2022 / 5782 — THE HINTING OF TORAH 1071
2023 / 5783 — HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY 1073
2024 / 5784 — THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY 1075
2025 / 5785 — LOVING FELLOW JEWS 1078
2026 / 5786 — THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL 1080

Masei מסעי

2016: read together with Mattos — A PARADOX (p. 1056)
2017: read together with Mattos — SILK WORMS (p. 1058)
2018: read together with Mattos — HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE. (p. 1062)
2019: read together with Mattos — RAMBAM (p. 1064)
2020: read together with Mattos — LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS (p. 1067)
2021: read together with Mattos — AHARON (p. 1069)
2022: read together with Mattos — THE HINTING OF TORAH (p. 1071)
2023: read together with Mattos — HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY (p. 1073)
2024: read together with Mattos — THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY (p. 1075)
2025: read together with Mattos — LOVING FELLOW JEWS (p. 1078)
2026: read together with Mattos — THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL (p. 1080)

Devarim · דברים

Devarim דברים

2016 / 5776 — VISION ... 1086
2017 / 5777 — YERUSHALAYIM ... 1088
2018 / 5778 — GREAT OPPORTUNITIES ... 1092
2019 / 5779 — OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL ... 1095
2020 / 5780 — FOLLOWING THE CLUES ... 1097
2021 / 5781 — A STORY ... 1099
2022 / 5782 — THE POWER OF A PHYSICAL ACT ... 1101
2023 / 5783 — REFLECTION ... 1103
2024 / 5784 — OIL, WINE and HONEY ... 1106
2025 / 5785 — THE LION ... 1109
2026 / 5786 — UNWARRANTED HATE vs UNWARRANTED LOVE ... 1111

Va'eschanan ואתחנן

2016 / 5776 — GROWING YOUNGER ... 1114
2017 / 5777 — HONOUR ... 1117
2018 / 5778 — NATURAL TALENT ... 1119
2019 / 5779 — FORCED LOVE? ... 1121
2020 / 5780 — OUR PRECIOUS BODIES ... 1123
2021 / 5781 — POWERFUL WORDS ... 1125
2022 / 5782 — 'SIMPLE' JEWS ... 1127
2023 / 5783 — BEARING SIMULTANEOUS WEEPING AND LAUGHTER ... 1129
2024 / 5784 — TU BEAV, TESHUVAH, FORGIVENESS ... 1131
2025 / 5785 — THE YARDSTICK OF TORAH ... 1133
2026 / 5786 — AROUSAL OF THE JEWISH HEART ... 1135

Eikev עקב

2016 / 5776 — LONG LIFE CONTINUED ... 1138
2017 / 5777 — DOWNFALL AND CONQUEST ... 1141
2018 / 5778 — THE SOURCE, THE RIVER AND THE GARDEN ... 1143
2019 / 5779 — HIDDEN DEEP LOVE ... 1148
2020 / 5780 — A STORY OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION ... 1150
2021 / 5781 — MATCH-MAKING ... 1152
2022 / 5782 — A SWEET AND HAPPY LIFE ... 1154
2023 / 5783 — THANK YOU HASHEM! ... 1156
2024 / 5784 — REWARDS OF LISTENING ... 1158
2025 / 5785 — FINDING LIGHT AND JOY IN THE BROKEN PIECES ... 1160
2026 / 5786 — APPRECIATING LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS ... 1163

Re'eh ראה

2016 / 5776 — TZEDAKA ... 1166
2017 / 5777 — The Marathon ... 1168

2018 / 5778 — THE ZODIAC OF ELUL 1170
2019 / 5779 — GROWTH 1173
2020 / 5780 — THE WISDOM OF TOLERANCE 1175
2021 / 5781 — A GENTLE INNER VOICE 1177
2022 / 5782 — THINKING OF OTHERS 1179
2023 / 5783 — FISH 1181
2024 / 5784 — SOME LESSONS FROM ANIMALS 1184
2025 / 5785 — TESHUVAH - A STORY 1186
2026 / 5786 — A WAKEUP CALL 1189

Shoftim שופטים

2016 / 5776 — DYNAMICS OF TZEDAKA 1192
2017 / 5777 — CELESTIAL BODIES 1195
2018 / 5778 — BROCHAS 1197
2019 / 5779 — REALISATION 1199
2020 / 5780 — THE HIGH-LEVEL RETURN OF TZEDAKAH (CHARITY) 1201
2021 / 5781 — ACCOUNTING 1203
2022 / 5782 — KINGS 1204
2023 / 5783 — SIMPLE SINCERITY 1206
2024 / 5784 — WILL POWER 1208
2025 / 5785 — WHY WORRY 1210
2026 / 5786 — A REFUGE FROM DIFFICULTY 1212

Ki Seitzei כי תצא

2016 / 5776 — THIRTEEN 1215
2017 / 5777 — KOL YISRAEL 1218
2018 / 5778 — PRECIOUS DAYS 1220
2019 / 5779 — ELLUL 1222
2020 / 5780 — COMFORT ZONE VERSUS THE YOKE OF TOIL 1224
2021 / 5781 — PURE AND CLEAR WINE 1226
2022 / 5782 — GOOD INFLUENCE 1228
2023 / 5783 — LEARNING FROM CHILDREN 1231
2024 / 5784 — FAMILY AND LIGHT 1233
2025 / 5785 — REFLECTION 1236
2026 / 5786 — ONE SMALL ACTION 1238

Ki Savo כי תבא

2016 / 5776 — A RADICAL PATH 1241
2017 / 5777 — FIXED TIMES 1244
2018 / 5778 — JOYOUS ACTION 1246
2019 / 5779 — HUMILITY AND CHAI ELLUL 1248
2020 / 5780 — FREE CHOICE 1251
2021 / 5781 — THE LAND OF ISRAEL 1253
2022 / 5782 — DEEP REFLECTION 1255

2023 / 5783 — SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 1257
2024 / 5784 — COMPLETE SETTLING WITH JOY 1259
2025 / 5785 — OUR HERITAGE AND CAPABILITY 1261
2026 / 5786 — GOOD RESOLUTIONS 1264

Nitzavim נצבים

2016 / 5776 — A LOVING JUDGE 1267
2017 / 5777 — PURITY 1269
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION 1272
2019 / 5779 — ROSH HASHANAH 1274
2020 / 5780 — JOYOUS SERVICE 1276
2021 / 5781 — STANDING UPRIGHT 1279
2022 / 5782 — BE A MENTCH - A STORY 1281
2023 / 5783 — THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM 1285
2024 / 5784 — SHANAH TOVAH 1288
2025 / 5785 — INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH 1291
2026 / 5786 — HIDDEN JOY 1293

Vayeilech וילך

2016 / 5777 — NEVER TOO LATE - DROP BY DROP - A REFLECTION 1297
2018 / 5779 — TO HIM WHO HAS COMPASSION ON HIS PEOPLE 1300
2019 / 5780 — THE JOY OF MOVEMENT 1302
2021 / 5782 — SEEING VIRTUE 1304
2022 / 5783 — PATHS OF TESHUVAH 1306
2025 / 5786 — RECOVERY AND CORRECTION 1308
2017: read together with Nitzavim — PURITY (p. 1269)
2020: read together with Nitzavim — JOYOUS SERVICE (p. 1276)
2023: read together with Nitzavim — THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM (p. 1285)
2024: read together with Nitzavim — SHANAH TOVAH (p. 1288)
2026: read together with Nitzavim — HIDDEN JOY (p. 1293)

Haazinu האזינו

2016 / 5777 — A ONE WORD INSTRUCTION BOOK 1311
2018 / 5779 — JOY 1313
2019 / 5780 — JOY OF SUKKOS 1315
2020 / 5781 — LOVE OF AWE 1318
2020 / 5781 — TEHILLIM 1320
2021 / 5782 — NEW RESOLUTIONS 1322
2022 / 5783 — BEARING OPPOSITES 1323
2023 / 5784 — RETURN 1325
2024 / 5785 — OUR FAMILY TREE! 1326
2025 / 5786 — JOY AND DANCING 1328
2026 / 5787 — DISCOVERING FAMILY 1330

Yom Tov & Special Days

Rosh Hashanah ראש השנה

2023 / 5784 — TESTS AND CHALLENGES 1335
2026 / 5787 — ANGELS 1338
2019: under Nitzavim — ROSH HASHANAH (p. 1274)
2020: under Haazinu — LOVE OF AWE (p. 1318)
2022: under Nitzavim — BE A MENTCH - A STORY (p. 1281)
2024: under Haazinu — OUR FAMILY TREE! (p. 1326)
2025: under Nitzavim — INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH (p. 1291)

Yom Kippur יום כיפור

2017 / 5778 — SCALES OF LOVE 1341
2024 / 5785 — A YEAR OF ABUNDANT GOODNESS 1346
2020: under Haazinu — TEHILLIM (p. 1320)
2025: under Haazinu — JOY AND DANCING (p. 1328)

Sukkos סוכות ושמיני עצרת

2016 / 5777 — SAMECH 1350
2018 / 5779 — SUCCESS POTENTIAL 1352
2019 / 5780 — DANCING 1354
2020 / 5781 — MUSIC 1356
2020 / 5781 — MUSIC CONTINUED 1358
2021 / 5782 — MOISHEH'S VISION 1360
2022 / 5783 — CREATING JOY 1362
2023 / 5784 — JOY 1364
2023 / 5784 — THE JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERES AND SIMCHAS TORAH 1366
2024 / 5785 — JOY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR 1368
2025 / 5786 — HOLY FIRE - A STORY 1370
2026 / 5787 — BEAUTY CONTINUED, WITH JOY 1373
2026 / 5787 — THE JOY OF SIMCHAS TORAH 1375
2017: under Bereishis — THE HUG (p. 27)
2019: under Haazinu — JOY OF SUKKOS (p. 1315)
2024: under Bereishis — SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH (p. 44)

Chanukah חנוכה

2017: under Mikeitz — FACETS OF LIFE (p. 260)
2018: under Mikeitz — THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY' (p. 262)
2020: under Vayeishev — A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS (p. 241)
2020: under Mikeitz — CHALLENGE (p. 264)
2021: under Vayeishev — THE ORAL LAW (p. 244)
2021: under Mikeitz — LIGHT (p. 266)

2022: under Vayeishev — LISTENING TO THE FLAME (p. 246)
2022: under Mikeitz — SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO (p. 268)
2023: under Vayeishev — A PIT FULL OF WATER (p. 249)
2023: under Mikeitz — OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE (p. 270)
2024: under Vayeishev — GOOD ATTITUDE (p. 251)
2024: under Mikeitz — FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES (p. 273)
2025: under Vayeishev — WATER AND LIGHT (p. 254)
2025: under Mikeitz — A RARE OPPORTUNITY (p. 276)

Tu BiShvat ט"ו בשבט

2025: under Yisro — WHO NOURISHES ALL (p. 455)

Purim פורים

2017: under Tetzaveh — JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS' (p. 518)
2018: under Tetzaveh — JOY (p. 520)
2018: under Ki Sisa — COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE (p. 542)
2019: under Vayikra — PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK? (p. 615)
2019: under Tzav — AND WHAT AFTER PURIM? (p. 644)
2021: under Terumah — JOY (p. 501)
2021: under Tetzaveh — LECHAIM (p. 527)
2022: under Vayikra — FUN WITH VOICES (p. 622)
2024: under Vayikra — JOY OF PURIM (p. 627)
2025: under Tetzaveh — LESSONS FROM PURIM (p. 534)
2025: under Ki Sisa — PURIM (p. 557)
2026: under Tetzaveh — DRESSING UP (p. 536)

Pesach פסח

2016 / 5776 — THE UNUSUAL NUTRITION OF MATZOS 1383
2016 / 5776 — IS EMUNAH THAT SIMPLE? 1385
2017 / 5777 — ONE LETTER CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE 1387
2018 / 5778 — FREEDOM 1388
2018 / 5778 — HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS 1391
2019 / 5779 — DAVID BEN GURION 1394
2019 / 5779 — SPLITTING THE SEA 1397
2021 / 5781 — LOVE 1399
2022 / 5782 — HUMILITY 1401
2022 / 5782 — CHANNAH CARE 1403
2024 / 5784 — SIGNIFICANCE OF MATZAH 1405
2025 / 5785 — DEVOTION AVAILABLE TO ALL 1407
2026 / 5786 — TIME USAGE, A STORY 1409
2020: under Shemini — OUR ARMY OF HASHEM (p. 669)
2023: under Shemini — LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE (p. 679)
2023: under Shemini — ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT (p. 682)

Lag BaOmer ל"ג בעומר

2018: under Emor — 7 = 5 + 2 (p. 776)
2021: under Emor — RASHBI (p. 783)
2022: under Emor — LAG BAOMER (p. 786)
2023: under Emor — AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE (p. 788)
2025: under Emor — GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT (p. 793)
2026: under Emor — TIMES AND TIME (p. 795)

Shavuos שבועות

2020 / 5780 — HONEY AND MILK 1413
2023 / 5783 — TO DO FIRST, AND UNDERSTAND LATER? 1415
2026 / 5786 — TWO OATHS 1417
2024: under Bamidbar — PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS (p. 856)

Indexes

Letters per parsha 1419
Family simchas: mazal tov index 1423
Yahrzeits 1470
Every letter by date sent 1481

בראשית

Bereishis

Bereishis · Noach · Lech Lecha · Vayeira · Chayei Sarah · Toldos · Vayeitzei · Vayishlach · Vayeishev · Mikeitz · Vayigash · Vayechi

בראשית

Bereishis

Bereishis 1:1 · parsha 1 of 12 in Bereishis · 1 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5777 — JACOB GOES ON HIS WAY 25
2017 / 5778 — THE HUG 27
2018 / 5779 — THE FOOLISH KING 30
2019 / 5780 — JOY CONTINUED 32
2020 / 5781 — THE LAND OF ISRAEL 34
2021 / 5782 — RESOLUTIONS AND RESOLVE 37
2022 / 5783 — THOUGHTFUL ACTION 39
2023 / 5784 — OUR BEAUTIFUL ERETZ YISRAEL 41
2024 / 5785 — SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH 44
2025 / 5786 — BOUNDLESS KINDNESS 46
2026 / 5787 — THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT 48

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

JACOB GOES ON HIS WAY

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 October 2016 · Shabbos 29 Oct 2016 · כ"ז תשרי תשע"ז

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well and had comfortable flights home after an amazing Yom Tov BH!

Mazal Tov Avi on your real birthday this coming week. Happy though that we could celebrate your English birthday with you last week BH!

The whole period from Elul through to Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, and even through to the end of Tishrei is a very full and rich period where we gather in the old year, make new resolutions, sit in Judgement in front of Hashem, do Teshuvah, and then burst out in Joy on Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

This is every year, but it was even more so this Year, where almost all of the Family were gathered together due to Mommy's birthday, and this added an even higher dimension to everything.

We have all filled up our 'vessels' with many riches (physical and spiritual) which we have gathered from all these experiences, and we are making our way back to the world and our regular ordinary lives.

This is described by the expression we use at this time of Year - Yaakov holech ledarko - JACOB GOES ON HIS WAY

But we take all the treasures we have gathered, keep them in storage, and draw on them throughout the coming Year to strengthen and brighten our Journies.

An interesting item came to my attention regarding Rambam learning.

The completion of learning Rambam 3 Chapters a day (which takes 1 year to complete) took place this Sukkos, and the restarting from the beginning again was on Hoshana Raba

Someone noticed that

1. Start of new cycle was Hoshana Raba, the 7th day of Sukkos

2. In Tishrei, the 7th Month

3. In the Year 5777

4. And the initiator of this amazing Project of Learning was the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the 7th of the Chabad Rebeiim

There are also many people learning one Chapter a day over 3 Years

This current Cycle is up to Sefer Tahara, Hilchot Tumat Ochalim, Chapter-14

And our very abbreviated Summary of 5 minutes overview per week are the 7 Chapters of Tumat Ochalim 9 - 16, P24 of Book 10

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-Hub4PlNwQtRe35VHCtu6S-vuJcLSXD8bxKyb6MLX -y4/edit

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and Wonderful Year

Bereishis · Sukkos ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

THE HUG

2017 / 5778

Gut Moed, Gut Yom Tov, Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 11 October 2017 · Shabbos 14 Oct 2017 · כ"ד תשרי תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and enjoying Yom Tov, Shabbosim etc.

We here in London have been so happy to have some of the Family with us, filling the home with much joy BH. Of course we missed all those who could not be here!

Mazel Tov to Avi on his upcoming birthday next week. I think we can do some pre birthday partying this year in London BEH!

I have been learning a Maamer of The Alte Rebbe on Sukkos (Shmuel Levy's 'mischief' from last Sukkos where he arranged a kvius of learning for me – Thanks Shmuel!), and also saw an Essay from Rabbi Jacobson. Both of these brought up an interesting point about the affectionate act of a HUG which I would like to share.

It is well known that the Hebrew word for Sukkah demonstrates the construction of a Sukkah ie the samech is a 4 walled sukkah, the chof has the shape of 3 walls, and the heh has the shape of the minimum size of a sukkah, ie 2 and a half walls. סכה.

The posuk mentioned is from Shlomo Hamelech 'His (G-d's) left arm lay under my head, and His right arm embraces me.'

The 'left arm under the head' refers to the love which comes about where there is distance between the loved and the beloved. – represented by discipline and awe – represented by Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

The 'embrace' or HUG is a love where there is closeness. – represented by Sukkos, the 'time of our joy'

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, the Arizal describes Sukkos as the time when Hashem embraces us,- the sukkah surrounds us.

He uses the arm to describe this ie arm has 3 sections, upper arm, lower arm and hand.

This represents the minimum size of this sukkah of 2.5 walls (the hand being the half).

IE THE SUKKAH REPRESENTS HASHEM EMBRACING US WITH HIS RIGHT ARM WITH A DEMONSTRATION OF CLOSE AFFECTION.

In relation to the close type of love there are 2 categories:

1. Forms of affection facing each other ie the front eg speaking, gazing etc
2. Affection of a hug where the arm goes around the back of the body.

Now forms of affection facing each other usually demand some kind of reciprocation, and one loves the other because of these or other beautiful qualities.

However the love of a hug, which goes around the back of the person, is much deeper, and demands nothing in return.

It is an unconditional love.

Because it is, my soul that loves your soul.

We still have today and tomorrow to be in the SUKKAH and experience this very deep and close love of Hashem embracing us with His right arm and His unconditional love, ie it exists even when we are in the process of doing the most mundane activities in the sukkah. Even just sitting there and doing nothing.

Especially tomorrow, which is Shmini Atzeres, where we , the Jewish Nation are alone with Hashem in the sukkah, how much more so does this apply.

(During all the other days of sukkos, there was also representation from the other Nations of the world)

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos to all.

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

THE FOOLISH KING

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 October 2018 · Shabbos 6 Oct 2018 · כ"ז תשרי תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had a Gut Yom Tov.

In London BH it has been very eventful, and packed with so many varied activities for us and for all the visitors, who came and helped make the Yom Tovim so special for us, especially the Families who travelled from far to be here.

Wishing everyone safe trips back home, and thank you!

It would be impossible to describe all the events and moods from Rosh Hashanah, through Yom Kippur, and then Sukkos and then Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, but it culminated with us all taking on new resolutions of how to improve in the New Year.

On Shemini Atzeres (or it could have been Shabbos before Shemini Atzeres), Mendel Kehaty made a small party for all of us, celebrating the fulfilment of the resolution he took on, at this time last year.

He managed to keep up the daily learning of Chumash, Tanya, Tehillim and one chapter a day of Rambam's Mishneh Torah throughout the year.

Mazal Tov Mendel and thanks for reminding us of the importance of this daily learning, and motivating us to make new resolutions for this year!

Something else he spoke about in the process, was how the Rebbe, on Simchas Torah in the first 10 years of his leadership, taught us a new song every year.

And so I was most interested to find a video recording of one of these years when the Rebbe taught, and explained the meaning of the song Tzama lecha nafshi - My soul thirsts for You.

The first part is the song itself, and then there is a second part where the Rebbe explains its deeper meaning, of how 'the foolish king' plays his part in trying to mislead and tempt us into going astray, and how we can overcome this and experience tremendous growth in the process.

Enjoy, and wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and wonderful year with much achievement. (see below)

https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/livingtorah/player_cdo/aid/2725133/jewish/Playing-the-Fool.htm

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

JOY CONTINUED

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 October 2019 · Shabbos 26 Oct 2019 · כ"ז תשרי תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and that all had an joyous and inspiring Yom Tov.

Mazal Tov to Avi on his upcoming birthday this week. Wishing you a successful year in all your pursuits Avi and all of it with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing the next stage of his Nursing Course. Michayil el chayil with continued successes!

BH we had a very joyous 48 hours of Yom Tov in London. (but we did miss the Family from abroad who often visit at this time of the year)

Our job is to now carry all our joy and inspiration with us into the New Year, and into our mundane lives.

This is especially important for the coming Shabbos, Shabbos Bereishis, where there is a saying, 'The way we conduct ourselves on Shabbos Bereishis, is the way we will tend to conduct our whole Year.'

I saw an interesting article from this week's Parsha regarding the JOY EXPRESSED BY THE TRIBE OF LEVI, from the Teachings of the Rebbe.

The Levites infused the Temple service with the joy of their MUSIC and SONGS OF PRAISE to Hashem

In this week's Sedra we see also how the Levites also infused their STUDY OF TORAH with joy, and by rendering CLEAR LEGAL JUDGEMENTS, and clearly instructing the people how to act and fulfil their obligations.

This clarity dispelled doubt and filled the people with joy and confidence in their Path of Life.

How did Levi achieve this joy?

It was their selfless devotion to Hashem, which freed them from their own personal agendas and predispositions.

This also reflects in the story of Adam and Chava in this week's Sedra.

They were meant to live a joyous life in Gan Eden, enhancing their awareness of Hashem and His Goodness.

And then along came the serpent to seduce them with temptation to do something that Hashem had forbidden.

And we are still trying to correct this error until today.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos Bereishis, whereby we CONTINUE with the true pure JOY of Yom Tov and the Leviim.

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

THE LAND OF ISRAEL

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 October 2020 · Shabbos 17 Oct 2020 · כ"ט תשרי תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Avi on your birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a successful year in all the good work you are doing, and with much happiness!

We are now starting Chumash over again from the famous Parsha Bereishis.

Shmuly and I were learning a sicha of the Rebbe from Bereishis last night, where the Rebbe spoke about the greatness of Rashi, and how this manifests especially in his first commentaries at the start of the whole of the Torah, which has the power to reflect the whole of Torah, its greatness and depth, and similarly the purpose of Torah and the Creation.

I cant go into the details of what we learnt, but I would like to share some aspects of this Rashi on the word BEREISHIS (simple superficial meaning is 'in the beginning')

Rashi points out that the word BEREISHIS is calling for a deeper explanation:

1. Because the grammar is incorrect - if it was really coming to tell us the simple meaning of the order of creation, it should have said 'barishonah'
2. In the next verse we see that the waters already existed, and so how can we say that 'In the beginning G-d created the heaven and the earth'? etc

Rashi, who almost always only focuses on the simple meaning of Torah, says that the word BEREISHIS is asking us for a deeper explanation from Medrash (a deeper level of Torah)

And the Medrash explains that the word Bereishis means beis (2) reishis. And beis can also mean 'for the sake of' reishis

1. Torah is called reishis ('the BEGINNING of His Way' - Mishlei)
2. Israel is called reishis ('the FIRST of His produce' - Yirmiyahu)

Ie Hashem created the world for Torah and for Yisrael

Another aspect Rashi brings up in his very first comment in Torah, quoting Rebi Yitzchak, is that 'IF THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WERE TO SAY TO ISRAEL ' YOU ARE BANDITS BECAUSE YOU CONQUERED THE 7 NATIONS OF CNAAN' ISRAEL SHOULD ANSWER: ' THE ENTIRE EARTH BELONGS TO THE HOLY ONE. HE CREATED IT AND GAVE IT TO WHOM HE SAW FIT. WHEN HE WANTED HE GAVE IT TO THEM, AND WHEN HE WANTED HE GAVE IT TO US.'

And is this accusation not familiar to our ears, ringing in the news almost every day of the year right up to our present times?!

World bodies, governments of almost every country in the world, the UN etc are obsessed with this issue, which is totally unreasonable, especially in our modern times when people are supposedly more civil.

Besides the above Rashi explanation, and all the other prophecies in the Bible (which the whole world accepts!), the Rebbe explains in another sicha, and many times over and over, that by giving away LAND one is putting lives at risk.

'Whoever destroys a Jewish life is considered to have destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a Jewish life is considered to have saved an entire world.'

Exchanging Land for 'peace' is unheard of in history, and it is clearly obvious to everyone, and especially the military experts, that Israel's security will be

majorly compromised if it gave away any of its Land, and this would put lives at risk, both Jewish and our enemies.

I suppose it is a good time now with the upcoming elections in America, a country which has tremendous influence on our beloved Eretz Yisrael, to add in some politics.

Please think very carefully, to vote for the candidate who is going to help Israel stand up to all the lying nations, who are lying about who the Land belongs to. We don't want to see America joining that league!

And in this process of using our voting power, we will be able to play a part in saving Jewish and Arab lives.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

RESOLUTIONS AND RESOLVE

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 September 2021 · Shabbos 2 Oct 2021 · כ"ו תשרי תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had many wonderful Yomtovim and Shabbosim.

And wishing all the travellers, safe trips home. It was great being with the ones who were here in London!

Mazal Tov to Avi for his birthday next week. We missed you and the Family in London this year! Wishing you continued success and growth Avi, with much happiness and nachas from the Family.

We now move from the blissful state of Elul and Tishrei, and we re-enter our worldly life and pursuits. But we now carry with us, all of our new acquirements that we have collected, and also armed with new RESOLUTIONS for the New Year.

In relation to this , I saw an interesting lesson that we can learn from Noach, who appears at the end of this weeks parsha, Bereishis. It was an article based on a sicha of The Rebbe Vol 35 p11-13.

There is an inner voice we have that torments us: - "Why even bother to pursue a path of spirituality and holiness, studying the Torah and fulfilling G-d's commands? After all, we are just one very small person in a very big world, and the world is often cold, and even hostile to goodness and holiness!"

We can therefore be inspired by Noach, when this voice tries to disturb us.

Noach was the only righteous person of his generation.

Yet, incredibly, this did not deter him from following his morals and ethics.

Noach RESOLVED to behave properly, despite the antagonistic behaviour of his contemporaries.

Furthermore, his conduct brought salvation to the whole world.

If Noach, who was truly on his own, was capable of this, then certainly we today, who are not alone, can courageously withstand the moral challenges of our contemporary world.

Gut Shabbos and a Good Year to all!

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

THOUGHTFUL ACTION

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 October 2022 · Shabbos 22 Oct 2022 · כ"ז תשרי תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and have had a wonderful Tishrei.

Welcome back home to all those who were travelling.

Mazal Tov to Avi whose birthday is next week. Wishing you much continued success Avi, in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much happiness. Missed seeing you all this Tishrei, and wishing Yeshayah a speedy recovery from his injury.

I would like to welcome Gavin, Jody and Sheli to our weekly email. We are so happy to re-connect, and in this way, also, to continue to have the presence of Renee ah with us! Please feel free to contribute and inform us of news from your Families.

Coming out of all the festivity of Tishrei we now return to our worldly occupations, and I saw a few interesting points relating to this which I would like to share:

- The Baal Shem Tov taught that working in a worldly occupation is comparable to studying Torah, and even greater. For everything in the world was created for the glory of Hashem. When a person uses his worldly possessions in a way prescribed by Torah, he (or she) is serving his Maker.
- In this week's Sedra Bereishis, it says that 'Enoch walked with G-d'. Enoch was a shoemaker. Yet because of his holiness, his mundane occupation did not distract him from his service of Hashem. On the contrary, we are told that with every stitch, he brought about a further degree of harmony within the spiritual spheres. (Hisvaaduyot 5749 Vol 1 p 247)

- And I think this one, again from the Baal Shem Tov (Keter Shem Tov), gives us a better idea of how we can achieve this.

Shlomo Hamelech said, 'Whatever you set YOUR HAND to do, do it with power.' (Koheles 9:10)

The Baal Shem Tov explains this to mean THOUGHTFUL ACTION [because the Hebrew word yad (hand) is related to the Hebrew letter yud, and the letter yud corresponds to the power of thought.]

Which comes to teach us that actions should be accompanied by the power of thought ie intention and understanding.

And as we go on our way, we take with us all the treasures and good resolutions, that we have accumulated over the holidays, to use throughout the year.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

OUR BEAUTIFUL ERETZ YISRAEL

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 12 October 2023 · Shabbos 14 Oct 2023 · כ"ט תשרי תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and have had a joyous Yom Tov.

Mommy and I thank the Families in California for hosting us in such a beautiful way, with splendid Yom Tovim and so much care. All the hard work has not gone unnoticed!

Mazal Tov to Avi for his birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much success in both gashmius and ruchnius, Avi, with much joy and contentment, and success with the education of your children. You and Penina should have much nachas from them BEH.

The unquestionable theme for this week has to be the tremendous trial that our whole Nation is facing all over the world, centered around the war which our brothers and sisters are fighting in ERETZ YISRAEL. And how our whole Nation is waking up, and coming together in so many different ways.

I was deeply touched by a forward that came my way, which I am attaching, but there are so many such reports of faith and courage emerging.

One simple and powerful point came out from a Zoom meeting we attended with 2 Chabad Houses in Ashkelon and Tel Aviv, and that was, that we should not under-estimate how much we can help, by doing even a small MITVAH. Especially if it is done WITH JOY.

And everyone can do this, adult and children, whether we can afford to donate or not. And our little individual effort can have the power to impact the war in a positive way, and beyond.

Chabad.org lists out some Mitzvot that we can do to help - https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/6120608/jewish/7-Things-You-C an-Do-for-Israel-Now.htm

The very first word in Torah, in Parshas Bereishis, which we read this week, is BERAISHIS - IN THE BEGINNING.

Rashi makes an amazing explanation about this in connection to EREZ YISRAEL:
(summarized):

He points out, that if the word Bereishis is coming to tell us the order of Creation, which it seems to be doing, then the grammar is incorrect. It should have said Barishonah (and there are other problems which Rashi mentions in this connection)

Torah is therefore hinting to us to look deeper!

In other parts of Torah the word Reishis refers to 1. Torah and 2. Yisrael - the People of .. (ie Be Reishis - 2 Reishis)

Ie Hashem created the world for the sake of His Torah and for the sake of Yisrael.

He then goes on to explain that Hashem gave us ERETZ YISRAEL. And in the future, if the Nations of the world will claim "You are bandits because you conquered the lands of the 7 nations of Kenaan", we should answer them " The entire earth belongs to The Holy One, Source of all Blessing. He created it and gave it to whom He saw fit.....

(Do we not see and hear this every day in the news!)

THE ENTIRE LAND OF ERETZ YISRAEL BELONGS EXCLUSVELY TO OUR JEWISH NATION (and we have no right to give away any part of it, especially when this involves our security)

Hashem should protect all our people in Eretz Yisrael, especially our brave army, air force, and navy, who are putting their lives at risk to protect us.

Gut Shabbos to all, and we should hear continual good news!

SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH

2024 / 5785

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Tuesday, 22 October 2024 · Shabbos 26 Oct 2024 · כ"ד תשרי תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Sukkos!

MAZAL TOV TO SARA AND ARON GLICK, AND GRANDPARENTS REUVEN AND CHANA LIEBA, ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY GIRL YESTERDAY - Chava (Eve) Nava! Wishing you all much nachas and many simchos! This should also add much joy for all of us in the week of Sukkos!

Mazal Tov to Avi Vogel whose birthday is next week. Thanks for being with us in London over Sukkos, and wishing you a year of much success in all your new endeavours Avi, begashmius and ruchnius and with much simchah!

Some points from a Sicha of the Rebbe Erev Simchat Torah 1984:

- The number 7 indicates connection to the natural world (7 days of creation, days of the week etc). Connected to this are the 7 days of Sukkos, where the JOY is on a natural level, even though we try and increase this joy every day.
- In contrast, the number 8 represents a state beyond nature. Connected to this are Shemini Atzeres and Simchat Torah, which are on the 8th and 9th days, where the JOY TRANSCENDS NATURE. We have the opportunity to experience unbounded joy on Shemini Atzeres and Simchat Torah. (8 reflects similarly in many other areas of Judaism)

- Atzeres also means 'protected'. This ensures that the JOY created on Shemini Atzeres and Simchat Torah will influence our whole year, and beyond, without being weakened.
- Even although the potential JOY is beyond creation, Hashem's ultimate intention is that we carry out His Service in and with the physical world (as with all Mitzvos). Therefore the HAPPINESS must be experienced by the physical body.
- One would think, that at this time of the year, when we have just finished reading the whole Torah, and we are now getting ready to start again, that we would celebrate by dedicating the day to Torah study (especially that Torah study is such a big and constant Mitzvah). Yet what do we do? THE TORAH IS TAKEN OUT WHILE CLOSED AND COVERED, AND WE DANCE WITH IT! Everyone, no matter what his level of knowledge or observance has equal opportunity with this joy!
- The happiness experienced through the year is generated by particular elements of a person's Service and personality. In contrast the happiness of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah is all-encompassing, and relates to a Jew's Essential Nature, beyond revelation

And this is drawn down through our efforts to dance, sing and be happy with the Sifrei Torah on Shemini Atzeres and Simchat Torah.

Happiness breaks down all barriers, even the barriers of exile.

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos to all.

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

BOUNDLESS KINDNESS

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 October 2025 · Shabbos 18 Oct 2025 · כ"ו תשרי תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and have had a happy Sukkos and Simchas Torah.

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Avi on his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with much success in both gashmius and ruchnius Avi, and with much nachas from all of your Family. So nice to have you here with all your Family (and all the other Family members who were with us in London for Sukkos!)

Mazal Tov to Sara and Aron Glick on the birthday of their daughter Chava Nava. And of course Mazal Tov also to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba!

I saw an interesting sicha from the Rebbe on this week's Sedra, Bereishis, about the creation of the fish and birds on the fifth day of creation. (V 1:20)

The character of the 5th day of Creation is one of BOUNDLESS KINDNESS, and Gemorra Shabbos p156a points out that people born on a Thursday (the 5th day of the week) also have this character trait.

However every Jew has the ability to tap into the formula for this abundant kindness, as follows:

The uniqueness of the 5th day is that the KINDNESS of Hashem was revealed, and this kindness was of an Infinite nature.

Rashi points out that fish and birds which were created on that day, do not toil for their sustenance. Rather they are sustained by the kindness of The Holy One Blessed Be He.

We also see the Infinite nature of this kindness in fish, which exhibit maximum proliferation, or boundless increase

Kindness is an inherent quality in all Jews (Tractate Yevamos)

However this has a nature which is limited by our feelings of self and identity, and therefore this kindness to others cannot be without limit.

The kindness of someone born on a Thursday however, when the kindness of Hashem shines, is one that transcends all limitations.

It is an unbounded kindness, extending even to self-sacrifice for the sake of helping another, without measure or limitation.

We learn how to reach this level of boundless kindness from the qualities of the fish (created on the 5th day):

- Fish are completely submerged in the water, and as such, their individual existence is not seen from the outside. (self nullification).
- Fish are also intimately bound up and united with their life source, the water. They are nullified and unified to their life source.
- And they receive the boundless blessing of proliferation

Ie in a like manner

- We need to reduce our feelings of "I" and self
- We need to work on recognising our true life source and cleaving to Him with genuine unity - through Torah and Mitzvos (which further reduces our feelings of separateness).

This gives us the capability to do kindness without measure.

- And this makes us a vessel to receive Hashem's boundless kindness.

Gut Shabbos and a wonderful New Year for all!

Bereishis ↑ Bereishis · Contents · By date בראשית

THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 October 2026 · Shabbos 10 Oct 2026 · כ"ט תשרי תשפ"ז

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and have had a Good Yom Tov!

Mazal Tov to Avi on his upcoming birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much success Avi, for you and your Family in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much joy and peace BEH!

A number of points came up in this weeks Sedra Bereishis, regarding the HUMAN PREDICAMENT, which I would like to share:

· None of the trees of the field were yet on the land and nor had any plants sprouted, because Hahem had not yet brought rain, since there was no man to work the ground (2:5). Rashi tells us that when man was created, he realised that rain was necessary, and prayed for it to fall. It then fell and the trees and plants sprouted

· The Eternal , the All Powerful then formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the soul of life (2:7) – This *double process* is unique to man and our Sages explain that the word 'formed' in this verse,(vayitzer) has 2 yuds which refer to this double process. The Baal Haturim says that the 2 yuds refer to the 2 inclinations found in man (and woman) ie the yetzer hara (evil inclination) and the yetzer tov (G-dly inclination), which are constantly battling each other. Man has free choice. Rashi says that the 2 yuds indicate the formation of man for this world and for the resurrection. Animals do not have a share in the World to Come (and Divine Judgement), and there is no double yud in reference to their formation.

· Then Hashem created for Adam a helpmate "It is not good that man is alone. I will create for him a helpmate, *ezer kenegdo."* (2:18) It is interesting

that kenegdo in Hebrew could mean complementing him, or opposite to him. Rabbi Gordon mentioned an interesting interpretation of this seeming contradiction as follows.- If a wife just says yes to everything a husband requests, this does not help him develop. If he is doing wrong in life, or not thriving in every way, *she needs to oppose him, to help him develop!*

· Adam and Chava were living a life of bliss in Gan Eden, but are then conned into eating from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil by the serpent, and are expelled from Gan Eden. This is because, by now, having this knowledge and free choice, it could mean that if they eat from the Tree of Life, which was also in Gan Eden, they could attain eternal life. And this could mean that there is the possibility that tyrants could live forever (3:22 – 24). Which no one would want. And as a consequence, the snake was cursed to crawl on it's belly and face animosity between it and man. The woman was given a future of anguish with pregnancy and birth, and domination of husband over her. Man had to now face a cursed ground resulting in hard work and sweat to produce bread, until returning to the ground from which he was taken.

The picture may look dismal, but our Sages tell us that this situation is a challenge for us and a *great opportunity, nevertheless*, to have a good quality life - To trust in Hashem, studying Torah and following it's guidances, engaging in Prayer, and doing acts of goodness and kindness.

As seen in today's Hayom Yom (27th Tishrei) "…….For a person who lives according to the Torah and the directives of our Sages lives a happy life both materially and spiritually."

Gut Shabbos to all!

נח

Noach

Bereishis 6:9 · parsha 2 of 12 in Bereishis · 2 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5777 — 1,064,340,000,000,000,000 51
2017 / 5778 — BEGINNINGS 54
2018 / 5779 — TRUST (BITACHON) 57
2019 / 5780 — KNOWLEDGE ROM THE HEIGHTS AND THE DEPTHS 59
2020 / 5781 — THE VALUE OF EARNING A LIVING 61
2021 / 5782 — THE RAINBOW 63
2022 / 5783 — BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY 65
2023 / 5784 — THE POWER OF ACTION AND FAITH 67
2024 / 5785 — TO WORK OR NOT TO WORK? 69
2025 / 5786 — RECONCILING TURBULENT AND SERENE 72
2026 / 5787 — POWER OF THE WORD 74

1,064,340,000,000,000,000

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 November 2016 · Shabbos 5 Nov 2016 · ד' חשון תשע"ז

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his first birthday! Remember with fond memories all the celebrations in the marquee tent last year BH

A few years ago (1998), Uncle Chanan gave me a very interesting book called 'Five Equations that Changed The World'.

This subject interests me very much, and it has been sitting on my bookshelf all these years tempting me to read it - when I find the time.

And I picked it up recently, and it is fascinating. I am still only just finishing the first of the 5.

I feel that what I have read so far is relevant to both last weeks Parsha Bereishis, and this weeks ie Noach.

I hope you can hold out to the end, as it will be a longer Dvar Torah than normal.

Bereishis speaks about the Creation of the world.

The first Equation in the abovementioned book is Sir Isaac Newtons equation on Gravity. (in 1600s)

To show the power of Newtons work , the author takes a long look back at the history of Mans understanding of the Universe, and at the life and work of Newton.

In short one sees Man looking up into the sky, through the ages, trying to make sense of what is going on.

Plato and Aristotle (Greeks) in about 300 BCE came up with the geocentric theory which held for many centuries. They saw that there were 2 realms , earth which is imperfect, and then the Celestial sphere around earth in which everything was perfect and in perfect uniform motion.

They brought religion and science together.

And then you see Man muddling through the centuries, sometimes Religion taking charge , and then sometimes Science in trying to understand the Universe.

In 1543 Copernicus set off a religious - scientific revolution by urging divorce from Aristotle and claiming that the Sun was at the centre of the Universe.

And also scientists were now developing telescopes and were noticing that not everything in the sky moves in a harmonious fashion.

Some bodies in the sky had eliptic paths etc

Science from here on starts to develop more, and we start to for the first time see real brilliance with Newton.

And we can only marvel at his greatness, and his contribution to the world through all his struggles.

Now throughout this period ie about 2000 years, scientists were looking and debating about how many stars there were in the sky, and were seeing about 4000

AND WHAT WAS THE OPINION OF THE JEWISH SAGES (WHICH THEY FOUND IN TORAH)?

1,064,340,000,000,000,000. (1.06 x 10 to the power 18 plus 4,340,000,000,000,000).

And this was in the time of the Talmudic Sages in the period 70BCE to 500 CE!!!

Modern calculations are now coming close to our Sages calculations.

In 1997 NASA estimated the number to be 10 to the power 21

In 2003 the Australian National University estimated 7x 10 to the power 22.

And now the link to Noach (if you can hold out)

The Rebbe says in a sicha quoting from Zohar 'In the 600th year of the 6th millennium (this corresponds to 1840 CE), the gates of supernal wisdom will be opened, as will be the wellsprings of lower wisdom. The world will then be rectified, enabling it to enter the 7th millennium.'

These upper and lower gates are alluded to in the flood of Noah where the ' floodgates of Heaven' and the 'wellsprings of the great deep' opened up and flooded the world.

The Rebbe explains that the 'Gates of Heaven' is referring to Torah Wisdom, and in particular revelation of the esoteric Torah, and ' the Wellsprings is referring to Secular Wisdom ie development of Science and Technology.

Both of these started flourishing in the period mentioned in the Zohar!

This is heading to the Messianic era in the 7th millennium when 'the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed.' - Rambam,

IS IT NOT ALMOST VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE?

Gut Shabbos

BEGINNINGS

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 October 2017 · Shabbos 21 Oct 2017 · א' חשון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and that those how were travelling are all settled down from the trips.

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his upcoming second birthday. Wishing Pesach and Chanie much nachas from him.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing his Nursing School entrance exams. Hatzlacha Rabbah Hirshy.

Mazal Tov to Chanan, for his 25th year of service to Radiology. Why did I have to find this out from someone who saw it on Facebook!. Wishing you many more years of service to Medicine and Science Chanan - See below

Many BEGINNINGS were evident recently:

Bereshis

We are now starting to read the 5 Books of Chumash from the beginning again, spread out over a year

Rambam's Mishneh Torah

Both cycles have just started again.

Some people are learning 1 chapter a day over 3 years, and some are learning 3 chapters a day over 1 year.

The beauty about Mishneh Torah is that it is completely practical halacha, and covers the entire Oral Law. It is an amazing achievement by the Rambam, to have contracted the whole Torah, in such a concise and organised manner,

into such a practical application, which everyone can access. Ie not just the learned.

I have summarised these Chapters in English and have a Comprehensive and a Short Summary, in case anyone would like to use them.

New Year

We have just come out of the highly inspirational month of Tishrei, and landing back down on earth to restart all of our New Year activities.

And we bring all our new treasures into the Year with us, from Tishrei.

Noach (This week's sedra)

The world has been destroyed by the Flood, and Noach and his Family are starting afresh, with a promise from Hashem that He will not destroy the world again.

Baal Shem Tov

Again in relation to this week's Sedra, Noach, The Rebbe points out a quote from the Zohar - 'In the 6th century of the 6th millennium, the portals of wisdom above, and the fountains of wisdom below, will open.

This date works out to be at the time of the Baal Shem Tov, who was born 1698, The Magid, and Alte Rebbe.

Our Sages explain that prior to the era of Mashiach, there will be a FLOOD of knowledge covering the world

1. Scientific knowledge within the world
2. Torah's Divine Wisdom that utterly transcends it.

Eventually the 2 types of knowledge will merge, resulting in a true understanding of Earth, Man, and G-d.

Already the connection between Torah and Science is becoming more and more evident.

Gut Shabbos to all with new resolutions and new beginnings, for a productive year.

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

TRUST (BITACHON)

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 October 2018 · Shabbos 13 Oct 2018 · ד' חשון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Avi on his birthday this week. We celebrated it the previous week when he was in London, but we can wish you again a wonderful year Avi in both material and Spirtual matters, with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week. And this is a special birthday because it is Netanel's opsheren, as it is his third birthday! We miss you Netanel, and you should have a very happy year!

Mazal Tov to Mendel Goodman, Devorah Leah's brother, who had a baby girl.

And we are so happy to have Baty and Family with us on their surprise visit to London! Next time Shmueli should also come. Enjoy.

The magazine Chayenu has started featuring The Gate of Trust from the book of the 11th Century Spanish scholar Rabeinu Bachaya ibn Pekuda, ie Chovos Halevavos - Duties of the Hearts.

It caught my interest and I thought maybe we could explore this area.

The Rebbe once explained the following about trust (Toras Menachem vol 9 p124):

' A Jew is not deficient in sustenance, he is deficient in his trust of G-d.

From Heaven there is an abundance of sustenance. However, if one is deficient in trust, then the sustenance does not reach us. (chas veshalom)

Bitachon is like a tap. When we have it, our blessings pour through...'

Introduction:

The root of the word bitachon, is betach, which means certainty.

SO BITACHON IS NOT ONLY A BELIEF IN HASHEM'S ABILITY, BUT A FEELING OF CERTAINTY THAT EVERYTHING WILL BE GOOD, TO THE EXTENT THAT IT SURROUNDS US WITH TRANQUILITY.

Another element of the word bitachon is that it contains the word 'tach' - plaster.

Ie, like in a good friendship where the friends trust each other, the greater the friendship, the greater the BOND, and the greater the certainty that each will only do what is in the others best interest.

Similarly when we develop this kind of 'cemented' relationship with Hashem, then certainly a loving G-d, who is the ultimate of good, will provide for each and every Jew, all that he needs.

In the words of the author, Rabeinu Bachaya ibn Pekuda:

'Having discussed in the preceding Gate, the obligation to assume the service of G-d, I think it is appropriate to follow this with what is needed above all things by a servant of G-d, and that is TRUST in G-d regarding all his needs.

For it is of great benefit in both religious and secular affairs.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and success in all our new year pursuits.

KNOWLEDGE ROM THE HEIGHTS AND THE DEPTHS

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 October 2019 · Shabbos 2 Nov 2019 · ד' חשון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Netanel Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year in California Netanel!

Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his first birthday, also next week. Wishing you a wonderful year in Stamford Hill Yosef!

I saw a very interesting comment on a pasuk from this week's Sedra, Noach. (from the Gutnick Chumash, based on talks from the Rebbe)

The pasuk was 'In the 600th year of Noach's life..all the wellsprings of the great depths burst forth, and the apertures of the skies opened up' Verse 7:11 - FLOOD

In the Zohar, the following prediction is recorded:

'in the 600th year of the 6th millennium, (this works out to be 5500 or 1740 and onwards), there will be an opening of THE SUPERNAL GATES OF WISDOM, AND THE LOWER WELLSPRINGS OF WISDOM, preparing the world for the 7th millennium (ie Shabbos, - the final Redemption)

This is just like a person prepares himself on Friday for Shabbos, when the sun heads downwards.' - FLOOD OF KNOWLEDGE

The Zohar links this prediction to the above pasuk in Noach.

By the year 1840, 2 major schools of thought had caused revolutions in their spheres of influence.

In the spiritual area ('the apertures of the skies'), the Chassidic movement had introduced mysticism and Kabalah.

In the secular area ('the wellsprings of the great depths'), the industrial revolution had reached its peak.

Now, we can understand how the Coming of Mashiach is connected with 'the earth will be filled with the Knowledge of G-d' with the foretaste of Kabalah etc, but how is this linked to the lower waters of technological development?

One of the prophesies to do with the time of the redemption is that 'all FLESH will see together that Hashem is speaking,' (Yeshayah), ie it will be discernable to the physical senses.

The phenomenal scientific development over the last 150 years, has brought to our senses, phenomena which previously would have been deemed impossible or supernatural ie man is able to see and hear from one end of the world to the other instantaneously (through TV, radio, phones, and mobile phones)

And therefore the concept of there being 'An Eye that sees, and an Ear that hears, and all your deeds are Recorded', is no longer imaginary!!

This is why the Zohar linked also the scientific revolution to the Coming of Mashiach.

May this be very soon in our days!

Gut Shabbos to all

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

THE VALUE OF EARNING A LIVING

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 October 2020 · Shabbos 24 Oct 2020 · ו' חשון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Netanel whose birthday is tomorrow. Wishing you a fun year Netanel with lots of learning!

Mazal Tov to Yosef whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a happy year Yosef!

In this week's Sedra Noach, we see the dove leaving the ark, plucking an olive branch and bringing it back to Noach, indicating that the flood had receded.

And Rashi then comments from the Sages '..Let my food be bitter like the olive, from the Hand of The Holy One, Source of Blessing, rather than sweet as honey from the hands of human beings.'

Related to this I saw the following points this week:

Baal Shem Tov - Meor Einayim Shabbos p451

The Baal Shem Tov taught that working in a worldly occupation can be equivalent, or even greater than studying Torah.

Because everything in the world was created for the Glory of Hashem, and when a person uses worldly items, in the way that Torah has prescribed, he (or she) is serving their Maker

The Rebbe Rashab - Shmuos Vesippurim Vol 1 p 78

It took many years for the Rebbe Rashab to decide about becoming the next Lubavitcher Rebbe, after his father passed away.

He later shared what prompted him to consent:

'The Mitteler Rebbe writes that toiling in business faithfully (BeEmunah) is greater than studying Torah lishmah (for its own sake and without any ulterior motives - a very high level)

Being so, it is probably more challenging as well

I was therefore afraid to undertake that mission, and I chose this job instead'...

The Rebbe Rashab - Likutei Sichos Vol 1 p 224

One of the chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab was a scholar who had an excellent mind.

One day he began to manufacture galoshes, and in due course he became deeply involved in his business.

Seeing him the Rebbe Rashab commented ' I have seen feet in galoshes, but a head in galoshes..?!'

Our Sages

Many of our Sages worked as menial labourers to earn a living:

Hillel was a woodcutter; R Oshiya, R Chanina and R Yochanan were shoemakers; R Yehuda was a baker; and others worked as blacksmiths, netweavers, tailors, diggers, and porters.

Gut Shabbos to all

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

THE RAINBOW

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 October 2021 · Shabbos 9 Oct 2021 · ג' חשון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year of growth and happiness. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Mazal Tov to Yosef whose birthday and opsheren is this coming week. Looking forward to seeing you with your tzitzis and a kapel like a big boy Yosef BEH. Michayil el Chayil.

Zohar

Hashem told Noach that he would never again destroy the world with a flood.

And then he told him that the RAINBOW is a sign of an everlasting covenant.

These two are not the same (and are represented by rainbows of different colour)

At present rainbows appear faint, and are a reminder that the Flood will not be repeated.

At the time of Redemption a different kind of rainbow will appear, which will be bright and vivid.

It will adorn itself with it's colours like a bride adorned for her wedding.

It will beam down brightly onto the earth and signal Moshiach's imminent arrival.

G-d will then remember the covenant that languishes in exile, and restore it to it's glory with the Redemption

Baal HaTurim

I understood the above better when I saw the Baal Haturim on the verse (9:9) - I, (Hashem), for my part, am going to set up My Covenant with you and with your descendants after you.

He points out something so interesting, looking at the 4 Hebrew words in this verse - mekim es brisi itchem ie If you look at the last letter of each of those words, it spells mesim - the dead.

Ie It is referring to the period of techias hamesim - Revival of the Dead!

(I think this is because the verse is saying that the covenant is with you and your descendants ie with each of us individually)

May it be soon in our time!

Gut Shabbos to all!

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 October 2022 · Shabbos 29 Oct 2022 · ד' חשון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Netanel and much success with all your school work and activities.

Mazal Tov to Yosef who also has a birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much growth and achievement in all areas Yosef.

I got an interesting picture today of our Family, from Sid Davidoff, from his the Barmitzvah in 1959.

Even in these early years, soon after the war, I was surprised to see how the Family was already growing, and it reminded me of one of the themes in this week's Sedra, Noach, of PRU UREVU - BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY.

So I thought I would share this picture, and share an interesting Rashi that I saw this week on this theme.

Thanks for the picture Sid, and everyone can have fun trying to recognize who is who!

The words of Torah are very precise, and one also gets glimpses of how sharp is Rashi.

In the beginning of the Sedra, when Noach and his Family are entering the Ark (7:7) it says 'And Noach and his sons, his wife and his son's wives, entered the Ark..'

Here Rashi notes that the order of the text indicates that the men were grouped separately and the women were grouped separately. He then con-

cludes that this indicates that marital relations were forbidden in the Ark, since the world was in a state of distress.

In yesterday's portion of the Sedra (8:15)), Noach and his Family are now leaving the Ark at the end of the flood, and what does the text say? 'Hashem spoke to Noach saying, 'Leave the Ark, you and your wife, and your sons and their wives... AND BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY ON THE EARTH.'

And Rashi points out the change in order of listing of the men and women in the verse. Here the order is husband and wife!

BH, there has been much further multiplication for all of our Families since 1959, and for our Jewish Nation in general.

Wishing all those who still need to find their partners, to find them soon, and fulfil the very first Mitzvah of Torah - PRU UREVU.

Gut Shabbos to all

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

THE POWER OF ACTION AND FAITH

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 October 2023 · Shabbos 21 Oct 2023 · ו׳ חשון תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday tonight. Wishing you a happy and successful year Netanel. It was nice seeing you again in LA over Sukkos BH!

Mazal Tov to Yosef who has a birthday this coming week. Wishing you also a happy and successful year Yosef!

"In every generation we have enemies trying to annihilate us, but G-d Almighty saves us from their hands." - Hagaddah.

I saw an interesting article from "Hebrew Word of the Week" (Rabbis Kalmenson and Abraham) which explores the POWER OF FAITH AND HOW TO DEVELOP IT, which relates to current events facing our People "

One of the Hebrew words for Faith is EMUNAH

- The minimum requirement of faith is the belief in G-d who is the cause of all existence.
- But this faith can and should be developed. The root of the word Emunah is uman which means a craftsman or artisan or a practitioner etc. All these people have become expert in their fields by developing their basic talents, through practicing, and constant cultivation.
- The modern Hebrew word for exercising is imunim.

Likewise, faith is an ongoing process of developing our basic 'talent' of belief. It is not a static noun, but a dynamic verb.

- The journey of faith requires us also to understand as much as we can, and then allocate faith to what is beyond our grasp. But with practice, our knowledge increases, and this dance between faith and knowledge is the expression of the perpetual journey of faith.
- But what is most important, and what really relates to us now in the current events, is that THE MORE WE DO, THE MORE WE COME TO UNDERSTAND, AND TO BELIEVE. Mitzvot which we perform therefore, are not only the fruit of faith, but also its nourishing roots, and brings us closer to Hashem.

All of our small individual Mitzvot that we can contribute to the current situation, will therefore carry much power, and our combined efforts, and unity of purpose, will bring Hashem's assistance against all of our enemies.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

TO WORK OR NOT TO WORK?

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 31 October 2024 · Shabbos 2 Nov 2024 · א' חשון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, have had wonderful Yomtovim, and have all returned back to regular schedules!

Yom Tov here was very nice having the Vogel Family with us, plus guests, and it was also great having Lyss (Pollock) and Nadav join with us from Birmingham and Leeds BH!

Mazal Tov again to Avi for his birthday today. It was great being with you and the whole Family over Sukkos etc Avi. Thank you all, and wishing you a shnas hatzlochah, and a carry through of all the brochos from Hashem over Yomtov into your whole year!

Mazal Tov to Netanel whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a great year Netanel, with success in all your schoolwork and leisure activities!

Attached find our updated Family Tree to reflect the new addition of Chava Nava Glick BH. Mazal Tov again!

The theme that I found interesting this week was about WORK, relating to this week's Sedra Noach, which I learnt from a maamer of the Alte Rebbe, and also from the Sedra itself. I would like to share 3 points

Maamer (from Torah Or much summarized)

- The 'many waters' of the flood of Noach are compared to the 'many waters' described

by Shlomo HaMelech in the verse "The many turbulent waters are unable to extinguish the great inner love." (within ourselves)

The 'many turbulent waters' are referring to the worries and EXERTIONS OF WORK that we need to employ to earn a living. And this turbulence is unable to drown the hidden love within the soul of every Jew.

Explanation:

Before coming down to this world, our G-dly soul had been basking in the rays of light of the Shechinah.

It now gets enclothed in a physical body, and has to TOIL and WORK with all the challenges it has to face in this world, and it comes to a state of discomfort and darkness.

It may therefore seem that it not worth all the trouble and our impulses would want to opt for an easy way out.

But the opposite is true. The Alte Rebbe explains that this lowly world has its source from a place higher than where our souls originated.

This can also be seen with food for example, which is apparently at a 'lower level' than human beings. Yet the food has the power to keep us alive.

Similarly, by engaging with the world and all its darkness through WORK, and by battling against our impulses, and contemplating on Hashems Creation through prayer, we have the opportunity to come to a greater light, out of the darkness, than our original source.

Similarly the floods of Noach were not just a punishment, but their essential function was to purify the world.

- Another way of understanding this is to look at the Hebrew word for Ark which is teiva.

Teiva also means 'letters (of the alphabet)'. Ie in the same way as Noah's Ark was not at all affected by the flood, and on the contrary, the flood waters kept raising it higher. Similarly, in the turbulence of our WORK and challenges, we can be elevated by entering into our teiva, being the words of prayer, where the turbulence raises us higher

Sedra

- When the dove returned to the Ark (V8:11) and it had an olive leaf in its beak, Rashi

comments as follows: "Let my food be bitter like an olive from Hashem's hand (referring to HARD WORK), rather than sweet as honey from the hands of human beings (referring to receiving charity)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh!

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

RECONCILING TURBULENT AND SERENE

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 October 2025 · Shabbos 25 Oct 2025 · ג' חשון תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and settled back into work after a busy Tishrei

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her Batmitzvah. I saw pictures of you and your party, Eliana, and it was so beautiful BH. Wishing you a year of much continued beauty and happiness, with much achievement in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week. BH much celebration in LA this week. Wishing you a great year Netanel with much achievement in school and all your activities BEH.

This week's Sedra, Noach, speaks about the world flood, but we also have our own personal difficulties which can flood our lives.

The Alte Rebbe in Torah Or mentions that mayim rabim, the many waters, are the worries that we have about making a living and our daily challenges, and these try to drown out our deep hidden love for Hashem

However the flood waters are also called mei noach, ie serene waters. Because our challenges can carry us up to higher and more refined levels, in the same way that the Ark rose above the waters, to bring one to a level of serenity, when the waters recede.

(The Hebrew word for ark is teivah, which in Hebrew also means words. Ie The words of Torah and Prayer can lift us above our many worries)

This paradox came up quite often in the Sedra, and I heard a connected teaching from the Baal Shem Tov on V 6:17, speaking about the window , or light, in the Ark.

The Hebrew word used for this light is tzohar.

The Baal Shem Tov explains, that the Hebrew word for troubles is tzara, which is the same letters as tzohar, just in a different order.

This means, that in life when we have tzara, we should not go looking all over the place for solutions. The solution and light (tzohar) can be found within the problem.

And by finding the solution we see that the problem was really an opportunity to be greater than before.

He concludes, "How do we access the tzohar in the tzara?"

By finding a teacher, delving into the 'ark' of Torah, and the 'ark' of prayer and meditation.

Gut Shabbos to all

Noach ↑ Noach · Contents · By date נח

POWER OF THE WORD

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 October 2026 · Shabbos 17 Oct 2026 · ו' חשון תשפ"ז

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and settling back into the worldly life of Cheshvan, after all the excitement of Tishrei.

Mazal Tov to Micaela Fasman on her birthday next week. Micaela and her husband Justin newly joined our Group 2 weeks ago. Wishing you a wonderful year with much growth and happiness, especially together BEH!

Mazal Tov to Netanel Davidoff on his birthday tonight. So nice to see you over Yom Tov Netanel, and wishing you a year of much success at school and all your other activities BEH!

Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his birthday next week. Wishing you also a year of lots of success at school Yosef, and all of your other activities BEH!

Wishing long life to Janine Milner, Anthony and Gillian on the upcoming yohrtzeit of Uncle Henry ah next week. We have such fond memories of Uncle Henry and how we would always bring our medical problems to him, and he would patiently and caringly answer them all, and give treatments. His neshamah should have an aliyah!

This week we are in the Parshah of Noach and it is interesting how a few events came together this week, seemingly by "coincidence"!

Mommy's English birthday comes up at the end of next week and some of our children gave us some vouchers for a day trip to the ZOO.

And of course "coincidentally", Noach is about all the animals etc in the Ark

And today, “coincidentally”, I saw an interesting article in Chabad.org titled “What You Need To Know About Visiting The Zoo”! – Reflecting on it’s beauty, associated halachah, and it’s simple enjoyment.

See attached if interested:
https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/7540726/jewish/What-You-Need-to-Know-About-Visiting-the-Zoo.htm

And in connection with the flood, I heard the following from Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon:

The Baal Shem Tov explains that the flood of Noach is not only a historical event, but it applies to each one of our own lives.

The Hebrew word for Ark is *Teva, *and it can also be translated as ‘WORD’.

Our own personal raging flood waters are all the trials and tribulations and worries that we have in trying to earn a living and other challenges, which try to drown our soul.

The solution is, as Torah commands us, ”Enter the Teva, ie enter into the words of Torah and Prayer – and then you will be saved from the flood”.

The above is the entering into the Ark, and later Noach is commanded to leave the Ark at the end of the flood.

The Baal Shem Tov follows up with the above theme to explain, that there comes a time in our lives when we have to go out, and engage fully with the world, and temporarily leave the Book (the Tevah)

But we minimally retain Praying 3 times per day and establishing fixed times for learning Torah, morning and night.

And work to make the world a dwelling place for Hashem.

Gut Shabbos to all

לך לך

Lech Lecha

Bereishis 12:1 · parsha 3 of 12 in Bereishis · 3 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5777 — FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH CONFUSION 77
2017 / 5778 — THE PATH 79
2018 / 5779 — TRANQUILITY 81
2019 / 5780 — POWERUL SIMPLICITY 83
2020 / 5781 — SEPARATION 86
2021 / 5782 — HAIR CUTTING 89
2022 / 5783 — ANALYSING WORK 91
2023 / 5784 — HUSBANDS AND WIVES 94
2024 / 5785 — THE STARS 96
2025 / 5786 — A PARABLE 97
2026 / 5787 — TAKING CHARGE OF OUR DESTINY 99

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH CONFUSION

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 November 2016 · Shabbos 12 Nov 2016 · י"א חשון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you Hatzlocha with everything Shmuly.

I saw an interesting story last week which links in with this weeks Sedra Lech Lecha.

The story is short and came from one of the Rebbe's secretaries R Yudel Krinsky.

Because he was a secretary, the Rebbe would give him hand written papers of his to type up.

When Rabbi Krinsky first saw these papers he was overwhelmed.

1. The handwriting was tight

2. It was surrounded by ommisions and additions

3. There were asterisks and arrows giving different instructions

Although Rabbi Krinsky did not say anything, the Rebbe noticed the expression on his face and said:

'Don't let the arrows confuse you.

Take word by word, line by line, with consistency.

You will see, everything will be in order.'

Rabbi Krinsky then concluded that 'Those words meant much more than typing tips.

They gave me direction for all my years of working with the Rebbe, and for life in general.'

In this weeks Sedra Hashem says to Avraham 'Go away from your land, from your birthplace, and from your fathers house, and go to the land which I will show you.'

Avraham has to leave his whole comfort zone, go through all the difficulties of travel, AND HE DOES NOT EVEN KNOW WHICH LAND HE IS GOING TO.

On this Rashi makes a beautiful comment ie Hashem did not immediately reveal the land to him so that he would get rewarded for EVERY WORD OF INSTRUCTION.(if Hashem would have told him the land straight away, he would only have been rewarded for obeying one mitzva)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and the strength to take steps through complexity, one at a time.

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

THE PATH

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 October 2017 · Shabbos 28 Oct 2017 · ח' חשון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

This week we have been learning the Laws of Personal Development (Hilchos Deos) in Rambam (one chapter a day) and the Parsha is Lech Lecha.

They both talk about creating a PATH for one's life, how to work on oneself to find the MIDDLE WAY, and guidelines on how to work with others, all of which are very interesting.

Most of this was in Rambam, and of course Lech Lecha ('go to you' or 'go to your true higher self') describes the JOURNEY of Avraham.

A sample from this week's Rambam:

To the physically unwell, the bitter tastes sweet and the sweet tastes bitter, and they reject healthful foods which they need.

Similarly those who are morally unwell desire and love bad traits, and are lazy to follow the good path.

The Rambam suggests that the morally ill should go to the wise, who are healers of the soul, and who will teach one how to acquire proper traits, and return to the good path.

Someone who is full of pride should train himself to practice the opposite extreme until the arrogance is uprooted from his heart.

Then he can shift himself to a middle path, in between the 2 extremes.

Similarly , this procedure can be followed for any bad trait a person has acquired or is part of his nature.

However there are some traits, where a person is forbidden to even follow the middle path, but has to adopt the opposite extreme completely. For example anger.

We should train ourselves not to become angry even when it seems appropriate to become angry. If it is vitally important to be angry to motivate family or community, it should be an angry front with an inner calm. Ie not real anger.

The early Sages said, anyone who becomes angry is like one who worships idols. If he was a wise man, his wisdom leaves him, if he was a prophet, his prophecy leaves him. The life of the irate is not true life.

This is the way of the righteous: they accept humiliation, but do not humiliate others. They listen when they are shamed, but do not answer. They do this with love and are joyous in their suffering.

Of them it states 'And those that love Him are like the sun when it comes out in its strength.'

Gut Shabbos to all

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

TRANQUILITY

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 October 2018 · Shabbos 20 Oct 2018 · י"א חשון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV TO SHMULY AND DEVORAH LEAH ON THE BIRTH OF A SON BH!!

And this coming week is also Shmuly's birthday. So double Mazal Tov. We look forward to the sholom zochor tomorrow and the bris next week BEH. Wishing you all many simchos and much nachas from all your children. Michayil el chayil.

I would like to continue along the theme of TRUST - bitachon which we started last week from the Book Chovos Halevavos, which I am finding to be such an exciting subject.

I find it exciting because one can apply it to daily individual areas of one's life, no matter where one is up to.

Even random incidences, but especially areas where we may be struggling.

So Rabeinu Bachya Ibn Pekuda says as follows:

'Among its benefits to him in religious life is TRANQUILITY OF SOUL in reliance on G-d, may He be exalted, as the servant is bound to rely on his master. Because if the person does not put his trust in G-d, he places his trust in what is other than G-d (ie themselves or other people).....'

So when a person is struggling with a problem in life, it is of course normal to put in all one's own efforts, and one is also yearning for Hashems blessings for success.

The Rebbe writes the following in a letter to someone:

' You have 2 options -

1. Until you see the fulfilment of the blessing, you can go about anxious that perhaps, chas veshalom, the blessing will not be fulfilled.

And then after the blessing is fulfilled, you will again worry saying ' Why did I have to waste so much energy worrying for nothing? (and why was my trust so weak)

2. Alternatively you can be strong in your trust and faith in G-d, that He will lead you on the proper path, and fulfil all the blessings with which you have been bestowed.

Afterwards when you see the fulfilment of the blessings, you can tell yourself 'See how well I handled myself, in that I did not worry about matters over which there was no need for concern!!'

Rabeinu Bachya describes the 2 situations of

1. When we trust in G-d, as 'connecting to a freshwater spring'
2. When we trust in ourselves and other people as 'hewing for themselves cracked cisterns'

We don't have to have it all, but we can start working with this immediately.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and many experiences of tranquillity of soul.

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

POWERUL SIMPLICITY

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 November 2019 · Shabbos 9 Nov 2019 · י"א חשון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Mommy for her upcoming birthday. Wishing you many happy years and in good health till 120!

Mazal Tov Shmuly on your upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you much success in both your gashmius and ruchnius pursuits, with joy!

Mommy and I heard a very interesting talk this week from a Sicha of The Rebbe (Likutei Sichos vol 25) on this week's Parsha Lech Lecha.

The Parsha starts off, 'Hashem says to Avraham, go from your land ..... etc. and then goes on to say what rewards Avraham will get for this.

The Ramban asks a question 'What is the reward going to be for?' It doesn't seem to say what Avraham has to do to get the very big rewards that are mentioned, except to leave his land and go to Eretz Yisrael?

The Rebbe addresses this question by starting to ask another question ie

WHY DOES TORAH NOT TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT AVRAHAM BEFORE HASHEM COMES TO SPEAK TO HIM AND INSTRUCTS HIM TO LEAVE HIS LAND?

With Noach, it tells us something about him ie he was a tzadik etc?

The Rebbe answers this in a very interesting way as follows

Torah is not just telling us what Hashem said to Avraham.

The deeds of our Forefathers are a guide for us, how to live.

It is telling us how the whole of Klal Yisrael started and how we should act.

In life you get all types of people, all at different levels of achievement in many areas, both secular and religious.

Even though all these achievements are highly respected and encouraged, they are as nothing in relation to Hashem! (this is not mentioned in the sicha, but an example would be, that the number one and a billion, are equally irrelevant to infinity!)

And so this one verse is telling us:

1. I am choosing to speak to you Avraham out of all the people in the world - 'Hashem says to Avraham...
2. And this is also indicating that it is the start and basis of Klal Yisrael - Avraham is one of the Forefathers
3. Hashem now gives Avraham an instruction to do something which Hashem wants (a Mitzvah) - The Infinite is asking a tiny creature to do something for Him.
4. This instruction is independent of any quality or achievement of Avraham - Torah does not mention anything about Avraham's life or qualities (most of what we know is from Midrash). THIS MEANS THAT ANY JEW HAS THIS CAPABILITY OF CONNECTING TO THE INFINITE HASHEM THROUGH HIS MITZVOT.
5. The rewards are very great from this connection - ' ....I will make you into a great Nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing etc.....'
6. Also the Alte Rebbe explains why in particular this Mitzvah was chosen to be the start of our Nation, in relation to the above points:

a. 'Leave your land (artzecha)' from the root ratzon - your will - ie go away from your wills and desires b. 'Leave your birthplace (moladetcha)' - leave your comfort zone and middos - emotions c. 'And leave the house of your father' - father refers to Chochma - ie leave your intellect.

IN SHORT THIS MEANS THAT ANY JEW HAS THE POTENTIAL TO RECEIVE GREAT REWARDS BY SIMPLY CARRYING OUT THE MITZVOS HASHEM WANTS US TO DO, AND THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT ANY UNDERSTANDING, ACHIEVEMENT OR SOPHISTICATION.

And this also answers the question of the Ramban as to why Hashem doesn't tell Avraham what he has to do to achieve this reward? Hashem just tells him to go to Eretz Yisrael. But what does he have to do there?

This is because the great reward is linked to just doing what Hashem has asked. The reward is there straight away, as soon as one starts the Mitzvah! The connection to Infinity has started.

The achievements of a non-Jew are also all good in improving the world etc, but their reach is limited to just what a human being can do.

Gut Shabbos to all. Ashrenu mah tov chelkenu - How happy are we, how great is our portion!

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

SEPARATION

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 October 2020 · Shabbos 31 Oct 2020 · י"ג חשון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

There are 2 very important Rahels to mention today:

- Today is the Yohrtzeit of Rachel Imeinu, and traditionally 1000's of people go to pray at Kever Rachel, in Israel, that Hashem should have mercy on us in her merit.
- And next week is the birthday of Rahel our personal imeinu. Wishing Mommy Mazal Tov for a beautiful year, with much nachas from all of our children, and in good health!

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday which is also next week. Wishing you much success in both gashmius and ruchnius Shmuly, and continued success in the chinuch of your children together with Devorah Leah.

In this weeks Sedra Lech Lecha, we discuss Lot who is related to Avraham.

They were travelling together but Lot had evil tendencies, and so at some point that had to SEPARATE TEMPORARILY from each other (13:9)

Later Avraham fought a war to save him, and separated again thereafter, but if we look further down the line over many generations, we see that the holy sparks that were hidden deep inside of Lot, became revealed. Ie his descendants were Ruth the Moabite (who became the ancestor of David Hamelech, and thereby Mashiach himself!), and Naamah the Ammonite (a wife of King Solomon), who now re-joined the 'tent' of Avraham.

We learn therefore that sometimes, despite our best efforts to befriend 'toxic' people, it may be necessary to SEPARATE TEMPORARILY, and with pray-

ers and Hashems help, they will one day realize their Divine potential. - Rabbi Wisnefsky - Based on works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

In connection with the above, I also read a very interesting story this week, about someone who was working against missionaries (Rabbi Kravitz from LA)

In one case there was a Jewish boy from a family, who got involved with a Christian group, and he became completely uncommunicative and SEPARATED from his family, and from anyone seeking to help him.

Rabbi Kravitz advised the parents to write to the Rebbe for advice.

Part of the Rebbe's reply was very powerful, as follows:

'..For when it comes to a Jewish heart, one never knows what and how, will come the moment of truth, and proper response.

It is my duty to call your attention to the following which I trust you will accept in the spirit that it is offered - All of the members of a Jewish family constitute one organism.

And when one part of it needs special treatment it can be done in one of 2 ways

- Directly trying to help or treat that part
- Indirectly by strengthening the other parts of the 'body', particularly those parts that govern the functions of the entire organism.

Applying the illustration to the present case, it is well to bear in mind that the father of the family is called the baal habayis - the head, and the wife is called akeres habayis (the mainstay) - the heart.

Thus, strengthening the commitment of the parents to Torah and Mitzvos, has a beneficial effect upon all the members of the family in the same direction.

Of course this may sometimes entail certain difficulties by having to make some changes, perhaps even radical changes in regard to habits and lifestyle etc. But on the other hand, considering the far reaching benefits, and especially the fact that parents truly would not consider anything too difficult if it can be beneficial to their children, of what significance can any difficulty be..'

Rabbi Kravits has used this advice many times over and over to the many cases he deals with, and with many success stories.

This has made families realise that there is something they can do, which will be beneficial to them as well.

Even before they see an effect on their children, they can derive comfort from their renewed involvement with Judaism.

Gut Shabbos to all

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

HAIR CUTTING

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 October 2021 · Shabbos 16 Oct 2021 · י׳ חשון תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Yosef on your opsherenish this evening, on your third birthday. Wishing you to have a happy year full of many new Mitzvos!

And Mazal Tov to Shmuly, exactly 1 week later, next Thursday. Wishing you an amazing year, and with lots of nachas for you and Devorah Leah, from Yosef, and all your children!

We have just come back from Yosef's opsherenish in shul, and what a celebration! It was like a little wedding BH!

It is a Jewish custom not to shave or cut a baby boys hair until his third birthday, and the Rebbe tells us in the Hayom Yom of 4th Iyar, that this custom is of great importance.

It is an educational act of leaving uncut the peyot (sidelocks), and accustoming the boy to wear a tallit katan, to recite the early morning brachot, birkat hamazon, and the bedtime shema.

And so now we know why it should be a big celebration!

Haircutting also came up this week in the Rambam 1-chapter-a-day, where we are learning the Laws of entry into the Bet HaMikdash (Temple)

It is a Torah Prohibition that a Kohen (including of course the Kohen Gadol) is not allowed to enter into the Mikdash (from the Altar and inwards) with long hair.

The Priests weren't always on duty in the Temple, and were therefore allowed to have long hair outside of the Temple. But before coming in, their hair had to be cut and neat, and their clothes laundered etc.

The definition of long hair, is hair left uncut for 30 days.

The Kohen Gadol has more strict rules because he is always in the Bet HaMikdash, and therefore his hair must always be cut.

Similarly, it is forbidden for anyone to enter the Mikdash (from the Courtyard of the Israelites) with unkempt long hair.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and continued simchos!

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

ANALYSING WORK

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 November 2022 · Shabbos 5 Nov 2022 · י"א חשון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday next week. Wishing you much success and happiness Shmuly. This week's Dvar Torah certainly reflects your hard work! Hatzlachah rabbah!

Following up from what Aaron (Glick) mentioned in his Dvar Torah last week, that Hashem usually does not give clear instructions to key figures in Tanach, we see this with Avraham in this week's Sedra Lech Lecha.

Hashem just instructs Avraham to leave his home, his country etc and travel to the land which I will show you! And Avraham went!

I learnt an interesting Sicha of the Rebbe this week (from Sicha 4 in Vol 16 of Likutei Sichos) which discusses this journey, and makes an ANALYSIS OF WORK, which I will try and summarise. (apologies for length)

The Midrash relates (Bereishis Rabbah 39:8) that when Avraham was travelling through Aram Naharaim (on his way to EY) he saw people eating, drinking and acting foolishly, and he said 'I hope my portion will not be in this land.'

When he reached the high ground of Tzur (in Canaan - future Israel) and saw people busy weeding and hoeing etc, he said 'If only my portion were to be in this land.' Ie He saw that the people were WORKING HARD ON THE LAND.

Hashem said to him, 'To your descendants I will give this land.'

Regarding the IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF WORK, our Sages say (Sanhedrin 99b):

Rabbi Elazar said, "Every person is created to toil, as it says, 'Man is born to toil.' I do not know whether he was created for verbal toil - or whether he was created for physical toil. ... you must say that he was created for verbal (conversational) toil. And still I do not know whether it is for the toil of Torah or for conversational toil. ... you must say that he was created for the toil of Torah."

Ie The Gemorra is listing THREE TYPES OF WORK

But this is unclear:

Is man's sole purpose for creation really just for physical toil? Avraham saw the physical toil.

And as far as 'for conversation' does not Rambam state that most of man's conversation is extremely undesirable?

And why work at all?

Our Sages have said (Bava Metzia) that 'A man prefers one measure of his own (which he has toiled for), than 9 measures of his fellow's (which he gets as a gift).'

A person derives no pleasure from things he receives gratuitously. On the contrary, such gifts shame him, being referred to as "the bread of shame." This is because a person is ingrained with the imperative to reach his ultimate purpose in life in not only being a "recipient," but by also being a "giver," similar to his Creator.

Summarising how the questions are resolved:

Physical toil - This is performing our mundane work within the world, and with faith. This takes us part of the way, but is still limited

Conversational toil - This is achieved with prayer, whereby man can reach higher than the world ('a ladder standing on earth, with its top reaching heavenward'). But this is still due to our own effort.

Toil of Torah - It is the Torah of Hashem, and is therefore totally unlimited and beyond our own abilities. We can therefore link to this unlimited nature, which can therefore create a new reality on earth.

It is therefore understood that we need all three types of "toil," and in this order - "physical toil," "conversational toil," and "the toil of Torah". Through this toil, a person can effect something new in the process of Creation. He thus becomes Hashem's partner, and similar to his Creator. And this is the purpose of Creation.

Coming back to Avraham, because the people in the land were "engaged in weeding. and hoeing.," physical toil, a preparation was made. So, after Avraham first pleaded and prayed ["conversation"], "If only my portion would be in this land", could the "land" be given to Avraham "and to his descendants after him." They then transformed the land to one which was illuminated with the light of the Torah that transcends Creation.

Gut Shabbos to all

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 October 2023 · Shabbos 28 Oct 2023 · י"ג חשון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to my dear wife on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you continued happiness and nachas from the whole Family, and continued success with everything that you do. See dedication Dvar Torah below.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much growth and achievement Shmuly, and beyond the normal, in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much joy!

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah on this week's Sedra Lech Lecha, from Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's Teachings, and which is also appropriate my wife's birthday coming up next week, and to all husbands and wives, and potential husbands and wives, in general.

(Talmud Bava Metzia 59a)

And R Chelbo said: A man should always be careful to honour his wife, for blessing is found in a man's home only because of his wife. As it is written, (in this week's Sedra, 12:16) "And with Avram he dealt well for (Sarai's) sake."

This is also borne out by what Rava said to the people of Mechoza (the city in which he dwelt): "Honour your wives so that you will become wealthy."

Reb Levi Yitzchak, then goes into a deep and intricate explanation of this passage, but for the purpose of this email, the above quotation will suffice.

So it is with much gratitude that I thank you my dear wife, Rahel, and wish you Mazal Tov on your birthday, and much happiness and success, which extends also to the whole Family and extended Family.

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing to hear only good news for our People!

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

THE STARS

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 November 2024 · Shabbos 9 Nov 2024 · ח' חשון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his birthday yesterday. Wishing you a great year Mark! I hope that all is going well with you.

Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a year of continued happiness and success in all your schoolwork, playing and juggling Yosef!

(See our Family Tree for who belongs where by searching with Ctrl F)

In this week's Sedra Lech Lecha, Hashem blesses Avraham that his children will be like the stars of the heaven (15:5)

On the simple level this means quantitatively, but the Frierdike Rebbe sees it also in a qualitative way as follows:

The Jewish People are compared to stars that sparkle in the Heavens.

Thanks to their light, even a person walking in the darkness of night will not err.

Every Jew, man or woman, has the moral and spiritual power to become a source of influence for his friends and associates and to bring them into the light.

(This week's Hayom Yom for the 5th of Chehvan)

Gut Shabbos to all with much light and peace

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

A PARABLE

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 October 2025 · Shabbos 1 Nov 2025 · י' חשון תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his upcoming birthday at the end of next week. This is a big one Shmuly - 40 - Ben arbaim lebinah. - a high level of intellect. And so I wish you a year when you will be able to engage in much Torah study, with joy, good health, plentiful parnassah, and success with the education of your children together with Devorah Leah BEH!

Mazal Tov to Yosef on his birthday today. Wishing you a wonderful year Yosef with continued success with your school work and all your activities. And to give your parents much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his birthday next week. I hope all is going well with you Mark, and wishing you a wonderful year BEH.

I saw an interesting PARABLE in Hayom Yom today:

The story is about an extremely simple person and a great Sage.

The simpleton feels himself to be a total non-entity in the presence of the Sage.

Now the Sage does not dismiss or reject the simpleton, because that would be an evil trait, but he feels no connection with him and cannot relate to him in any way. In fact he cannot sense or perceive this low simpleton as belonging at all to the category of human beings!

If this great Sage now instructs or requests the simpleton to do something for him it causes three changes:

- The simpleton moves from a feeling of non-entity to feeling a 'somebody'. He is now able to carry out the instruction from the Sage. But more than that. The Sage has instructed him personally, and he now feels a personal connection.
- From the Sages perspective, the simpleton now 'exists'. He is now somebody who he can talk to.
- The instruction actually unites the lofty Sage with the gross simpleton!

And there is no difference at all as to what the command is about. It could be a great lofty matter, or even a trivial one!

The parable is obvious.

The word MITZVAH means to connect or join.

Whoever performs a Mitzva becomes joined to the Essence of Hashem, the One who issued that particular Command.

The above is connected to this week's Sedra Lech Lecha, with the birth of the Jewish Nation through Avraham, and Hashem making a covenant between Avraham and his descendants through Yitzchak (V17:7- end of Sedra) - an everlasting covenant . To which we are all personally linked BH.

Gut Shabbos to all

Lech Lecha ↑ Lech Lecha · Contents · By date לך לך

TAKING CHARGE OF OUR DESTINY

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 October 2026 · Shabbos 24 Oct 2026 · י"ג חשון תשפ"ז

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Rahel (Mommy) whose Hebrew birthday is next week. This is a decade birthday BH, and we wish you many more, in good health and happiness, together, BEH! And continued success with all your Family, School, and Community work, and more BH.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly whose birthday is next week. Wishing you much continued success in everything that you do Shmuly, begashmius and ruchnius , and it should be with ease and joy BEH.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva for passing her exams with excellent scores to gain access to University in EY to study midwifery, starting next month BEH. Hatzlachah rabbah!

In this week's Sedra Lech Lecha, (V15:5), it says that "Hashem took Avram outside from his tent and asked him to look towards the heavens and count the stars.... And so will be your descendants."

This is the simple meaning but Rashi then gives 2 further explanations:

According to the Medrash this means that you should "Leave your astrological calculations (stars)....." because it seemed decreed that Avram would not have a son. And this was true.

Hashem was saying, never-the-less, *that a Jew can change his destiny*.

Even although it may feel that we are trapped in a situation, or a habitual way of life (good or bad), we have the power to create a new destiny. - "Your descendants will be (uncountable) like the stars"

And connected, Rashi brings a second explanation: "He (Hashem) took him (Avram) outside the terrestrial atmosphere and lifted him above the stars, (because the word used in the passage is *habet,* looking, but habet really means looking down from above)

Meaning that Avram (and ourselves) are higher than the stars, and we are not controlled by them.

Rather we can create our own destiny.

How?

Through our deeds

In this case Avram and Sarai names were changed to Avraham and Sarah

In Gemorra Rosh Hashanah p16b, it describes 5 ways to annul an adverse decree ie:

· Charity

· Prayer

· Changing one's name

· Improving one's actions (especially with Mitzvos and transforming ourselves)

· Relocating to a new place

Gut Shabbos to all!

וירא

Vayeira

Bereishis 18:1 · parsha 4 of 12 in Bereishis · 4 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5777 — ANGELS, PLANETS AND MOONS 102
2017 / 5778 — AGONISING 106
2018 / 5779 — BITACHON, YOSEF AND RAHEL 110
2019 / 5780 — CONGRUITY BETWEEN OUR INNER AND OUTER SELVES 113
2020 / 5781 — MARRIAGE FORMULA 115
2021 / 5782 — SWEET DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINED LOVE 117
2022 / 5783 — ESHES CHAYIL (WOMAN OF VALOUR) 120
2023 / 5784 — ADDRESSING DIFFICULTY WITH JOY 122
2024 / 5785 — DEVELOPING ENTHUSIASM 124
2025 / 5786 — EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH 127
2026 / 5787 — HOPE AND EFFORT 129

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

ANGELS, PLANETS AND MOONS

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 November 2016 · Shabbos 19 Nov 2016 · י"ח חשון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Mommy on your Hebrew birthday which has already been thoroughly celebrated.

Mazal Tov Penina on your upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful Year.

Mazal Tov Shlomo Dahan on his Chassana this week, and all the Family who are there celebrating. You should build a binyan adei ad.

And news from the week - I found the news about the MOON very interesting.

This week the moons orbit was very close to earth and there was therefore a huge moon to see.

The last time it appeared like this was 1948.

Does this date ring a bell?

Yes, 1948 was when the State of Israel was re-established.

And so I also found it interesting when looking through all the news this week, how much amazing new potential is developing for Israel, with all the changes taking place in US.

And in Jewish Teaching, the moon very much represents Klal Yisrael, (while the sun represents the Nations of the world). Any connection?

In this weeks Sedra Vayerah, it speaks much about ANGELS, and together with Rashi's commentaries, we get quite a good idea about their nature and how they operate.

And so I thought that I would attach the view of the Rambam on these creations (ie ANGELS, PLANETS etc)

As you know the Rambam , besides having a vast Knowledge of the whole of Torah, was also an Astronomer, Physician to the Court of the Sultan of Turkey, and a Philosopher. And as one reads through the Mishneh Torah one is only amazed at his complete mastery and confidence in discussing all these subjects, and more.

In relation to today's subject one sees his amazing mathematical calculations of Astronomy to calculate the New Moon every month in the section of Kiddush Hachodesh. This is far too complicated to talk about now.

Below is an extract from my Summary of the Mishneh Torah on the subject of the creation of Angels and Planets etc: (Book 1- The Book of Knowledge, Laws of the Foundations of Torah, Chaps 2 and 3)

'Everything Hashem created can be divided into 3 categories

- Combination of matter (golem) and form (tzura) which are born and perish e.g. man, animals, plants etc.

- Combination of matter and form which does not change. E.g. the stars and spheres. – Their matter and form differ from first category.

- Creations which have form but no matter at all. E.g. angels (There are 10 levels of angels)

Hashem does not know with a knowledge external to Himself as with humans. Rather His Knowledge and His Life are one. Man cannot comprehend this fully.

The different levels of angels all have a correspondingly greater knowledge of Hashem, which is greater than humans. However even the highest angels cannot know Hashem fully.

Perek ג') Maaseh Bereishit (The Study of 'Natural Forces')

Structure of the Spheres.

There are basically nine spheres

Each of the 8 spheres which contain the planets and stars are themselves divided into many spheres.

The spheres are solid, transparent, can rotate in different directions from each other and have other characteristics different from the world e.g. no taste or smell.

The earth is suspended in the centre of these nine spheres.

Astronomy attempts to calculate the numbers of spheres, their movements, position of planets etc.

The ninth sphere has been divided into 12 sections and these sections have been named according to the shape of the stars below them i.e. the mazalot (i.e. Aries, Taurus etc)

The Spheres have intelligence (i.e knowledge of Hashem) higher than man but less than Angels, and they recognise this.

The moon is about 1/40 the size of the earth and the earth is about 1/170 the size of the sun (in diameter).

Below the Sphere of Moon, Hashem created four layers – Fire, Air, Water, Earth. (in this order from above down) – the 4 elements

They have no souls and are considered as dead. '

Perek ד') Maaseh Bereshit continued

The four elements and the Nefesh.

All bodies below the sky are made up from a combination of these 4 elements.

These bodies will eventually decompose back to their original elements.

The form of the body i.e. its eternal spiritual aspect, is called Nefesh.

The Neshama is different to the nefesh. The neshama requires the body, but the nefesh is eternal.

And then in Chap 7, where the Rambam speaks about Prophecy, he again mentions further about Angels (ie the lowest level of Angels called Ishim):

'When the spirit of prophecy falls upon him, his nefesh becomes mingled with the angels called Ishim, and he is transformed into a different person.

There are different levels of prophecy.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos (accompanied by the Melachim on Friday night)

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

AGONISING

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 November 2017 · Shabbos 4 Nov 2017 · ט"ו חשון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mommy on her upcoming birthday. See below

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday this Shabbos. You should have a good and abundant year Shmuly, with joy and good health.

Mazal Tov Hirshy on your acceptance into Nursing School. You worked really hard for many years to achieve this, and with excellent results BH. Well done! Michayil el chayil.

Mommy and I saw a brilliant shiur from Rabbi Jacobson on this week's Parsha Vayera, which I would like to share.

I will try and summarise as best I can, but if anyone has an hour to spare, I recommend you look at the full version, attached below, especially if you are interested in psychology.

https://www.theyeshiva.net/jewish/142.

When the Torah is read in shul, it has a very characteristic tune.

Each word has an attached sign, called trop, indicating the tune of each word.

In Judaism, everything is very precise, and the tune of every word is integrally related to that word.

In fact it is said that the Vilna Gaon could hear the word from the music!

In this week's sedra there is a very unusual note called the SHALSHELES.

It is only found 4 times in the whole of Torah, one of which is in this weeks sedra.

It has a very unusual sound and shape.

It looks like a vertical double z, and is on top of the word VAYISMAHMAH, 19:16, (he, Lot, HESITATED).

The sound is a triple one, and goes backwards, forwards, backwards, forwards, backwards, forwards 3 times.

Listen out for it this Shabbos!

IT BASICALLY REPRESENTS UNCERTAINTY, AND A STATE OF AGONISING, and has this meaning in different ways, in each of the 4 places where it occurs

In the context of our Sedra, the story is as follows:

Avraham and Lot had been travelling together, but at one point they took a different view on life, and they separated from each other.

Lot was attracted by Sdom, (the Jordan plain) which was worldly, looked beautiful, immorality was rife, and as Rashi mentions 'he separated himself from the One Who precedes the world.'

Avraham goes to Canaan,(Eretz Yisrael) where he relates to Hashem, makes a Covenant, fights wars, reaches out to people to do kindnesses etc

Lot had tried to assimilate with the people of Sdom, and had even been elected to be a judge!

Yet, after he tried to protect the angels (in form of men) who had come to destroy Sdom and save Lot and his family, the people of Sdom turned against him, rejected him, and called him a stranger. Even his own 2 sons-in-law are mocking him!

However despite all this, and knowing that destruction was on its way, HE HESITATES to leave - tune of shalsheles - and the angels have to grab him and force him to leave to save his life.

The psychology is as follows;

Each of us have both of the forces of Avraham and Lot battling within each of our beings, and this sets up a powerful tension within, which causes us AGONY.

Leon Festinger in US in the 1950's calls this tension COGNITIVE DISSONANCE, and speaks about it in a very similar way as Torah teaches us.

The person experiencing this tension knows what is true and what is not, but to avoid the pain of the tension, they choose to opt out, by lying to themselves, and making all kind of justifications and excuses for 'separating from the One Who preceded the world', and 'moving to Sdom'

This way there is now apparently no more tension in their being.

Then 10, 20 years down the line, even when the very society one opted out to, is rejecting one, and destruction is imminent, the hesitation is still there and probably even stronger.

In contrast, Avraham, who was just as involved in the world as lot, if not more so, when he went to purchase maarat hamachpela in Chevron, he said to Cheis, 'I am a foreigner in your land' (ie he was not interested in assimilation)....etc,

How did Cheis reply?

He said 'Hear us my master. You are a prince of G-d in our midst.' - Respect.

Which brings me back to Mommy's birthday.

I know that Mommy grew up with a very difficult surrounding environment of Arabs in Tunisia, having to go through different non-Jewish Schools where she had to find ways to keep Shabbos against all kinds of resistence.

And then there was the 6 Day War with all the additional Arab tensions.

And the social pulls to assimilate and opt must have been powerful as it would be in any society.

And there were the mockers trying to humiliate etc.

But you held strong to your core truth.

And this week's message from Torah is therefore so appropriate for you.

Wishing you much love, happiness, success, and good health, and I am sure this is a shared feeling from the whole Family.

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

BITACHON, YOSEF AND RAHEL

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 October 2018 · Shabbos 27 Oct 2018 · י"ח חשון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Double Mazal Tov to Shmuly for his birthday, and the bris of their new baby on Wednesday. The new baby's name is YOSEF and he is very cute BH. May he grow up to Torah, Chuppah and Maasim tovim and bring everyone much nachas.

Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is this Shabbos. Wishing you a year of many simchos in good health and happiness

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week, a few days later. Have a wonderful year Penina with much growth and achievement, in your new home in Tarzana, with much joy.

BH it was a week of much celebration with the birth of Yosef Davidoff, then a beautiful sholom zochor, and then a beautiful bris, and Shmuly's birthday. It was also nice to have had Baty and her children with us from Australia. BH

And we must thank Mommy especially, for really being the one behind all the catering and beautiful presentations of the sholom zochor and bris, and for the so many hours that went into these, and with very little notice. - THANK YOU

I would like to carry on the theme of BITACHON (trust) this week and link it to this weeks sedra Vayera, YOSEF, and Mommy (RAHEL)

How can we reach this balance of our own efforts, and trust in Hashem, and how to handle wealth, ingenuity, strength, talents etc?

We see in this weeks sedra that Hashem says to Avraham - I will make you great.

And we see Avraham becoming great and wealthy.

Yet this week we read from Rabeinu Bachya, in the Gate of Trust - 'If he (referring to us) relies on his wisdom, ingenuity, physical strength, and his own efforts, he will labour in vain.... as it says in Iyov 'He traps the clever in their own cunning'....If he relies on his great wealth it will be taken from him....or he will be denied the opportunity of enjoying it....His wealth may also be the cause of his undoing and the loss of his soul... (chas veshalom)

The commentary on the above explain that wisdom, wealth and strength in themselves are nothing to boast about.

However if one sees them as an avenue to serve Hashem, and as a gift from Hashem, then there is something to boast about!

And how is this connected to RAHEL and YOSEF?

So of course we know that Rachel was Yaakov's favourite wife (hint hint)

And she had to wait a long time before she gave birth, and then she gave birth to Yosef.

And for this reason, and also because Yaakov recognised the great strength of Yosef, Yosef was very dear to him.

In fact when Yosef was born Yaakov felt he could now 'relax' his efforts and PUT HIS TRUST IN G-D because he now had a son who could conquer Eisov - 'the House of Yosef is a flame, and the House of Eisov, straw' See Sedra Vayeitze.

And then we see how Yosef reached this amazing balance of power and wealth (when he became second in charge of the whole of Egypt), TOGETHER WITH HIS DEVOTION TO HASHEM, NEVER PARTING FROM THIS, AND THE TEACHINGS OF HIS FATHER YAAKOV.

It is interesting that it was also the yohrtzeit of Rachel imeinu last week on 11th of Cheshvan, and we see her tremendous devotion to her children. It is known of her request to be buried on the roadside, where she constantly waits for the return of her children, Bnei Yisrael, to Eretz Yisrael with the coming of our Redemption, may it be soon in our days.

And this is also the devotion of our Mommy RAHEL.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

CONGRUITY BETWEEN OUR INNER AND OUTER SELVES

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 November 2019 · Shabbos 16 Nov 2019 · י"ח חשון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mommy again, whose English and Hebrew birthdays covered 2 weeks, and the real Hebrew one is this Shabbos!

Mazal Tov to Penina whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a year of much achievement and joy for you and the whole Family!

And then there are 2 Mazal Tovs for the Davidoffs in Sharon:

Mazal Tov Reuven on your birthday. Wishing you continued success in everything that you do Reuven. Thanks for always being there when we need medical advice!

Mazal Tov to Perry whose birthday is 1 day earlier. We hope all is going well with you. We need another simchah to get together again. Wishing you a wonderful year!

In this week's Sedra, Vayeira, Yitzchak is born

I saw an interesting extract from a sicha of the Rebbe, speaking about our INNER AND OUTER SELVES.

Avraham's nature was Kindness.

Yitzchak's nature was Severity or Strictness.

Right from birth our faces reflect our inner personalities

The Hebrew word for face is panim, and for inside it is pnimius, and as can be seen it has the same root.

Our inner thoughts and emotions are mirrored in our face.

This congruity (equalness) between the soul and the face is especially true for the patriarchs because there was no difference between their inner and outer lives.

THEY DID NOT PRESENT ANY FALSE FACADES TO THE WORLD.

Now the face of Yitzchak was almost identical to that of Avraham.

How could this be, because their natures were completely different!?

And it is explained, that Hashem performed a miracle for this to occur, so that people shouldn't say that Yitzchak was not Avraham's son (because 'Sarah conceived and bore to Avraham a son in his old age...' 21:2.

This teaches us a very interesting lesson.

Even though it may be demanded of us sometimes in life, to temporarily act contrary to our natural self, (FOR EXAMPLE IF WE HAVE A KIND NATURE [AVRAHAM] AND WE NEED TO EXPRESS SEVERITY [YITZCHAK]), OUR FACE - OUR OUTWARD DEMEANOUR AND BEHAVIOUR - SHOULD NEVERTHELESS STILL MAINTAIN OUR INNER NATURE OF KINDNESS!!!

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

MARRIAGE FORMULA

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 November 2020 · Shabbos 7 Nov 2020 · כ' חשון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Penina for your birthday next week. Wishing you a very happy year with much growth, and lots of nachas from the children, together with Avi!

At the very end of this week's Parsha Vayera, we read about the birth of Rivka (22:23).

This followed straight after the whole story of Avraham being prepared to SACRIFICE Yitzchak - which represented COMPLETE SELFLESS DEVOTION to the requests of Hashem (by both Avraham and Yitzchak)

In a Sicha from the Rebbe (Vol 25 p137), the Rebbe points out that the juxtaposition of the binding of Yitzchak to the birth of Rivkah, his future wife, indicates that SELF SACRIFICE IS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF HEALTHY MARRIAGE.

'When one marries and especially when one starts to have children, the primary focus becomes the immediate task of supporting our families, and dealing with the material world, and its attendant mundane matters.

Whatever self-orientation occupied our focus before marriage, even if this self-orientation was very spiritual, it must largely be replaced by selfless devotion TO OTHERS.

It is imperative, that as this happens, we keep in mind that marrying and raising a family, are just as much a part of fulfilling our Divine mission, as are more explicit spiritual pursuits.

In fact, making a Jewish home filled with the knowledge of Torah and the performance of G-d's Commandments and good deeds, is the primary way that we transform the world at large into Hahem's true home.'

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos.

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

SWEET DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINED LOVE

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 October 2021 · Shabbos 23 Oct 2021 · י"ז חשון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with lots of nachas from all the Family!

Mazal Tov Penina for your birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with much achievement in all areas of gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov again to Shmuly who is farbrenging tonight with all his friends in celebration of his birthday which was today. Enjoy! Lechaim!

2 aspects of one theme came up this week in relation to Parshas Vayera, from the Rebbe and his father R' Levi Yitzchak, which I would like to share.

The angel comes to inform Avraham and Sarah, in their old age, that they will have a son.

Our Sages teach that the date of this visit was Pesach, and that Yitzchak's birth was on Pesach the following year.

Everything in Torah is very precise, and so what is the significance that Yitzchak was born on Pesach?

R' Levi Yitzchak explains that Pesach, which falls in Nissan, is a time of Chesed - Divine KINDNESS and outpouring of love (Hashem took us out of Mitzraim at this time)

Yitzchak embodied the attribute of Gevurah - RESTRAINT and Discipline (the Kabbalists explain that certain souls are derived from specific Divine attributes, and regarding Yitzchak it says 'And the FEAR of Yitzchak).

This strengthens the question even more - Why was Yitzchak who represents Gevurah, born on Pesach which is a time of Chesed?

R Levi Yitzchak answers that this is the Kabbalistic concept of 'Sweetening of Judgements' - Unbridled strictness could lead to relentless punishment, and therefore it needs to be tempered and sweetened with Chesed ie kindness.

And the other way around. Avraham represents Chesed - KINDNESS (as it says 'Avraham who Loved Me'). The Rebbe explains in this weeks sicha from Vol 15:

In V 21:30 Avraham is proving to Avimelech that a particular well which he had dug belonged to him (Avraham)

Yet the Zohar calls it the well of Yitzchak?

It is true that the Pelishtim had filled up and blocked Avraham's well, and Yitzchak had re-dug it, but it was still Avraham's well? So why does the Zohar call it the well of Yitzchak?

The explanation is that the root of the word Pelishtim is from the Hebrew word mefulash an open thoroughfare. This is why our Sages say that the Pelishtim were scoffers - this is triggered when the heart is too open and perforated on all sides.

They hijacked Avraham's unbridled KINDNESS and corrupted it into the joy of scoffing (blocked up his well)

However when Yitzchok redug this well, with his character of RESTRAINT, the Plishtim did not now have further access to it, and it would therefore endure forever.

So who did the well belong to in ESSENCE? How do we resolve these natures of Kindness and Restraint?

The Zohar says 'No avodah (service) matches the avodah that is out of LOVE AND JOY.

It is only that the for the joy (derived from Love) to endure, it must be preceded by the FEAR of G-D and the acceptance of the Yoke of Heaven.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

ESHES CHAYIL (WOMAN OF VALOUR)

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 November 2022 · Shabbos 12 Nov 2022 · י"ח חשון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is on Shabbos. We all wish you a year of continued success in all the many areas that you are involved with, in both secular and spiritual. And with much joy. BEH many simchos!

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week. Actually your English birthday is today Penina, the same as Mommy's. Wishing you therefore a wonderful day today, and on your Hebrew birthday next week, and a wonderful year BEH!

I have attached some videos explaining the meaning of HAKHEL, but in brief, the Mitzvah of Hakhel occurred every 7 years, on Sukkot, after the year of Shemita. This last Sukkot was therefore a Hakhel Sukkot. Hakhel means to gather together.

Following in the spirit of Hakhel, for the whole year, we look for opportunities to 'gather together', with family, friends or acquaintances, in a spirit of goodwill and to spread the light of Torah and Mitzvot.

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5648804/jewish/What-Is-Hakhel .htm

So as mentioned above, it is Mommy's birthday this Shabbos, and she is making this into a HAKHEL GATHERING with friends and family. Of course there will be many courses of delicious food and drinks, and in addition she will prepare a story, Dvar Torah etc in line with the Rebbe's directive to make many such gatherings throughout the year.

And anyone can make these social gatherings in whatever style that is suitable.

And so, in honour of my 'eshes chayil' wife, I saw a short Dvar Torah in this week's Sedra Vayera (21:12).

Sarah saw that the behaviour of Yishmael (Avraham's son from Hagar) was a bad influence and danger for her younger son Yitzchak, and it came to the point where she told Avraham to 'Drive out this maidservant and her son..'

And Hashem then says to Avraham, 'Do not be upset about the boy and your maidservant. EVERYTHING THAT SARAH TELLS YOU, LISTEN TO HER VOICE..'

Rashi says about this that we learn that Avraham was on a lower level of prophecy than Sarah.

And the Alte Rebbe comments as follows:

The Talmud states that 3 Tzadikim (Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov) were shown the prophecy that in The World to Come, 'the female will surround and encompass the male.'

And a WOMAN OF VALOUR (ESHES CHAYIL) IS THE CROWN OF HER HUSBAND, (Proverbs) will be fulfilled.

Avraham was given a glimpse of this when Hashem told him to listen to the words of his wife Sarah.

Thank you for being an Eshes Chayil! And to all the other wives who are an eshes Chayil for their husbands!

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

ADDRESSING DIFFICULTY WITH JOY

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 November 2023 · Shabbos 4 Nov 2023 · כ' חשון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday this coming week. Wishing you a wonderful year with much happiness, and much nachas from your Family Penina, together with Avi. And continued success in all areas!

Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his upcoming birthday. I hope all is well with you and your Family Mark, and wishing you a happy and successful year! For those who have not met Mark, he is the father-in-law of Perry, and father of Mikayla.

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff on the birth of a nephew, to her sister Mariasha. Only continued simchos.

I saw an editorial this week on how the Rebbe reacted to the Yom Kippur war, and how this can guide us on how we can respond to the current difficult times that we are all facing.

When the Yom Kippur war broke out, there was much fear, and calls for prayer and fasting.

Yet the Rebbe called for a farbreng.

A farbreng is a gathering together of many Jews listening to Chassidic Discourses, in a spirit of joy, unity and sharing.

The Rebbe explained this action on the basis of a teaching from the Baal Shem Tov on the verse "G-d is your shadow at your right hand."

Just as a shadow follows the movements of a person's limbs, so too G-d follows the actions of the Jewish People.

Similarly the Zohar teaches,

"The higher realms impart influence to the lower realms according to their state. If on this earthly plane a person's state is luminous, Divine light shines to him from above.

If his state is one of sadness, a comparable influence is granted to him.

Therefore we are taught, "Serve G-d with joy", because a person's joy draws down joy from Above.

How much more so when many Jews gather together in one place, they evoke the Divine presence, as our Sages taught, "The Divine Presence rests on every congregation of 10 Jews."

And how much more so is this true when the gathering is connected with the teachings of Torah, arousal to the fear of Heaven, and the giving of Tzedakah.

Accordingly, the way in which we can positively influence our current situation, IS THROUGH JOY, because "Joy breaks through barriers, including the geographic barriers separating us from those in danger.

Soon after the Yom Kippur war the Rebbe started the campaign for Jewish women and girls to light candles for Shabbat.

The Rebbe called women, Ambassadors of Light.

Our souls are like candles, and like candles we can give to others without being diminished or extinguished, sharing our light and our love, which transcends age, location and abilities.

Gut Shabbos, with much light, and may Hashem protect our soldiers, the hostages, and all who are suffering in this war, and generally.

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

DEVELOPING ENTHUSIASM

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 November 2024 · Shabbos 16 Nov 2024 · ט"ו חשון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mommy on her Hebrew birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with many simchos and achievements in both gashmius and ruchnius, all in good health and happiness

Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much nachas from your Family, Shmuly, success with business, and learning, and all the many activities that you do BEH.

Mazal to Reuven whose birthday is also on Shabbos. Wishing you a happy year Reuven with much continued achievements BEH.

And 1 day later is Perry's birthday. Mazal Tov Perry. I hope you will be having a combined Family party!

And last but not least, all the way in Melbourne, we wish Adrian a happy birthday for next week. So nice to be keeping in touch Ade. I hope all is going well and wishing you a wonderful year BEH.

In this week's Haftarah for Parsha Vayera there is a story about 'one woman' who came to Elishah with a bitter cry about her situation. She was a widow of one of his close followers, who were called 'the sons of the prophets'. Her husband died leaving heavy debts, and the creditor wants to take her two sons as slaves in recompense for the money owed. Elisha asked her if she has anything at all at home. She replied, just a flask of oil.

Elisha told her to borrow many empty vessels from her neighbors. Then she should pour the oil from her flask into the borrowed vessels. She did this, and

miraculously the oil continued to flow until all the vessels were full. Elisha told her to sell the oil, pay off her debts, and use the rest to help her live.

The Alte Rebbe in a Maamer explains, that this story refers to the cry of our souls which senses it's lack of enthusiasm in serving Hashem. (And this is the link to the Sedra where Hashem was revealed to Avraham -Vayera elav Hashem, who came to visit him in his state of sickness after his bris) As follows:

- 'One woman' is the soul which is one with Hashem
- 'Her husband' is one of the 'sons of the prophets', refers to the ability of the soul to experience spiritual revelations.
- She calls out to Elishah - The Hebrew word Elishah also means 'turns towards Hashem' - hints at the soul crying out to Hashem.
- 'My husband is dead' (ishi mes) - Ishi also means fire in Hebrew, implying that my fire of inspiration and enthusiasm in serving Hashem is lacking.
- 'The creditors' - this is referring to our animal soul which tries to forget about our G-dly soul. The Hebrew word for creditors is nosheh and in Hebrew this also means to forget.
- How? By demanding 'her two children to be taken from her as slaves'. The 2 children symbolise our Love and Fear of Hashem ie The creditors want to block these emotions and force us instead, into the false loves and desires, and worries about materialism in making a living etc.
- But fortunately the woman still has 'one flask of oil' - the inner spark of the G-dly soul
- How does this become once again fired to fill our being with light and joy in the same way as 'the oil miraculously continued to flow until all the vessels were full'? This is through realising with contrition that we are far from Hashem, and then by overcoming our worldly challenges so that they are no longer obstacles, and by practicing Torah and Mitzvos with a sense of great delight. As it says in Tanya Chap 27, 'When the negative

realm (Sitra Achra) is quelled, the glory of Hashem spreads through all the worlds BEH..

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos with much delight!

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 November 2025 · Shabbos 8 Nov 2025 · י"ז חשון תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Mommy/Rahel whose birthday is on Shabbos. Wishing you, my wonderful wife, a wonderful year with much joy, many simchos, good health, lots of nachas from all the children and grandchildren, and continued achievements in all the good work that you do, in both gashmius and ruchnius BEH!

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday at the end of next week. Wishing you a year of much achievement for you and Avi, Penina, in both gashmius and ruchnius, with much joy. Continue with all the good work that you and Avi are doing together BEH!

Mazal Tov to Elisha on his birthday next week. Keep giving your parents and all of us much nachas Elisha, and wishing you a happy year!

I saw an interesting short note this week which caught my attention and which I would like to share (A Chassidisher Derher - Sichos Kodesh 5739 Vol 2 p316)

The verse in Iyov teaches us "THAT MAN IS BORN TO TOIL"

For a person to remain mentally and emotionally healthy, he must labour, and feel a sense of work and accomplishment.

The Gemorra tells us about the porters of Mechoza, that when they were unable to do their work of carrying loads, they became ill

The same is true for all of us.

Hashem created us in such a way, that to be emotionally well, we must be engaged in productive activity.

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayeira ↑ Vayeira · Contents · By date וירא

HOPE AND EFFORT

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 October 2026 · Shabbos 31 Oct 2026 · כ' חשון תשפ"ז

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week. Wishing you an amazing year Penina, with continued achievements and growth in both gashmius and ruchnius, and much nachas for you and Avi from all your Family BEH.

Mazal Tov to Elisha on his birthday next week. You should continue to give your parents much nachas Elisha, and wishing you a happy and successful year BEH.

I saw the following from an article by Rabbi Eliezer Shemtov this week: (Vayera 21:9 – 21)

One of the great causes of anxiety and depression is when one finds oneself in an extreme situation *where it feels that there is no way out*

We see an example in this week's Sedra Vayera, with the story of Hagar and her son Yishmael, fathered by Avraham.

Sarah instructs Avraham to send them away, because of her and Yishmael's misbehaviour, and they set out into the desert.

The water of her canteen runs out, and Yishmael is on the verge of death.

She places the dying boy under a bush and moves away so as not to witness his death, and weeps out aloud in desparation.

An angel then calls out to her and tells her not to despair ("arise, lift up the boy, and hold him by the hand"), and that Hashem has heard the child's cry, and He will make him into a great Nation.

Then Hashem opened her eyes and she saw a well of water.

She filled her canteen and gave the boy to drink.....

One of the lessons from the story is from the fact that Torah did not say that Hashem miraculously sent a water source. It says that Hagar's eyes were opened by Hashem and thereafter, at some point, she saw a well of water that she had not seen before.

Why could she now see the well?

Because her attitude had changed and she was on the look-out to try and solve the problem, to search and find what is needed. Therefore she discovered the water that was always there.

We need to put in our maximum efforts. Hashem does not do for us what we could achieve ourselves.

Miracles only happen after we have exhausted our own resources, if needed.

The message is "Never give up if the goal is worthy. The effort depends on us, and the success depends on Hashem. There is far more that we can achieve on our own which we often don't realize!"

Gut Shabbos to all!

חיי שרה

Chayei Sarah

Bereishis 23:1 · parsha 5 of 12 in Bereishis · 5 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5777 — A DUAL MANOEUVRE 132
2017 / 5778 — AGONISING ??? 134
2018 / 5779 — PEOPLE 137
2019 / 5780 — SONS (AND DAUGHTERS) 139
2020 / 5781 — MARRIAGE AND LOVE 141
2021 / 5782 — ETERNAL GENERATIONS 143
2022 / 5783 — WEALTH 145
2023 / 5784 — AM YISRAEL CHAI 147
2024 / 5785 — DEVOTION 150
2025 / 5786 — ORDER AND PEACE 153

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

A DUAL MANOEUVRE

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 November 2016 · Shabbos 26 Nov 2016 · כ"ה חשון תשע"ז

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

In this weeks Sedra, Chayei Sarah, Sarah dies at the age of 127, and the Chumash says 'these were the years of Sarah's life.'

And Rashi comments 'This tells us that her years were all equally good.'

Basically Sarah achieved a lot in her life.

There were 2 interesting Hayom Yom quotes last week (which the Rebbe actually spoke about in relation to Chayei Sarah) which SHOWS US HOW WE CAN USE OUR TIME, AND MAKE OUR DAYS AND YEARS MORE PRODUCTIVE.

I have learnt in a Pesach sicha of the Rebbe that Freedom and Productiveness is a DUAL MANOEUVRE ie it is a combination attitude of both rejecting what is wrong and then following up with doing what is right.(and it is like a DUAL)

And this is what I recognised in these 2 Hayom Yom:

16 Cheshvan

Thought serves the intellect and emotions. (When we are not occupied with these substantial activities) it continues to function, but now the thinking is not only devoid of content, but also open to depravity.. brought about by 'emptiness of the head'. But when the mind is occupied, there is no room for these silly or vain thoughts devoid of substance.

17 Cheshvan

Time must be guarded. Every bit of time, every day that passes, is not just a day, but a matter of life. As it says in Talmud Yerushalmi (Berachot 1:1) 'A day enters and a day departs, a week enters etc.a month etc.a year etc...'

It is urgent to 'accept the yoke of Torah.'

Wishing everyone days where we are occupied with much good activity, and where we can look back and say that our year was good (even if there are still improvements to make)

Gut Shabbos

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

AGONISING ???

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 November 2017 · Shabbos 11 Nov 2017 · כ"ב חשון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Penina on your upcoming birthday on Shabbos! Wishing you a wonderful year in all areas, with your wonderful Family!

Mazal Tov to Reuven whose birthday is thereafter. Wishing you much continued success and happiness Reuven.

And Mazal Tov Perry on your birthday one day apart from your father. Hope you will all be celebrating together, and for many happy occasions. Missing you all.

Last week week we met that interesting musical note called the SHALSHELES and found out that it only occurs 4 times in Chumash.

We heard it in last week's sedra Vayera, and funnily enough, it also occurs in this week's sedra Chaye Sarah! (24:12)

This week it was connected to the decision making of Avraham's servant Eliezer who was given the task to go to Charan and find a wife for Yitzchak from Avraham's family who dwelled there.

Basically the sound of the Shalsheles, in all 4 places, represents a person caught in the middle of difficult life decisions.

And so, in relation to the above, I found it interesting, this week, reading an article about 2 members of our community, Dr Tali Loewenthal and his wife Professor Kate Loewenthal.

Part of their story, was that in their early years when they were making their approach to Judaism, they were both faced with dilemmas of whether they should continue their secular studies, in an environment which they perceived as being difficult, or to involve themselves more fully in Judaism.

Tali was studying Jewish History and Literature, and was worried about the many 'heretical' texts that he was being forced to read.

The Rebbe advised him to finish his Doctorate, and advised him, in a 9 minute private audience, on certain aspects of his studies and his life in general.

Kate also came to seek The Rebbe's advice, feeling guilty that she was not giving her full attention to her family as other Chassidic wives did. Also she was concerned that perhaps psychology was not an acceptable pursuit for a religious woman. She was suggesting to The Rebbe that she should give up her position of University lecturer in psychology.

The Rebbe told her 'There is no conflict between psychology and Torah...You should use your psychology to have a positive effect on your students.'

Years later, Tali was visiting The Rebbe, while the Rebbe was giving out dollars. (bear in mind by the way that thousands of people would be walking past the Rebbe for a 20 second contact). The Rebbe began speaking about his wife, who was by then a mother of 11 children and a full Professor of the psychology department.

He said 'Your wife is a religious woman, who covers her hair, who teaches in the academic world.

SHE IS SHOWING EVERYONE THAT YIDDISHKEIT IS NOT DIFFICULT!, NOT DIFFICULT!, NOT DIFFICULT!' (emphasising 'not difficult' 3 times, with much intensity)

Anyone who knows Tali and Kate will verify the tremendous Torah knowledge they have achieved, their dedication, and how many hundreds (could be thousands) of people they have reached out to, and helped.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

PEOPLE

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 November 2018 · Shabbos 3 Nov 2018 · כ"ה חשון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This coming week is the yohrtzeit of my first cousin, Alden ah'. Alden was Froma's husband, and Kerry Lee's father, and he was the son of Aunty Girlie, who was my mother's sister. Alden and I were good friends and I remember him often with fond memories. We wish the Family many simchos in the future.

Most of our lives we are dealing with PEOPLE.

Sometimes we have good experiences, and good feelings, sometimes the opposite. Sometimes we trust and sometimes we judge unfavourably. Sometimes we need people and other times we are helping. Etc.

In this weeks sedra, Chayei Sarah, we see aspects of this:

Avraham comes to Chevron and addresses the bnei Ches to purchase maaras hamachpela to bury Sara, and how Efron was scheming, to give it for free, and then scheming with the price. But Avraham did not trust and he insisted to pay the full price in front of the whole city as witnesses.

Then we see the faithful servant Eliezer, going out to find a wife for his master Avraham's son Yitzchak, faithfully carrying out his instructions, and even putting his own interests aside. And he finds Rivka for Yitzchak with Hashem's help.

Then there is Lavan, Rivka's brother, who is greedy, and shows disrespect for his father

And then we see Avraham dividing his wealth and giving everything to Yitzchak and 'presents' to his concubines.

And the passing of Sarah, Avraham etc.

This week, I have been much more aware of the first Prayer that we say before going to sleep at night on week days. (Interestingly we do not say it on Shabbos and Yom Tov)

I think the reason it has been more prominently understood by me, is because I have been reading The Gate of Trust by Rabeinu Bachya, and it just seemed to ring true and harmonise with those Teachings.

Anyway whatever it is I want to share this very beautiful tefilah for those who don't know it, and to refresh, for those who do.

'Master of the Universe. I hereby forgive anyone who has angered or vexed me, or sinned against me, either physically or financially, against my honour, or anything else that is mine, whether accidentally or intentionally, inadvertently or deliberately, by speech or by deed, in this incarnation or in any other, (!!!) ANY ISRAELITE.

May no man be punished on my account.

May it be Your Will Hashem my G-d, and G-d of my fathers, that I will no longer sin, and neither shall I again anger You, nor do what is wrong in Your eyes.

The sins I have committed, erase with Your abundant mercies, but not through suffering or severe illnesses.

May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, Hashem, my Strength and my Redeemer.'

What potential, this one Prayer alone holds for the world!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

SONS (AND DAUGHTERS)

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 20 November 2019 · Shabbos 23 Nov 2019 · כ"ה חשון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Due to circumstances the email is a bit earlier than normal.

This coming week is the Yohrtzeit of my cousin Alden, and I wish Froma and Kerry Lee and Adrian long life. You should only experience simchos in the future.

I saw 3 sets of interesting items this week which were all connected as follows:

1. In this weeks Sedra Chayei Sarah, 2 items stood out

1. Hashem blessed Avraham with EVERYTHING IE A SON (the Hebrew for everything is bakol, and Rashi points out that the numerical value of bakol is the same as ben ie a son)
2. And Avraham now instructs his SERVANT, Eliezer, to go and find a wife for Yitzchok, from Avraham's birthplace.

2. And then, over 2 consecutive days in Moshiach Day by Day it was speaking about

1. Serving Hashem like a SON
2. Serving Hashem like a SERVANT

Serving Hashem like a son (Likutei Sichos Vol 19)

A child is an extension of his father.

In essence they are one.

Therefore, to bring Mashiach, we must not only learn and understand, BUT WE MUST ALSO INTERNALISE AND EXPERIENCE TORAH AND

MITZVOS WITH PLEASURE AND JOY, LIKE A SON SERVING HIS FATHER OUT OF LOVE.

Serving Hashem like a servant (Tanya Chap 41)

It is not enough for us to serve Hashem with understanding and enjoyment.

We must also serve WITH A SIMPLE FEELING OF OBLIGATION AND COMMITMENT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT.

This

a. trains us to go beyond our own abilities and understanding b. pushes us to influence the world beyond our personal sphere and comfort zone

3. And thirdly, this week I am travelling to the Kinus Hashluchim in New York, with 2 SONS, AND MEETING 1 SON-IN-LAW there BEH!!

Thank you for the accompaniment which is much appreciated!

And thank you Hashem for blessing us bakol (and that includes sons, and daughters and all the Infinite connected generosity!)

Gut Shabbos to all.

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

MARRIAGE AND LOVE

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 November 2020 · Shabbos 14 Nov 2020 · כ"ז חשון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Reuven for your birthday next week. Wishing you much continued success Reuven with good health.

Mazal Tov Perry on your birthday next week. Long time no see. We need more simchos in the Family to get together. Have a great year Perry!

Mazal Tov to Adrian Sacks in Melbourne who also has a birthday next week. Hope this message reaches you Adrian! Australia is so far away.

And next week is also the yohrtzeit of Alden AH, who is Kerry Lee's father and the past husband of Froma (and Adrian's brother). Wishing you all long life and only simchos in the future!

In this weeks Sedra Chaye Sarah, we learn about the MARRIAGE AND LOVE between Yitzchak and Rivkah.

And it was interesting to see a deeper meaning of Marriage and love, explained in Tanya this week.

The Tanya from the end of last week, and this week (Letter 29) has been speaking of the deeper meaning of 'Eishes Chayil.('A woman of valor is the crown of her husband.' - Book of Proverbs)

This verse is a metaphor for Torah ie The husband is referring to the Written Torah (Chumash), the wife is referring to the Oral Torah (Gemorra), and the Crown refers to the Halachot (Laws of Torah).

In another verse (Ecclesiastes 9:9), Torah is also likened to a wife, where it says 'See to live your life with the woman whom you love.'

So the Alte Rebbe goes on to explain why Halachot are called the Crown, and 'Whoever studies halachot (Laws) is assured of a share in Olam Haba- the World-to Come)' - why just Halachot?

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria stated that the soul of every Jew needs to be reincarnated many times until he will fulfil all 613 commandments of the Torah in all 3 GARMENTS OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, AND DEED.

The light of Hashem is pleasant and sweet and it gives an infinitely intense delight.

But the light is too powerful for the soul, and the only way the soul can experience this light, even in an extremely contracted form, is if it is enclothed and protected by these GARMENTS, the garments of Mitzvot.

There are 248 positive Mitzvot and 365 negative Mitzvot (=613)

In the same way, it is said, that within a child there are 248 organs and 365 sinews.

In the same way as the 613 limbs and sinews, hidden in the seed of the father (Chochmah and the Written Torah), become revealed in the womb of the mother (Binah and the Oral Torah), and then the mother gives birth and raises 'many worlds', so too does the inner meaning of Written Torah become explained by the Oral Torah, which then is brought down into the myriads of Laws.

These laws are the Supernal Will in Keter (the Crown), which is above the head (Chochmah)

The Halachot therefore allow us to access the Divine Will and allow the soul to experience the pleasantness of the light of Hashem.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

ETERNAL GENERATIONS

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 October 2021 · Shabbos 30 Oct 2021 · כ"ד חשון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again to Penina on her birthday today. Wishing you and all your Family a wonderful year in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the purchase and renovation of their new home in North Hollywood. Meshaneh makom meshaneh mazal letovah! So happy and excited for you all BH!

We wish long life to Renee, Sid and Brian for the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave this coming week. It brings back such good memories thinking of Uncle Dave. His neshamah should have an aliyah.

We also wish long life to Froma, Kerry-Lee and Gareth for the yohrtzeit of Alden, also next week. Alden and I were good friends (and cousin) and I think about him often. His neshamah should have an aliyah.

In this weeks Sedra Chayei Sarah, we read about the FIRST MARRIAGE in our Jewish History ie that of Yitzchak and Rivkah. Avraham and Sarah were our first forefather and mother, but Avraham was not yet circumcised at their marriage.

Ever since their marriage Judaism has survived and thrived through the centuries PRESERVED BY TORAH, and passed on from generation to generation.

The reason this stood out for me this week, is because SALT came up in the Rambam learning, in connection with the Laws about the Temple Services.

And Rabbi Gordon related an interesting story from the Gemorra, which was spoken in riddles, about SALT as follows:

A Greek Philosopher came to one of the Tanaim of his time and asked him 'What does one do if salt loses its preservative powers?'

And the Tanna answered him, 'Take the afterbirth of a mule and add it to the salt.'

So the philosopher said, 'But a mule does not have children!'

And the Tanna replied 'AND SALT CANNOT LOSE ITS PRESERVATIVE QUALITY!'

Behind the riddles, they were debating as follows - A mule does not have children, and only lasts one generation.

Similarly, all the .isms in the world come for a short time, and then disappear (eg communism, fascism, fashions, empires etc)

But Torah preserves the Jewish Nation forever, like salt, and it can never lose it's preservative powers!

That is why salt is placed on all the Sacrifices. They all need the eternity of Torah.

Also we dip the challah 3 times in salt on Shabbat.

The gematria (numerical value) of salt (melech) is 78.

And the numerical value of Hashems Name is 26.

3x26=78!

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos, and we should hear much news of new weddings for all who need!

WEALTH

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 November 2022 · Shabbos 19 Nov 2022 · כ"ה חשון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I want to apologise to Mark Koval for missing his birthday on the 6th of November, to Perry whose birthday was on the 15th of November, and to Reuven whose birthday was yesterday! For those who do not know, Mark's daughter Mikayla is married to Perry. And Mark's wife Pam is also on our group

Reuven everyone knows is my brother and Perry's father, and married to Chana Lieba (Annette)

The reason I missed these out is that I was focused on the Hebrew dates, and looking in October calendar instead of November.

But as nothing happens by accident, this gives me a good opportunity to reintroduce the Kovals and to wish the members of the Davidoff /Koval Families ie Mark, Reuven and Perry a big UNITED MAZAL TOV on your birthdays. Wishing you all a happy year with much achievement, and much shared nachas from your children!

There are 2 Yohrtzits this week:

We wish long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah, for whom I have many fond memories. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

It is also the yohrtzeit of Alden ah, my cousin. His neshamah should have an Aliyah. We wish long life to Froma and Kerry Lee. Alden and I spent many years of sharing each other's company, and I still think about him often.

Mazal Tov to the following grandchildren who have excelled in their Rambam exams (Chidon) - Esther and Binyamin Davidoff in London and Gavriel Davidoff in LA. So proud of you all! Not sure if anyone else participated?

I saw 2 short Dvar Torah from this week's Sedra Chayei Sarah, which I think are connected to each other.

Who ruled over all that he had (Gen. 24:2) (- Klei Yakar)

These words refer to Abraham and indicate just how great a person he was. Though Abraham amassed wealth, he did not become like some other wealthy people for whom money becomes the only motivating factor in their lives.

Abraham ruled over his possessions, and not the other way around.

And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, but to the sons of the concubines...he gave gifts (Gen. 25:5-6) (-The Rebbe)

Isaac is symbolic of holiness and the spiritual realm.

The "sons of the concubines" stand for the physical and corporeal world.

The Torah teaches that we must give "all" of ourselves - the lion's share of our time, energy and talents - to spiritual matters.

Worldly matters, however, can be placated with "gifts"...

Gut Shabbos to all

Chayei Sarah ↑ Chayei Sarah · Contents · By date חיי שרה

AM YISRAEL CHAI

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 9 November 2023 · Shabbos 11 Nov 2023 · כ"ז חשון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Reuven (Ravin) on his upcoming birthday next week. I hope that your knee is healing well Reuven, and wishing you a year of much activity and ease of movement with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Perry whose birthday is right next to his father. We hope all is going well with you Perry, and wishing you a great year!

Mazal Tov to Naomi for all the celebrations in the Fisher Family - Becca's wedding and Evelyn's batmitzvah. Simchos should lead to further simchos!

We want to wish long life to Froma whose mother passed away last week. Wishing you comforting from Hashem Froma, and only happy occasions in the future. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

This week is also the yohrtzeit of my cousin Alden ah. We wish Froma and Kery-Lee long life. Alden is missed by all of us and we wish his neshamah an Aliyah.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah, and this week was the unveiling of the tombstone of Renee ah. Both the neshamos should have an Aliyah, and we wish their whole Family, Roy, Sid, Brian, Jody, Sheli, Gavin and Adam, and their Families, long life, and only happy occasions in the future.

I saw an interesting halachah (law) in this week's portion of Rambam that we are learning, in the section Taanis (Fasts) Chap 1, which I found interesting, as it relates to the current difficulties facing Israel, and all of us. As follows:

"It is a positive Command to cry out to Hashem in the event of any difficulty that arises, which affects the community, as when you go out to war, famine, plague etc..

This practice is one of the paths of repentance, for when a difficulty arises, and the people cry out to Hashem, everyone will realise that the difficulty occurred because of our conduct...

This realization will cause the removal of the difficulty."

And look how beautifully Am Yisrael has responded!

The response has been huge, beyond any description, as we can all see and hear from all the stories going around.

But I also saw the results of a survey which was carried out this week, from 211 respondents across all 50 US states, which was addressed to Chabad Lubavitch Rabbis based in cities and towns with robust Jewish communities, but also from areas with minimal Jewish experience.

The results reflect a major Jewish awakening, which paint a picture of the indomitable Jewish spirit

- 98% are seeing an increase in personal practice related to Jewish Traditions - People are starting to light Shabbat candles, purchasing and putting on Tefillin, saying the Shema, baking Challos, wearing identifiable Jewish jewelry etc
- 86% are seeing an increase in attendance at synagogue and programs
- 77.3% have seen a stronger sense of Jewish pride and confidence
- 81.5% state that people in their communities have been feeling scared - a wide spectrum of Jews, facing antisemitism, are choosing to increase in acts of Jewishness as opposed to laying low
- 93.4% say that they are witnessing a stronger feeling of connection to the Jewish People or a desire to connect to other Jews

- 88.2% state that their communities are connecting more strongly to Israel and her People
- 85.8% state that their members have been experiencing a deeper connection to their own Jewish identity.

The survey results paint a picture of a Jewish Community responding to this fraught moment with a renewed sense of solidarity and faith.

AM YISRAEL CHAI!!

MASHIACH NOW!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

DEVOTION

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 November 2024 · Shabbos 23 Nov 2024 · כ"ב חשון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a wonderful year Penina with lots of exciting developments, nachas from your children and success with their chinuch, and sholom bayis, all with much joy!

It is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah this coming week and we wish long life to Sid and Brian. Uncle Dave's neshamah should have an Aliyah. We have many warm memories of Uncle Dave visiting our home in SA almost every week, with his happy nature . I never saw him in any other mood. He was always happy! - We can learn from him.

In this week's parsha Chaye Sarah we have voluminous discussion relating to the DEVOTED AND TRUSTED SERVANT OF AVRAHAM ie Eliezer who was a Cananite servant.

Avraham is sending Eliezer on a mission to a far- away land to find a wife for his son Yitzchak.

Eliezer himself was pulled by dual devotions, because the Midrash tells us that Eliezer was hoping that his own daughter would be the one to marry Yitzchak. Therefore the success of his mission would bring an end to his personal aspiration! Yet he sets out undeterred!

Eliezer gets instructions and goes on his mission, and miraculously arrives at his destination in super-quick time.

He then starts praying to Hashem with a long conversation of who he is looking for and under what circumstances.

Then in V 24:15 it says that "He (Eliezer)had not yet finished speaking, when Rivkah came out.."

Now in Midrash Bereishis Rabbah 60;4, it says that only 3 righteous people had their prayers answered straight away, and that was Eliezer (Avraham's servant), Mosheh Rabbeinu, and Shlomo Hamelech.

This is astounding! How is it possible to make a comparison between Eliezer, a Canaanite servant, and Mosheh and Shlomo?

And the matter is even more astonishing in that Eliezer's prayer was answered even before he finished talking, whereas with Mosheh and Shlomo, it was only after they finished talking!?

In an article by Rabbi Menachem Feldman, he explains an answer to this based on a Sichah of the Rebbe as follows: (summarized)

We have 3 great Patriarchs and 4 great Matriarchs, and they had great children and relative.

And we all admire their great qualities, each in their own way.

Yet, even although we have inherited some of these qualities, we find it hard to fully identify with them and their greatness. We each have our own agendas, challenges, joys and sorrows etc.

But with Eliezer, we can identify.

He was a simple independent human being with his own personality, perspectives and agenda.

AND YET, IT WAS ELIEZER, DESPITE HIS MISGIVINGS ABOUT HIS MISSION, WHO, WITH HIS OWN INITIATIVE AND CREATIVITY, AND EMPLOYING HIS OWN JUDGEMENT, SUCCEEDED IN ARRANGING THE MARRIAGE OF YITZCHAK, WHICH WOULD PERPETUATE AVRAHAM'S LEGACY FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE!!

The purpose of Creation is carried out by ordinary people like ourselves, and by combining our own special identity with the will of the Divine, we are able to use our personal gifts, talents and unique touch to carry out the vision of the Creator.

Gut Shabbos to all

ORDER AND PEACE

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 November 2025 · Shabbos 15 Nov 2025 · כ"ד חשון תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Yechezkiel ben Ester a refuah shleimah.

Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday today! Wishing you a wonderful year Penina with much joy, and much growth in both gashmius and ruchnius BEH.

Mazal Tov to Reuven whose birthday is on Shabbos. Keep the golf clubs swinging Reuven and wishing you a healthy and happy year.

And next day is Perry's birthday who also plays golf with his father (and I heard that you both were playing with Brian and Warren last week - so nice BH!) Wishing you a great year Perry.

And the next day is Adrian (Sacks) birthday in Melbourne. Mazal Tov Ade, and wishing you a good, happy and healthy year!

We wish long life to Sid and Brian for the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah which is next week. He is fondly remembered and we wish his neshamah an Aliyah.

And another yohrtzeit at the end of next week is that of my cousin Alden ah. He is much missed. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and we wish long life to his Family, Froma, Kerry Lee, Gareth, and Adrian.

Another interesting Chassidisher Derher (from Igros Kodesh Vol 20 p315 - Responsae) came past me this week, which I would like to share:

"Generally speaking, a person's life needs to be, specifically, in an orderly fashion.

And specifically, this is the way of kedushah (Holiness), in contrast to sitra achra (unholy impure forces), which function in a chaotic manner.

"And I mean order in all areas - waking up, studying Torah, eating and drinking etc, And certainly and importantly with regards to your relationship at home. For 'great is the peace between husband and wife, for then Hashem's presence rests amongst them'."

Gut Shabbos to all!

תולדות

Toldos

Bereishis 25:19 · parsha 6 of 12 in Bereishis · 6 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5777 — HIDDEN MESSAGES 156
2017 / 5778 — BIRTH 159
2018 / 5779 — LAUGHTER AND LIGHT 161
2019 / 5780 — HOLINESS AND LAUGHTER 163
2020 / 5781 — FROM MUNDANE TO INSPIRATION 165
2021 / 5782 — MARRIAGE - A STORY 168
2022 / 5783 — UNDERSTANDING PRAYER 170
2023 / 5784 — STRETCHING TIME 172
2024 / 5785 — EDUCATION - A STORY 174
2025 / 5786 — METICULOUS AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE TALK 177

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

HIDDEN MESSAGES

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 December 2016 · Shabbos 3 Dec 2016 · ג' כסלו תשע"ז

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well, especially Sarita, who is having an operation on her tonsils, adenoids and grommets placement.

We wish her a quick refua shleima and send her our love.

We send condolences to Froma, Kerry Lee and Gareth on the passing away of Alden AH. The Family should only have simchas in the future. Alden was a close cousin of mine.

Welcome back Pesach and Family from Longbeach wedding.

This weeks Sedra is Toldos, and it speaks mainly about Yitzchok and Rivka.

And it reminds me of something I find fascinating in the davening of Rosh Hashana every year. (See attached)

Can you see HIDDEN in the Prayer 'Shochen ad marom.' the names of Yitzchok and Rivka running from top to bottom?

We say this prayer every day, but it was always a mystery to me why it was highlighted (bold) on Rosh Hashana.

And it is almost impossible to recognise this hidden coding when we read this prayer every day.

There is an opinion that this Prayer was written by a Yitzchok whose wife was also Rivka, but why is it just highlighted on Rosh Hashana?!

In addition it only works out with our nusach which is Sefard, and not the Ashkenaz version. But in the Ashkenaz machzor on Rosh Hashana, it also accepts this format whereby Yitzchok and Rivkah appear!

So today I asked Dayan Raskin and he told me at least 2 points of this connection to Rosh Hashana.

1. Yitzchok was the first in Chumash (in this weeks Sedra) to use prayer to overturn a decree ie for Rivkah to be able to give birth now. And on Rosh Hashana, using this power handed down to us, we can do the same in our own prayers to Hashem. (and I suppose in our prayers throughout the year also)

2. Of our 3 Forefathers, it is explained in Chassidus, that Avraham represents Kindness (Chesed), Yitzchokk represents Gevura which is Power or Withholding, and Yaakov represents Tiferes which is the combination of Chesed and Gevura resulting in the balance translated as Beauty.

Rosh Hashana is a Day of Judgement, and Judgement is Gevura (represented by Yitzchok) and we are praying to have any harsh judgements (chas veshalom) overturned by Hashem, in the same way that the prayers of Yitzchok overturned the decree on Rivka that she should now be able to have children.

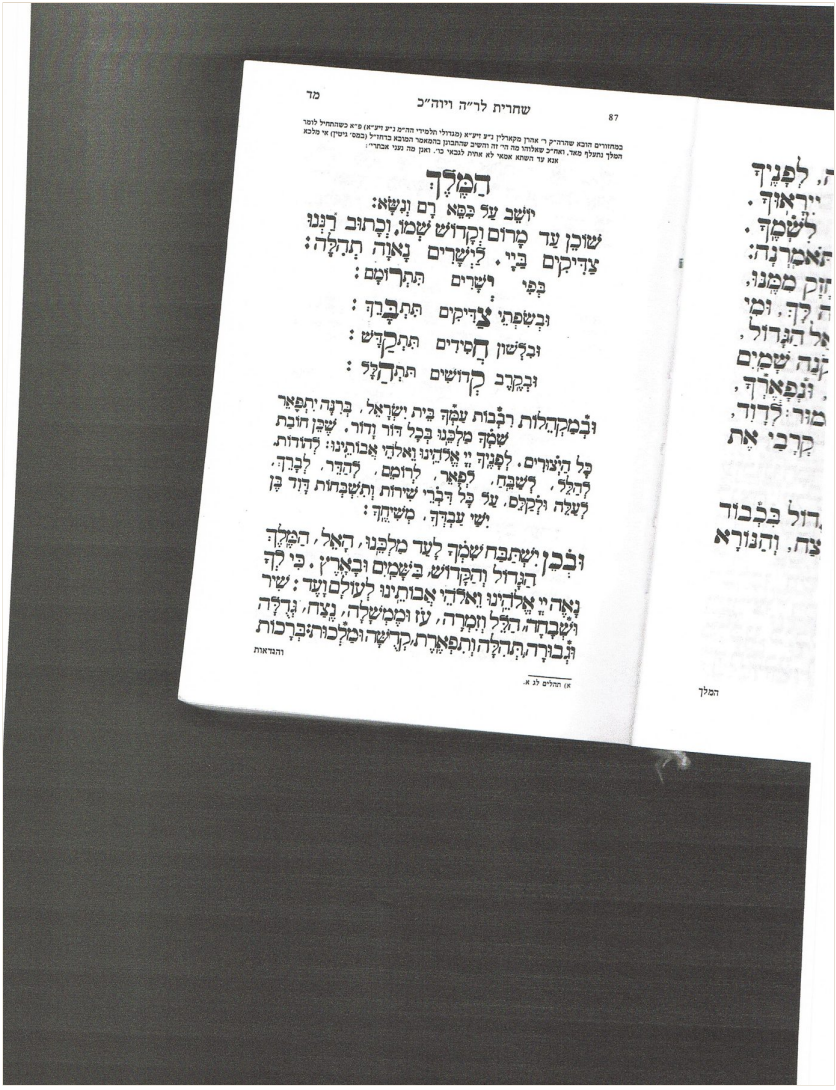
Isn't it so interesting how the Truth of Torah is so intricately woven into the Hebrew words and language, and how fortunate we are to have our Sages who can see, and reveal these to us.

AND THERE IS SO MUCH MORE STILL TO BE EXPLORED AND FOUND.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Attached to this letter

Scan of the Rosh Hashanah prayer showing the hidden names


87
שחרית לר"ה ויוה"כ
מד
המלך

BIRTH

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 November 2017 · Shabbos 18 Nov 2017 · כ"ט חשון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on having moved to their new home.

Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on moving to their new home this coming week.

It should be meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal, letovah for both Families! Lets have your new addresses!

We wish long life to Kerry Lee for the Yohrtzeit of her father Alden, which is this Shabbos. His neshamah should have an aliyah.

Actually at the end of last weeks Sedra, and in this week's Sedra Toldos, we have been learning about Yitzchak and Rivkah.

Last week was their marriage, and it said 'Yitzchok married Rivkah and she became his wife, and he loved her. Yitzchok was then consoled for the loss of his mother.'

In the same way Kerry Lee, you should be consoled for the loss of your father.

In this week's sedra, Rivkah is pregnant and gives BIRTH to twins Yaakov and Esav.

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah from The Rebbe this week on BIRTH, based on the pasuk in Yeshayeh 'Tzion experienced birth pangs, and gave birth to her children.'

Our Sages compare the Exile to pregnancy, and Redemption to birth

The Talmud describes the foetus as follows - 'Its head is between its knees, its mouth is closed, and it is fed through the umbilical cord. (Niddah 30b)

The child is fed directly to the stomach, feeding only the PHYSICAL NEEDS of the body.

The childs mind is not fully functioning, and its eyes are closed and unused. Ie the SPIRITUAL NEEDS of head and heart are not fed.

Spiritually, the state of Exile is similar.

We don't understand or see G-dliness.

Our spiritual minds and eyes are largely dormant.

Our actions of good deeds and mitzvot are habitual and cold. They do not affect our minds and hearts to Know and Love Hashem.

REDEMPTION (Mashiach) is the state of BIRTH, where we understand and feel G-dliness deeply in our minds and heart.

But we don't have to wait till then.

By increasing our understanding, awareness and sensitivity to G-dliness, this will help us go from Exile to Redemption.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all.

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

LAUGHTER AND LIGHT

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 8 November 2018 · Shabbos 10 Nov 2018 · ב' כסלו תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

There are no personal Mazal Tovs this week that I know about, but BEH we are now moving into the month of Kislev which contains Chanukah and so many important and happy Chassidic events. These all reflect much physical and Spiritual LIGHT, in the middle of the dark winter (in the Northern hemisphere) BH

In addition, this week,s sedra Toldos reflects LAUGHTER.

I saw an interesting section about this, in the book 'The Inside Story', based on the works of the Rebbe as follows.

Toldos means 'the generations' or the progeny. It reflects the history of the world.

(When applied in a personal way it could also refer to our own good deeds generated throughout our lives, and what we achieve)

Toldos comes up at the beginning of creation where it says 'These are the toldos of the heaven and the earth upon their creation'.

18 Biblical Books and 3000 years later, Torah concludes the Book of Ruth with 'These are the toldos of Peretz.....and Jesse fathered DAVID.'

The Midrash says that the word toldos throughout Torah is spelt in a deficient way (without a vav) except in the above 2 examples, of Creation and Perez. In these 2 places, both the words toldos of Creation and the toldos of Peretz are spelt in their full form with both vovs!

To explain this the Midrash says, that human history is the journey from toldos (the perfect world that G-d created), to toldos (the perfection of the age of Mashiach ben David).

In between, from the time of the sin of Adam, the generations are imperfect and trying to address these imperfections.

Now, in the sedra of Noach, it starts off 'These are the toldos of Noach.....' And the sedra is named Noach.

In our sedra it starts off 'These are the toldos of Yitzchak.....' But the sedra is called Toldos! Should it not have been called Yitzchok?

The word toldos is no small matter. As we can see from the above, it embraces the cosmos, spans the whole of history, and describes our purpose in life.

So why was this name given to our sedra of Yitzchak and not to the sedra of Noach?

Noach means tranquillity.

Yitzchak means LAUGHTER

Indeed Torah was given to make peace in the world and in our lives, BUT WE WANT MORE THAN THE ABSENCE OF DISCORD. WE WANT JOY. WE WANT LAUGHTER IN OUR LIVES.

Wishing everyone a gut Shabbos and a gut Chodesh with not only joy and laughter, but also much light.

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

HOLINESS AND LAUGHTER

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 November 2019 · Shabbos 30 Nov 2019 · ב' כסלו תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to the Bongarts on the engagement of their daughter to Moishe Golomb from London. The Bongarts are a close friend of our Family, and as far as I remember have attended every one of our major simchos, hosted us on many occasions in NY, made engagement lechaims, sheva brochos etc. And we are also close to the Golombs in London. Wishing the couple that their wedding should be at a shaah tovah umatzlachas, and they should build a binyan adei ad together, and give much nachas to their parents.

We (Shmuel Levy, Pesach, Shmuly and I) have just returned from a most memorable trip to NY for the Kinus (gathering) HaShluchim 2019

We were guests, and there were 5800 shluchim plus guests at the banquet on Sunday evening, all in one venue BH!

This was a royal treat, and I think is unique in the world.

Our trip started as soon as we arrived, with the deeply HOLY EXPERIENCE of visiting and praying at the Ohel ('Resting Place') of the Rebbe and Frierdike Rebbe, and ending with the huge banquet of dining, singing, Divrei Torah, dancing, socialising etc etc, FULL OF JOY with 5800 people BH.

In between I also had the opportunity to promote the Rambam books at the Book Fair connected to the Kinus etc.

This experience very much reflects a Dvar Torah I saw in this week's Sedra, Toldos.

It is well known that Yitzchak's nature was gvura which reflects discipline, FEAR OF HEAVEN etc.

And his name means LAUGHTER.

How do these 2 apparent opposites come together?

In the Sedra Yitzchak was locating and digging wells, and finding water.

And the Philistines were trying to steal these.

The explanation given by The Rebbe is as follows:

The Philistines represent unrestrained levity and mindless frivolity for its own sake.

This was the opposite of Avraham and Yitzchok, who personified the joy that comes from feeling close to Hashem.

So the Philistines tried to appropriate the wellsprings of Holy joy, erroneously claiming that the service of G-d is serious and solemn, which cannot tolerate laughter and joy.

Their view was that happiness, joy and laughter can only be used for empty levity and scoffing.

But, as is demonstrated over and over in our Jewish Nation, and especially at the abovementioned Kinus, the highest levels of Holiness can and are, associated with the highest levels of joy and laughter.

Gut Shabbos to alll

FROM MUNDANE TO INSPIRATION

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 November 2020 · Shabbos 21 Nov 2020 · ה' כסלו תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I want to wish Renee, Sid and Brian long life for the Yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave which was last week. You should have only joyous occasions to celebrate.

In this week's Sedra Toldos, we learn about Yitzchack RE-DIGGING the wells of water which his father Avraham had dug, because they had been stopped up by the Philistines.

I saw an interesting article written by Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz AH, who passed away a few months ago, explaining the significance of this story.

Avraham was a pioneer of Judaism.

He searched to find out the meaning of everything, he asked many questions, and everything interested him.

This was represented by him digging and searching into the earth to discover living waters, and he was put through many tests by Hashem.

Some excitements last 5 minutes, some a few hours, some a few days, months, or even a few years etc, but mostly they tend to dissipate and become dull.

This is represented by the Philistines.

They are not particularly bad, they don't show abominable behaviour as with other Nations that we meet in Torah, and on the whole they are decent people.

But what do they do? They come along and fill the wells of living water (enthusiasm and zest for life), with earth (dullness) - Sitemum is the Hebrew word used for this, which has the root stam.

Stam is like, 'whatever', or a shrug, or ordinary, or path of least resistance, or random.

They deflate everything they encounter, and this rapidly passes from one person to the next.

And the Philistines also represent this tendency which we have within ourselves.

And this then was Yitzchak's work.

His father had the energy, inspiration and enthusiasm of a pioneer.

Yitzchak is the second generation, and he now has to follow in his father's footsteps and re-dig the same holes which the Philistines had stopped up.

On the one hand it is easy because the wells are already well located, and an opening has already been made, but on the other hand it is difficult because there are no new discoveries

Despite the difficulty Yitzchak pushes himself forward and redigs the wells, TO AGAIN DISCOVER THE JOY OF THE LIVING WATERS

This applies to us both in our secular and spiritual lives.

Even although we are repeating similar tasks every day, we need to redig the well to find fresh living waters, and to try find something new and interesting.

And this is done, as was done by Avraham, to ask questions, try to understand better, refresh what we have forgotten, penetrate subjects deeper etc

It applies also to looking for hidden treasures in other people, and requires much training and practice!

Gut Shabbos to all

,

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

MARRIAGE - A STORY

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 November 2021 · Shabbos 6 Nov 2021 · ב' כסלו תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

There are many MARRIAGES in this weeks Sedra, starting off with the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah, the first Jewish marriage in our history.

In V25:20 it says Yitzchak was 40 years old when he married Rivkah, the daughter of Besuel haArami from Padam Aram..

Rashi questions why Torah repeats to us that Rivkah was the daughter of Besuel and the brother of Lavan, when we have been told this previously? Rashi answers that it was to EMPHASISE HER PRAISE, THAT SHE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A WICKED MAN, THE SISTER OF A WICKED MAN, AND HER HOMETOWN WAS A PLACE OF EVIL PEOPLE, YET SHE DID NOT LEARN FROM THEIR EVIL DEEDS.

And so it was personally very interesting for us this week, to be part of a brand new engagement many centuries down the line, still holding fast onto these traditions and values handed to us by our Forefathers.

We hosted a very fine girl this week of Russian origin, and now living in Germany.

We don't know what happened to the father, but mother and daughter live alone, and both voluntarily decided to convert to Judaism.

And what a fine and sincere Jewess she is!

The purpose of her trip to Stamford Hill was to meet a boy in our community, Dovid, who also had a difficult background, and had been struggling

with his Judaism. He had over the past few years made very strong moves to strengthen his Judaism

At this point I must give credit to the beautiful work that Shmuly does in our community, where him and a few others make farbregens (social gatherings) for the youth in our community, and they all have great times together.

Dovid was one of the boys who benefitted from these connections, and it was through this youth work that he became more committed to Judaism

And so after an intense week of meetings between the couple, they announced their engagement this week BH!

MAZAL TOV TO TWO SINCERE JEWS STARTING OUT THEIR LIFE WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION OF TORAH VALUES, HANDED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. - see photos attached.

AND, in this same week, one year down the line from another wedding in Shmuly's group of boys, was the BRIS of the son of one of these boys BH!

MAZAL TOV AGAIN! And yasher koach to Shmuly.

Wishing all those who have not yet taken the marriage step, to take courage, and take the plunge with Hashem's blessings.

Gut Shabbos to all with wishes for many more simchos!

UNDERSTANDING PRAYER

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 24 November 2022 · Shabbos 26 Nov 2022 · ב׳ כסלו תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I have been looking at a series of articles on Prayer, which brings up very interesting points.

And this week's article does also link to our Sedra Toldos, and all the Sedras relating to our forefathers and foremothers, where we learn about all their trials and tribulations with marriage, children, finances, battles, trickeries, wars etc, and how they PRAYED and the NATURE OF THEIR PRAYERS.

The section of Prayer which was being discussed, was one of the Introductions to Prayer in the Morning davening.

First there is Hodu. and then comes Mizmor Shir. which is Psalm 30.

This Psalm describes very clearly all our trials and tribulations, and how we cried out to Hashem.

At times it seems that Hashem is angry with us and we are being made to suffer, but the Psalm assures us, and makes us confident that Hashem will hear us and answer our prayer.

'One may lie down weeping at nightfall, but at dawn there is joy..'

When we feel that we are suffering, we need to know that it is only temporary.

And moreover, that in that very suffering, there is HIDDEN GOOD.

Because Hashem desires life and goodness, and that from the grief itself will come JOY.

The ups and downs of life are part of Hashems Master Plan, to remind us that we constantly depend on G-d.

If we were always to be successful, we would become arrogant.

Having understood all this, we can clear our heads of all sad thoughts, and sing Hashem's praises with joy.

This prayer helps us attain TRUE HAPPINESS, even if things are not going as we like them to be.

Generally, Psalms are very intricate and deep.

But already 600 years ago the Rivash (R Yitzchak bar Sheshes 14th C Spain) said ' I daven with the intentions of a child.' - A child doesn't have any complex thoughts. When he davens he knows one thing - he is talking to Hashem Himself, no more and no less.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh!

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

STRETCHING TIME

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 November 2023 · Shabbos 18 Nov 2023 · ה' כסלו תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his Bar exam in LA, and who is therefore now a qualified lawyer. What a great achievement Zalmy! Wishing you much success in all areas and with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday tonight. Wishing you continued growth and development, giving your parents much nachas!

And following a few days later is the birthday of Dovber Levy. Wishing the whole Family continued nachas from him with much growth, development and joy BEH!

There are many Chassidishe events in Kislev, and the next few are related to The Mitteler Rebbe, Rabbi Dovber Schneuri, who was the son of The Alte Rebbe, and assumed leadership after his passing.

The 9th of Kislev marks his birth and his Yohrtzeit. He was born in 1773 and passed away in 1827, both on 9th Kislev.

A year before his passing, on the 10th of Kislev in 1826, he was freed from imprisonment after being charged falsely.

The Mitteler Rebbe was famous for his vast knowledge of Torah and in particular CHASSIDUS, and his eloquent ability to expand on his father's teachings, accentuating their profundity in both depth and breadth.

To draw out a practical point that we can use about LEARNING CHASSIDUS, I saw an interesting story from a chassid, Reb Shimon, about his private meeting (Yechidus) with The Rebbe.

The Rebbe asked Reb Shimon what was happening with his learning of Chassidus and Reb Shimon replied that he was learning the daily Tanya (there is a daily schedule of learning which includes Chumash, Tanya, Tehillim - acronym chitas)

The Rebbe responded that chitas is like the alef-beis of learning, but is not the serious study that could be called LEARNING CHASSIDUS. And added that he should learn some Maamorim (deep Chassidic discourses).

When Reb Shimon heard this he said that he would try and find the time (because as far as he understood, he couldn't really fit this into his schedule)

To which The Rebbe replied,

"Eretz Yisroel stretches according to it's inhabitants, because of her holiness.

The time set aside for Torah is the same. Due to the holiness of Torah, THE TIME STRETCHES AS NECESSARY."

Gut Shabbos, and wishing all a month with much light of Torah, Chassidus, and Chanukah

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

EDUCATION - A STORY

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 28 November 2024 · Shabbos 30 Nov 2024 · כ"ט חשון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV TO PESACH AND CHANIE ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY BH! Wishing that the bris should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas, and that he should be a source of much nachas to you both, together with all your children!

Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday next week. Wishing Avi and Penina much continued nachas from her!

It is my cousin Alden's yohrtzeit on Shabbos, and we wish long life to Kerry Lee, Gareth, and Froma and their Families. I think of Alden often with warm memories. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

I saw an editorial this week from Rabbi Yossi Goldman, which was a story from one of his contacts, and his reflections on that story in connection with this week's Parsha, Toldos.

The Parshah speaks about the generations (toldos) of Yitzchak with the birth of Yaakov and Esav, and how they each go on their very different ways of life, and how Yitzchok gets to give his all-important blessings to Yaakov. (Esav was caught up with the ways of the world, and he fell into bad ways, while Yaakov was pure and stayed on a good, refined path. And just as a point of interest Esav, eventually, also does teshuvah!)

The commentaries explain that this was not just a blessing but the SYMBOLIC HANDING OVER OF THE JEWISH LEGACY TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

The Story:

A man of great respect, who was highly intelligent, highly sensitive, and who had reached the apex of his profession, came to visit Rabbi Goldman to discuss personal issues.

He wanted to discuss his most personal disappointment in his life which was connected to the wedding of his eldest daughter.

On the night of her wedding, after he came home, he found himself crying.

His wife asked him why he was crying, when he should be bubbling with joy.

He answered " I have just given away a daughter that I do not know, to a man that I do not know."

It had suddenly struck him like a ton of bricks, that he had spent years and years building up his business, and in the process he had neglected his family.

Thank G-d this man resolved to actually rectify his situation after the discussion!

On reflection, Rabbi Goldman concluded, that we need to know our children, from both a family, and a Jewish Faith, perspective.

It is not a given that our children will automatically absorb their Jewish Heritage.

It takes a lot of hard work and years of personal guidance by dedicated parents.

The influences from the world on children is dramatic and powerful.

If we don't transmit a healthy value system to the next generation, the vacuum will very likely be filled with other willing teachers.

The good news is that our children actually do want the guidance, and crave to have a direction in life, from home.

And what they learn at home will have a far more lasting impression than what they pick up elsewhere.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

Toldos ↑ Toldos · Contents · By date תולדות

METICULOUS AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE TALK

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 20 November 2025 · Shabbos 22 Nov 2025 · ב׳ כסלו תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Shirah, and you should continue to give much nachas to your parents!

Mazal Tov to Freida on the growth of her 'Mommy and Me' Group in Longbeach. Attached see the article which appeared in The Chronicle Magazine this month highlighting this Project - well done Freida! https://issuu.com/jewishlongbeachajcc/docs/chronicle_november_december_2025/ s/131194738

Another interesting piece of work that came up this last week was an extensive Family Tree of the Stein Family made by Kevin Ossey (Different from the Family Tree created by Kevin Marks - funny how the Kevins have both created Family Trees!) - See attached

Kevin Ossey is married to Isanne Heiman, part of the Stein Family, and they are currently living in the US.

I have copied Kevin into this email, with many thanks for this amazing work, and lots of love!

It is interesting that we have received this Family Tree in the week of Parshas Toldos, Toldos meaning 'Generations' ie 'These are the generations of Yitzchak..' BH

In connection with this Parshah, I heard an interesting Dvar Torah from Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon on the verse mentioning that Yizchak was aging and his eyesight was failing (27:1)

One of the reasons given for this by Rashi, was that Yitzchak had to be blind so that Yaakov could receive Yitzchak's blessings instead of Esav.

The Rebbe asks a very interesting question about this - If Hashem wanted Yaakov to get the blessings instead of Esav, could he not just have clarified to Yitzchak that his son Esav was evil and that Yaakov was righteous?! Did he have to make Yitzchak blind to achieve this?

And the answer is that it was more important not to make a negative statement about Esov , than the blindness of Yitzchok

Esov was an evil person, and Yitzchak was a Tzadik. Nevertheless, Hashem still balanced not to make a negative statement about Esov, at the expense of making Yitzchak blind!

How much more so must we be meticulously careful not to speak NEGATIVE TALK about anyone (and not even about ourselves)

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all.

ויצא

Vayeitzei

Bereishis 28:10 · parsha 7 of 12 in Bereishis · 7 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5777 — THE LAME BRIDE 180
2017 / 5778 — BELOVED 184
2018 / 5779 — THE SOURCE OF CONFIDENCE AND JOY 187
2019 / 5780 — LADDER 189
2020 / 5781 — HE WHO IS SMALL IS GREAT, AND HE WHO IS GREAT IS SMALL 191
2021 / 5782 — THE BLESSING OF CHILDREN 193
2022 / 5783 — BIRTHS AND EDUCATION 195
2023 / 5784 — SINGING AS WE GO INTO BATTLE 197
2024 / 5785 — THE WELLSPRING OF MARRIAGE 199
2025 / 5786 — FREE CHOICE 202

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

THE LAME BRIDE

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 December 2016 · Shabbos 10 Dec 2016 · י כסלו תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

We welcome Kerry Lee to our Family Group and wish her again long life for the loss of her father. You should have only happy occasions in the future Kerry Lee.

Mazal Tov to Talya on her birthday next week. We miss you Talya. Haven't seen you for such a long time!

We want to wish Shmuel and Rivky Mazal Tov on their move to LA. It should be meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal for good!

I also want to mention something else about Shmuel.

When he was here for Yom Tov he got up to mischief and arranged with Dayan Raskin to learn Chassidus with me before Shacharis 2x / week. (Thanks for that Shmuel!!)

And so this week I am sharing a Maamer from The Alte Rebbe that we have been learning at this shiur.

Over the past few weeks we have been reading in Chumash about the marriages of Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchok and Rivka, and now in this weeks Sedra, Yaakov with Rachel and Leah.

And the Maamer I am learning was also focused on marriage (Likutei Torah - Bamidbar - Veerasticha)

It is very intricate and I am only going to focus on one point (and interestingly enough, todays Hayom Yom was on a very similar point)

The word kallah is a bride

But the word is also used in the context of yearning as in the phrase kaltsa nafshi, which is referring to the yearning of the Soul to cleave to its source ie Hashem, with all its might

Ie all Jewish souls are called by the term KALLAH for this reason.

Now there are 2 categories of Kallah - this Yearning of the Soul (Kalsa hanefesh) - as brought from Gemorra Ketubos

1. Kallah naeh (a beautiful kallah)

2. Kallah chigras oi stuma (A LAME KALLAH)

The beautiful Kallah refers to someone whose whole life is devoted to Hashem and Torah and Mitzvos and he or she does not divert from there left or right, and their G-dly soul dominates.

THE LAME KALLAH is one who is dominated by their Animal soul, and it is said of them that they have eyes but don't see etc. and there is no yearning of the soul because the G-dly soul is imprisoned within the body

And yet she is still a kallah albeit a Lame one.

And now the Alte Rebbe shows how this lame bride can reach a much higher level than even the Beautiful bride.

The restrictions of the body does not have to prevent 'her' or 'him' from libi ubesari yeranenu el keil chai -my heart and body will sing to the living G-d.

And how is this done?

When 'she' will meditate or think deeply at how great is the world, and Hashem is greater than the world, and even greater than above the world ie the skies, planets stars etc, and even there where it is beyond the Universe Hashem is higher than that, where our weak minds have no capability of grasping at all, and even beyond there where there is no longer even any connection at all to world or pre world.

And when we steep our mind in this understanding, there will be aroused in the heart a fiery awakening to relate to Hashem.

And from this very high position , it will also will translate to reach all the way back down to the persons physical life also.

And this will all be with a much greater intensity than the approach of the Beautiful Kallah, because there has been a transformation of darkness to light

As mentioned I was amazed to see how todays Hayom Yom (8th Kislev) was so similar to this theme, and I attach it for those who have the time.

By the way we are making a Chuppa and seuda for a Russian couple who need a small private wedding, in our home next Sunday. And of course whoever is able to come will be welcome.

WISHING EVERYONE WHO STILL NEEDS TO FIND THEIR TRUE MARRIAGE PARTNER, TO FIND HIM OR HER VERY SOON, and in the meantime wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Attached to this letter

Scan of that day's Hayom Yom (8 Kislev)

Sunday **Kislev 8** **5704**

Torah lessons: Chumash: Vayishlach, first *parsha* with Rashi.
Tehillim: 44-48.
Tanya: We must understand (p. 611)...and the like. (p. 613).

Man should ponder thoughtfully how great are the kindnesses of the Creator: Such a puny insignificant being, Man, can bring great delight to the "Greatest of all great" of Whom it is written, "There is no delving into His greatness."[1] Man ought therefore always be inspired, and perform his *avoda* with an eager heart and spirit.

1. Tehillim 145:3.
2. See Adar Sheini 6, p. 34.

Monday **Kislev 9** **5704**

Torah lessons: Chumash: Vayishlach, Sheini with Rashi.
Tehillim: 49-54.
Tanya: There is yet (p. 613)...from the created. (p. 613).

Birth of the Mitteler Rebbe in 5534 (1773), and the day of his passing in 5588 (1827). He is interred in Niezhin.

On 9 Kislev 5554 (1793) the Alter Rebbe said a *maamar,* now part of chapter 53 of the *Sefer Shel Benonim* (Tanya), discussing the First Sanctuary. The next day he said Chassidus again — the conclusion of that chapter. The *maamarim* from Rosh Hashana 5550 (1789) until 10 Kislev 5554 (1793) which included assembled words of counsel from earlier years, were the basis for the 53 chapters of the *Sefer Shel Benonim.*[2]

Tuesday **Kislev 10** **5704**

Torah lessons: Chumash: Vayishlach, Shlishi with Rashi.
Tehillim: 55-59.
Tanya: This is not so (p. 613)...which is G-dliness. (p. 615).

On this day in 5587 (1826) the Mitteler Rebbe was released from his imprisonment in the city of Vitebsk. During the preceding *Chol Hamo'ed* Sukot it became known that the Mitteler Rebbe had been slandered. On Sunday of *parshat* Noach, 28 Tishrei, he left Lubavitch accompanied by officers. At noon he arrived in Dobromisl, where he said the *maamar Mayim rabim* etc. On Monday he left there, and travelled to Lyozna, where he said the *maamar Reshafeha rishpei* etc. On Tuesday he left there for Vitebsk where he remained imprisoned until the Sunday of Vayishlach, 10 Kislev.

Wednesday **Kislev 11** **5704**

Torah lessons: Chumash: Vayishlach, Revi'i with Rashi.
Tehillim: 60-65.
Tanya: The reason is (p. 615)...and the Gemara. (p. 615).

(At this point there appears in the Hebrew text emendations to the Siddur-With-Chassidus, that have meaning only in the Hebrew original. *Translator).*

יום ראשון ח כסלו

שיעורים. חומש: וישלח, פ' ראשונה ע
תהלים: מד-מח.
תניא: אך להבין . . . -קנח-
א מענש זאל זיך מתבונן זיין, ווי גרויס ד
ב"ה זיינען, אז אזא קטן שבקטנים ווי דער
קען ער מאכען א נחת רוח גדול צום גד
וכמ"ש ולגדולתו אין חקר, דארף דער מענש
באגייסטערט און טאן די עבודה בלב ונפש

יום שני ט כסלו

שיעורים. חומש: וישלח, שני עם פירש'
תהלים: מט-נד.
תניא: אך עור . . . -קנח- מה
יום הולדת את אדמו"ר האמצעי — תקל
הסתלקותו — תקפ"ח. ומ"כ בניעוישין.
ט בכסלו תקנ"ד אמר רבינו הזקן מאמר —
פרק נ"ג מספר של ביינונים (תניא) המדב
ראשון. למחרתו אמר חסידות עור הפעם —
הנ"ל עד גמירא. כי המאמרים מר"ה
כסלו תקנ"ד (אשר בהם נכללו לקוטי ע
הקודמות) מהם נסדרו נ"ג פרקי ספר של בי

יום שלישי י כסלו

שיעורים. חומש: וישלח, שלישי עם פי
תהלים: נה-נט.
תניא: משא"כ ההלכות . . . -
אדמו"ר האמצעי יצא לחירות — תקפ"ז
בעיר וויטעפסק. בחומ"ס נודע אשר
אדמו"ר האמצעי. ביום א' פ' נח כח תשרי
פקידים מליובאוויטש, בצהרים בא לדאבר
שם דא"ח מים רבים נו', יום ב' נסע משם
אמר שם דא"ח רשפי רשפי גו', יום ג' נס
טעפסק, וישב שם תפוס עד יום א' וישלח

יום רביעי יא כסלו

שיעורים. חומש: וישלח, רביעי עם פירי
תהלים: סה-סח.
תניא: והטעם . . . -316- וג
מהגהות אאמו"ר על הסידור „סדר ה
הרא"ח): ח"א ד"ה ברוך עושה בראשי
„משא"כ בחי' רד"א", ניתקן „ומעתה יו
בחי' רד"א".
ח"ב ד"ה עד הגל (פח. ד): „לרבנן
שבירך", ניתקן „לרבנן אם בירך".
שם: „דעת ר"י וכן האמת" העביר קו
האמת".
שם (פט. א): „התהו דנקודים" ני
דעקודים".

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

BELOVED

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 November 2017 · Shabbos 25 Nov 2017 · ז׳ כסלו תשע״ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Talya on her Basmitzva on Sunday. It sounds like such a beautiful event is being prepared! It should be a beautiful simcha, and the preparation for a beautiful life based on Torah and mitzvos, Talya. Also enjoy Bobba and Rivky who are travelling to be there with you BEH. And Mazal Tov also to Baty and Shmueli, and wishing you lots of nachas from Talya and all your children.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah, who is also travelling to the wedding of her sister next week. Wishing you many simchos in your Family!

Mazal Tov Renee on your upcoming birthday, on Shabbos I believe. Be well and have a wonderful year Renee.

Welcome back Pesach who has just returned from New York where he attended the phenomenal event of Kinus Hashluchim with 6000 other people.

The Kinus Hashluchim is an annual event where thousands of the Lubavitch Shluchim get together for a few days, and the highlight of this gathering is the Banquet.

I really have never ever heard of any such banquet, consisting of 6000 people all housed and catered for in 1 venue, and it is really a most amazing event.

Mommy and I watched some of it, and I am attaching the link, if anyone would at least like to get a glimpse of what took place.

<http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=48211&alias=kinus-hashluchim-banquet-5778> http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=48211&alias=kinus-hashluchim-banquet -5778

This week we have been learning in Rambam's Mishneh Torah, the Laws of TESHUVAH.

I found this very interesting and will try and share some of the points that came up.

- A Baal Teshuvah should not consider himself distant from the level of the righteous....He is BELOVED and desirable before the Creator as if he never sinned.
- Furthermore, he has a great reward, for he has tasted sin, and yet has separated himself from it, conquering his evil inclination.
- Teshuvah is great because it draws a man close to the Shechinah. Previously he was hated by Hashem, disgusting, far removed, and abominable. Now he is BELOVED and desirable, close and dear,....clinging to the Shechinah.
- If fools shame the Baal Teshuvah, pointing to their previous life-style, they will pay no attention. On the contrary they will rejoice.
- We are promised by the Torah, that if we fulfil its service with joy and good spirit, and meditate on its wisdom, Hashem will remove all the obstacles which prevent us from fulfilling its service ie sickness, war, famine etc. Similarly He will grant us all good, which will help us reinforce our performance of Torah ie plenty, peace, wealth etc., so that we are not totally involved throughout our days in matters required by the body. Rather he will sit unburdened, able to study wisdom, and perform mitzvot, in order that he will also merit the life of the World-to-Come
- However, one who serves Hashem out of LOVE occupies himself in the Torah and mitzvot, and walks in the Paths of Wisdom, for no ulterior motive - Not because of fear that evil will occur, nor in order to acquire

benefit. Rather he does what is true, because it is true, and ultimately, good will come because of it.

- Nevertheless, our Sages declared that a person should always occupy himself with the Torah even when it is not at this high level, because eventually it will lead to this high level. (no efforts will be lost).
- Freewill is granted to all men (of course including women). If one desires to turn to the Path of good and be righteous, the choice is his. Should he desire to turn to the Path of evil and be wicked, the choice is his.
- In the World-to-Come there is no body or physical form. Only the souls of the righteous. There is no way in this world to grasp and comprehend the ultimate good which the soul will experience in the World-to-Come. The Prophets only prophesied about th Messianic age, but not what the World-to-Come looks like.

Gut Shabbos to all and a beautiful BASMITZVAH.

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

THE SOURCE OF CONFIDENCE AND JOY

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 November 2018 · Shabbos 17 Nov 2018 · ט' כסלו תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Perry on his birthday today! Wishing you a wonderful year and hope that things are progressing from the last time we met at Sara's wedding!

And staying in Sharon, Boston, one day later is Reuven's birthday. Mazal Tov Reuven! Missing you. Wishing you a happy year with many more simchas in your Family.

I saw a short but important dvar Torah from this weeks parsha Vayetzei, drawn from the teachings of The Rebbe, as follows:

It is based on the posuk 'Light of foot, Yaakov set out for the land of the people who lived in the East.'

Yaakov was running away from his brother Esav, and in addition he knew he was heading towards a spiritually dangerous place. Ie a mundane place full of trickery and no spirituality.

Nevertheless he went out with a spirit of JOY AND TRUST which permeated his entire being, all the way down to his feet, to fulfil his Divine mission.

Similarly, when we go out each day to our mundane activities, (and often where there are additional difficulties), we can adopt the same JOYFUL AND CONFIDENT attitude as did Yaakov.

The key is to make sure beforehand, that like Yaakov,

1. We are properly nourished (from the study of Torah),
2. Properly clothed (observing mitzvot), and
3. Properly focused on our goal of making the world a suitable dwelling place for Hashem. (each in our own small areas of influence)

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

LADDER

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 December 2019 · Shabbos 7 Dec 2019 · ט' כסלו תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Renee on your birthday from last week. I am sorry that it slipped past me! But good wishes are never too late. Wishing you a wonderful year with good health, and lots of happy occasions for you and your whole Family.

Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday at the end of next week. Wishing you a happy year Naomi with good news. Hopefully some simchos!

Mazal Tov Gavriel on your upcoming birthday. I hope things are going very well in Longbeach and that you are doing well in School. Wishing you a successful year in both secular and Torah subjects.

In this week's Sedra Vayetzei, Yaakov has a dream about a 'LADDER which was fixed to the ground below with its top reaching up to the Heavens, and there were angels of G-d ascending and descending.'

In the Hayom Yom from this week (5th Kislev) it says that PRAYER is the ladder that connects souls and Hashem. And even though it stands on the ground ie prayer starts with a mere acknowledgement of Hashem (Modeh Ani when we wake up), it's top reaches the Heavens.

Ie by understanding each stage of the Prayers, we can reach this highest level of connection to Hashem.

And last week Tanya was speaking very much about the greatness of PRAYER as follows: - Kuntres Acharon Essay 4

1. Basically, even though Torah study is loftier than Prayer, Prayer has the main task of extracting and refining Holy sparks and elevating them from the

world of Tohu to their supreme Source, and even higher, to the Infinite One
2. Torah and Mitzvot draw down light into the world of Atzilut, and this only later comes down with diminished intensity into the lower worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. But Prayer calls forth the Infinite ein sof light into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah directly, and not by mere enclothement.
3. The initiation below from the heart of man (and woman) expressing a boundless love to G-d in Prayer, each one with his own 'might - meodecha', causes an arousal from the Divine state of Infinity, and brings down assistance in even temporal things as needed in health, peace, and livelihood.

The drawing down of this Infinite light into the lower worlds, is impossible without the prior initiation from below.

The Alte Rebbe discusses all this in much more detail.

Gut Shabbos, and may all our Prayers for good, be answered.

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

HE WHO IS SMALL IS GREAT, AND HE WHO IS GREAT IS SMALL

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 November 2020 · Shabbos 28 Nov 2020 · י״ב כסלו תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope that you are all well.

Mazal Tov to Renée on her birthday this week. Wishing you a happy year Renée with good health and nachas from all your family.

Mazal Tov to Talya in Sydney on her birthday next week. Wishing you much success with your studies Talya, and much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday next week. You should continue to be a first-class student Gavriel, in combination with a happy year.

What caught my interest this week was a lesson in the HaYom Yom of Tuesday, and this also links to the characters of Yaakov and Esav, who we are learning about in this week's Sedra Vayetze, and in next week's Sedra Vayishlach.

HaYom Yom

'When a person contemplates the great kindness of the Creator - in that the tiniest of insignificant beings, man, can bring satisfaction to the the greatest of the great, Hashem, whose greatness cannot be fathomed – this should lead him to be always high-spirited, and carry out his (or her) Divine service with an eager heart and spirit.'

Sedra

When Yaakov and Esav have their historic meeting in next week's Sedra, Yaakov says '..yesh li kol' - I have everything.

Esav says '...yesh li rav' - I have much.

In the Maamer Basi Legani of the Frierdike Rebbe, he explains the difference as follows.

Yaakov personifies holiness, and his use of the term kol, i.e. everything, implies a unity between the material and spiritual.

Esav personifies the forces of evil, and his use of the term rav - much, implies a multiplicity of the material.

Explaining this concept further, the Zohar cites a teaching of the Master of the Heavenly Academy: 'HE WHO IS SMALL IS GREAT, AND HE WHO IS GREAT IS SMALL.'

That which is holy is small, in the sense that it possesses the capacity for self diminishment.

By contrast, he who describes himself as being great, i.e. having multiplicity, is small. Of him it may be said 'le rosh ein kol' – 'The poor man (in this context, the evil man) lacks all (kol).'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

THE BLESSING OF CHILDREN

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 November 2021 · Shabbos 13 Nov 2021 · ט' כסלו תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov To Reuven on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you a healthy, happy year Reuven with continued growth and activity.

Mazal Tov To Perry whose birthday is one day difference from his father. Wishing you an amazing year, especially with your upcoming wedding and new partner BEH, and wishing the whole Family many celebrations.

Mazal Tov to Gavriel, whose birthday just squeezes in at the end of the week. Wishing you to go from strength to strength with your very good learning in both secular and Torah studying, and with much happiness.

I saw an interesting lesson about CHILDREN that we can learn from our Parshah for this week, Vayetze, from a sichah of the Rebbe (Sichos Kodesh 5740 Vol. 3 - as adapted by Daily Wisdom Vol 2)

It says in V 29:33 that "(Leah) again conceived and had a son"

Even after Leah had already been blessed with children, she still considered each additional child an additional blessing.

The Torah teaches us that our ability to love, expands according to the number of our children.

And similarly there is an increase in our Divine blessings of sustenance and livelihood.

Thus the more children we have, the more attention, and material benefits we can give to each.

The story of Leah is one of the numerous places in the Torah which emphasises the beauty and blessing inherent in the birth of each additional child.

Each child is a unique reflection of G-d's image, and has a unique contribution to make, both to our lives and to our Divine mission.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

BIRTHS AND EDUCATION

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 December 2022 · Shabbos 3 Dec 2022 · ט' כסלו תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH there have been many BIRTHS this week:

Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on the birth of Shira Nechama! We are so touched to have another beautiful baby named after my mother ah. Thank you! You should bring her up to Torah, chuppah, and maasim tovim with much joy and nachas, and from all your children BEH.

Mazal Tov to Avi's brother Eli on the birth of a son named after his father ah Yisrael Meir. I am sure this must be a source of great satisfaction for you and your father Avi!

And another brother of Avi (didn't yet hear which one) had twin boys this week BH! Mazal Tov Mazal Tov! No names yet.

Mazal Tov Avi on an amazing week BH!

Wishing many simchos for the whole Family.

And also many BIRTHS in this week's Sedra Vayeitzei, where all 12 sons are born to Yaakov and his wives.

Of course when children are born they also need EDUCATION, and some interesting points came up in the Sedra:

- When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing children, she gave her handmaid Zilpah, to

Yaakov for a wife, and she then bore a son, on which Leah said bagad, which means good fortune, and he was therefore named Gad. (V 30:9-11)

Rashi points out though that bagad also means disloyal. Ie It is as if Leah was saying to Yaakov that he had been disloyal to her! (But did not Leah ask Yaakov to marry Zilpah??!!)

Rabbi Gordon explained the above by giving over a story about his father.

It occurred a few days before his father's passing, when he called Rabbi Gordon in, and had a conversation about the above point in the Sedra.

He said that ONE SHOULD FIND A WAY TO INSPIRE CHILDREN TO DO THE RIGHT THING, EVEN WHEN THEY RESIST AND DO NOT WANT TO TAKE INSTRUCTION.

If we allow them their demands, under pressure, to go on their wrong path, they will one day come back and protest "Who asked you to listen to me!" (In the same way that Leah protested to Yaakov)

- In a Sicha the Rebbe explains the above (Likutei Sichos Vol 1)

Yaakov succeeded in raising all of his 12 sons to follow in the righteous ways of Avraham and Yitzchak, while both Avraham and Yitzchak each had one righteous son and one wicked.

He (Yaakov) was able to do this because he combined the kind nature of Avraham with the strict nature of Yitzchak, and related to Hashem with simple sincerity. In this way he transcended the differences between the opposite approaches of his forebears, and was able to relate equally well to each of his children's different personalities .

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

SINGING AS WE GO INTO BATTLE

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 November 2023 · Shabbos 25 Nov 2023 · י״ב כסלו תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you an exciting year Talya with much achievement. Looking forward to see which direction you will be heading BEH!

Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday next week. Wishing you a happy, fulfilling year Gavriel in all areas, with expression in many talents BEH.

I saw an interesting Sicha on this week's Parshah Vayeitze - Likutei Sichos vol 20 - Below much summarized.

Yaakov was fleeing from his brother Esav who wanted to kill him, and travelling to his deceitful uncle Lavan, who was living in the bad environment of the place, Charan.

So Yaakov arrives at a place, the sun had set. and he lay down (V28:11)

Bereishis Rabbah 68:11 infers from this expression of lying down, that during the 20 years that Yaakov lived with Lavan he hardly slept. So what was he doing (besides his work)?

He was reciting (WITH SONG) the 15 chapters of Shir Hamaalos (Song of Ascents) in Tehillim!

The explanation goes deeper. - Chidah (Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai)

There were 15 years that the lives of all 3 Patriarchs overlapped, when they were living together.

Avraham - with his nature of kindness - chesed

Yitzchak - embodied by fear and withholding - gevurah

Yaakov - embodied by beauty and compassion - tiferet, a harmonizing of the above 2 characters.

Therefore the deeper meaning, explains the Chidah, is that Yaakov was not only reciting these 15 psalms, BUT THAT HE WAS EMPLOYING ALL THREE POWERS OF THE 3 PATRIARCHS SIMULTANEOUSLY IN HIS BATTLE WITH LAVAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT. (which is no easy task)

And he did this with AN UPBEAT JOY (because Yaakov understood that the descent into difficulty and exile, with all of its pain, was only to allow him to reap greater spiritual light from the darkness)

The first chapter of the 15 Shir Hamaalot Psalms says, "I come in peace, but when I speak, they come to wage war "(Tehillim 120:7)

We do not seek out darkness and confrontation - 'We come in peace.'

But when Hashem places us in difficulty and exile, we do not cower.

We sing as we engage in the battle.

Because we know that we will emerge victorious, with a much greater light.

Gut Shabbos to all, and may much light emerge from our efforts in Israel's battle, and our own personal ones.

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

THE WELLSPRING OF MARRIAGE

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 December 2024 · Shabbos 7 Dec 2024 · ו׳ כסלו תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Dov Hyman is undergoing treatment for a condition. We wish him a refuah shleimah!

And at the same time we wish you a huge MAZAL TOV Dov, on the marriage of your son Josh. So happy that you were able to attend!! Wishing you many more simchos in good health.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on the bris of their new baby boy who has now been named Elisha. What a beautiful name BH. Wishing you lots of nachas and happiness from him, and from all of your Family

Mazal Tov again to Avi and Penina on the birthday of Shira which was today. Mazal Tov Shira!

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on the birthday of Dovber which is next week BEH. Wishing you much continued nachas from him, and wishing Dovber much continued growth and development with much happiness!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome a new member to our family Group. I was in touch this week, with my cousin Selma Penn (nee Davidoff from Uncle Meyer ah), who is also excited to reconnect with Family members. Please see everyone's contact details above Selma.

I am also posting Kevin's updated Family Tree, with the new additions of above simchos, and this will also enable you to get to know everyone on the group better. So happy that we are communicating again after all these years BH! Welcome!

This week's Sedra is VaYetzei, and one of it's themes is how Yaakov had to LABOUR FOR 14 YEARS for his MARRIAGE to Rachel which came about through much sweat, toil and hard work!

I saw an interesting article from Rabbi Yosef Y Jacobson on this subject, based on the teachings of the Rebbe, which I would like to share in a summarized form:

The Midrash relates that 3 of the greatest men in our Jewish History, encountered their wives at WELLSPRINGS ie Yitzchak, Yaakov and Mosheh Rabeinu.

Like all the stories in Torah, this one too carries deep lessons, which come to assist us in our lives.

And so what can we learn about MARRIAGE IN CONNECTION TO A WELLSPRING, and how does it affect us practically?

Lakes, rivers and seas etc are exposed bodies of water, and don't take much effort from ourselves to access them.

A wellspring, however, contains 2 opposing components:

- The well is of no value without human toil. We need to dig deep into the earth to uncover the spring of hidden water
- We do not create the source and flow of the water. Our efforts merely expose that which fully exists

The Zohar explains that a "wife and her husband are 2 halves of the same soul"

Just like a well is made in Heaven, so are each of our marriage matches made in Heaven. This soul-flow between wife and husband is already in existence, but it may be completely concealed!

OUR HUMAN JOB IS TO SEARCH, DIG AND EXPOSE THIS INNER SOURCE OF WATER.

And if conflict is experienced, it does not mean that the relationship is over. It is always inherently intact. We just need to be committed to take a shovel in our hands and bring to the surface the inner wellspring of love that bonds us to our partners.

Wishing everyone a beautiful Shabbos!

Vayeitzei ↑ Vayeitzei · Contents · By date ויצא

FREE CHOICE

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 November 2025 · Shabbos 29 Nov 2025 · ט' כסלו תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Dovber Levy on his birthday this Shabbos and his upcoming opsher celebration next week BEH. Wishing the whole Levy Family a wonderful simchah, and many more, and for Dovber to have a wonderful day and year BEH!

Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday at the end of next week. Wishing you a great year Gavriel with much success and happiness.

More news from Pesach and Chanie, some sad and some happy. We wish long life to Chanie and her Family on the passing of her grandmother in EY. Baruch Dayan Haemess. And wishing you only simchos in the future.

Pesach and Chanie and Elisha were also travelling in SA for a wedding, and managed to fit in additionally, a nice re-union with Froma, Kerry Lee and their Family. It is so heart-warming seeing family in distant countries getting together BH. I think Pesach also tried to make contact with Darryl Milner. Pesach and Chanie are now on their way to Israel for the shivah.

Today, I was learning Gemorra Megilah p25a, and I came across an interesting lesson about FREE CHOICE where the Gemorra refers us to Chap 5 in Rambam's Laws of Teshuvah

Here Rambam explains Free Choice as follows:

Only human beings have the power to choose between good and evil. Man has full power to control his destiny.

Man's actions are in his own hands. G-d does not lead him in a particular direction nor decree any behaviours on him.

It is an essential point of our religion (belief and understanding) that we are judged according to our deeds and are fully free to go in any direction that we choose, and that the consequences will follow accordingly.

And connected, from this week's Sedra Vayetze, it says (29:1) "Yaakov set out LIGHT FOOTED for the land of the people who live in the East."

Even although Yaakov was facing many dangers both physically and spiritually, he set out in a Spirit of Joy and Confidence.

The key is to make sure that we are properly nourished with Torah study, Mitzvah observance, and focused on our goal. (Based on a sicha from the Rebbe)

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos, and a month of much light, with upcoming Chanukah BEH.

וישלח

Vayishlach

Bereishis 32:4 · parsha 8 of 12 in Bereishis · 8 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5777 — CONNECTING 205
2017 / 5778 — KABBALAH, GEMATRIAS, AND BROTHERS 207
2018 / 5779 — CONVERTING CHAOS TO SERENITY 209
2019 / 5780 — THOUGHTFUL PONDERING 212
2020 / 5781 — FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT 214
2021 / 5782 — HISTORY 217
2022 / 5783 — HOW TO BE A MAN 220
2023 / 5784 — THE BATTLE OF EDUCATION 222
2024 / 5785 — SMALLNESS 225
2025 / 5786 — STRENGTH 227

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

CONNECTING

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 December 2016 · Shabbos 17 Dec 2016 · י״ז כסלו תשע״ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well

This time of year always has this beautiful combination of the births of Channa and Rivky, Yud-tes Kislev ie The Alte Rebbe and Chassidus, and the lights of Channuka, all harmonised together.

So first Mazal Tov Channa on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you to continue advancing in all areas. Everything is possible and you should reach all the good goals that you desire.

Mazal Tov Rivky on your upcoming birthday. iYrh you are facing a year with lots of change and new possibility. It should be with happiness and much achievement.

There was one main thought running through mt mind most of this week which came from an article that I had read.

Someone we know had yechidus (a private meeting with the Rebbe).

This person assessed himself to be the type of person who was not so joyful, and he decided to ask the Rebbe how he could be JOYFUL all the time.

And this is what he did, and the Rebbe answered him 'If you keep in mind that the Soul of a Jew is part of G-d above, how can you not be constantly joyful.'

He then added 'I see that you are by nature a melancholy type of fellow, but if you bear this in mind at all times, you will be joyful.'

Yud Tes (19th) Kislev is the central day of the year to the Teachings of Chassidus, and this also is being celebrated next week. It is known as the Rosh Hashana of Chassidus.

In connection to both of the above points was the Hayom Yom of this week on 13 Kislev which went like this:

'Chassidus changes what exists, and uncovers the essence character. The essence character of the Jewish person is beyond estimation and assessment, for he is part of G-d's Essence.

Whoever lays hold of a part of The Essence is as though he lays hold of of it all.

Just as the Essence is unlimited, so is the part unlimited.....

And Chassidus reveals the essence character of the soul.'

An additional point which I would like to mention is that the word MITZVA means TO CONNECT.

We as Jews, have a most valuable asset, ie to be able to connect to Hashem with physical acts ie Mitzvos as instructed to us through Torah, and to further understand these better through the learning of both Nigleh and Chassidus.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Yom Tov (19 Kislev) and a Chanuka with much light.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

KABBALAH, GEMATRIAS, AND BROTHERS

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 November 2017 · Shabbos 2 Dec 2017 · י"ד כסלו תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Welcome back Mommy from the long trip to Sydney for Talya's Batmitzvah. I heard this was so beautiful! Mazal Tov again Talya and the whole Family.

Mazal Tov to Gavriel for your birthday on Shabbos. We are so looking forward to your being with us on Shabbos! What a surprise.

In this week's Sedra Vayishlach, we learn about the meeting between Yaakov and Esav.

The enmity between the 2 is well known, and Yaakov is very fearful, hearing that Esav was approaching his Camp with an army of 400 men, and knowing that Esav had intentions to kill him. Yaakov had fled from him some 34 years previously.

He prepares a very large present of herds and flocks, which he sends out in advance to Esav, spends the night wrestling with an angel, and then goes out ahead of his Family to meet Esav and his army.

It then says that 'he (Yaakov) bowed down to the earth 7 times until he reached his BROTHER.'

'Esav ran to meet him and hugged him.....etc'

A friend of mine told me a very nice dvar Torah on this meeting, authored from the Rebbe's father Reb Levik, whose style is very deep, and derived from Kabbalah and Gematrias (matching the alphabet and numbers ie the numerical value of aleph is 1, beis 2 etc) As follows:

יצחק (Yitzchak) = 208 = 8x26 (Hashems name is numerical equivalent of 26)

Yitzchak gave main brochos to Yaakov, and then also blessed Esav.

יעקב (Yaakov) =182 = 7x26 ie he received 7 of the 8 portions of Yitzchaks 8x26 Holy powers

עסו (Esav) = 376 = 350 + 26 = [26 + (7x50)]

טמא (Impurity) = 50

The portion of G-dliness in Esav (ie the 26), was surrounded by 7 layers of Impurity.

Therefore, when Yaakov approached Esav with his 7 powers of 26, (Holiness), he bowed 7 times.

With each bowing he was removing one layer of impurity from Esav, with his equivalent Holy power.

After all 7 levels of impurity were removed from Esav, HE REACHED HIS BROTHER, ie the internal G-dly essence of Esav.

How intricate, deep and beautiful is our Torah!!

Gut Shabbos to all in the month of Light, Chassidic Yom Tovim and Birthdays - Kislev.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

CONVERTING CHAOS TO SERENITY

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 22 November 2018 · Shabbos 24 Nov 2018 · ט״ז כסלו תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Lots of birthdays this week, and so in date order,

Mazal Tov to Gavriel whose birthday is today! We are missing you in London, but also happy that you are already doing well in school in California BH. Have a wonderful year and bring much nachas to your parents Gavriel.

Mazal Tov to Talya in Sydney Australia on your birthday tomorrow. It was so nice that you were in London in summer and that we got to know you better. We heard how good you are doing in school and we wish you to continue growing , and with much happiness for you and your Family.

Mazal Tov Renee on your birthday next week. Have you returned from your trip to Australia and New Zealand? Hope it was good, and wishing you a year of happiness and in good health.

Mazal Tov Channah, our first born, on your birthday next week. It should be a year of good deeds and good resolutions, in good health and joy.

And last but not least, Mazal Tov Rivky on your birthday one day after Channah. Wishing you much happiness , and further achievements in both gashmiyus and ruchnius.

Both Channah and Rivka were born on and just after the Holy Yom Tov of Yud Tes Kislev, the Yom Tov of the Alte Rebbe and the Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus, and going into Channukah - all reflecting much Spiritual and physical Light BH!

About Yud Tes and chof Kislev, The Alte Rebbe said "Whoever rejoices in my simcha, I will take take him from distress to relief, from gashmiyus to ruchniyus, and out of gehinom."

This falls on 26th, 27th and 28th November this year and there will be events all over the world BEH

This weeks Sedra Vayishlach primarily focuses on the Universal battle between Jacob and Esav. (drawn from talks of The Lubavitcher Rebbe which I read this week)

Esav is a very powerful force deriving from the world of Tohu (CHAOS), whereas Jacob's source is the world of Tikun (CORRECTION and ORDERLINESS).

Jacob acknowledged Esav's strength which were superior to his own.

He also recognised that in order to bring the world to its ultimate destiny (OF PEACE AND SERENITY), it would be necessary to combine strengths.

BUT he also realised that it would be his job (Jacob's) to harness the raw untamed power of Esav.

In this week's sedra Jacob realised that it is going to be a long and hard process over many centuries, and parted company from him 'Until I will reach my master (Esav) in Seir' (When Esav will be subdued)

And this work is continuing through the centuries by ourselves, through Torah and mitzvos, being the descendants of Jacob.

The power of Esav on a practical level is represented by inflated egos, self- aggrandisement, arrogance, and self-obsession.

Even although we are constantly working on these negative qualities in ourselves, as we get closer to Mashiach, they will soar out of control.

Mashiach will have the exact opposite traits, being extremely humble and selfless - ani verochev al chamor -humble and riding on a donkey.

He will teach us how to subdue our egos and nullify our will to Hashem.

Interestingly and connected, there is a new online Course starting up soon, which really caught my interest, and I think may benefit many people in our generation of chaos, and am attaching the link below.

https://www.chabad.org/tools/subscribe/email/view_cdo/i/8A35D917402345A2:B55A4D102ADA5C047EE2C797D65D7FA9185022F44647F905E5425D-F6BAE48D1E#utm_medium=ema il <https://www.chabad.org/tools/subscribe/email/view_cdo/i/8A35D917402345A2:B55A4D102ADA5C047EE2C797D65D7FA9185022F44647F905E5425D-F6BAE48D1E#utm_medium=email&utm_source=64_chabad.org_subscribers_en&utm_campaign=en&utm_content=header>
&utm_source=64_chabad.org_subscribers_en&utm_campaign=en&utm_content=header

May we already tap in to the correction of chaos, to bring us a taste of serenity even while we are still in golus.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

THOUGHTFUL PONDERING

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 December 2019 · Shabbos 14 Dec 2019 · ט"ז כסלו תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Channah on your upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with much growth and happiness

Mazal Tov Rivky on your birthday next week, one day later. Wishing you a year with much nachas from your Family, and with much joy.

Mazal Tov Talya (Bassin) on your birthday tomorrow. Wishing you continued success with your excellent work at school, and this should be with much joy. I got your note about your Project on Your Family Roots, and look forward to sending you all the information you are looking for!

I have already wished Gavriel Mazal Tov for his birthday, but because it is today, I would like to wish him again, to have an amazing year!

There was an interesting Hayom Yom this week which I wanted to share, as follows:

'Man should PONDER THOUGHTFULLY on how great are the kindnesses of the Creator.

Ie To ponder on how, such a puny and insignificant being, Man (the smallest of the small), can bring such great delight to the Greatest of all greats, of whom it is written 'There is no delving into His Greatness'

Therefore, Man should always be inspired to perform his avodah (service) with an eager heart and spirit!'

And this can be understood better from this week's Sedra Vayishlach, where we see that Torah alternates using the names Yaakov and Yisrael, for our Forefather.

The Chassidic Masters point out that Yaakov refers to the aspect of Servants to Hashem.

And Yisrael refers to us as Children to Hashem.

This can also be reflected within each of us.

At times in our life we are in the spirit of Esau, just getting through our material lives. The Jacob aspect of our nature will be fighting the battle with Esau, and be keeping Judaism just as a duty when possible, and without much love, as a servant

And then there are times when the Yisrael aspect of ourselves, overcomes the apathy and materialism of Esau, when we do a mitzvah with love and enthusiasm as a child.

So why does Torah continue to use the name Yaakov, even after he has conquered Esau, and has been given the name Yisrael? (which seems like a higher level?)

This is to indicate that Torah values both names and both Services.

1. There is great value in also doing a mitzvah even when we lack the joy and desire
2. And to point out that the opportunity to experience the joy and fulfilment of a mitzva, is always accessible for us - IF WE PONDER THOUGHTFULLY.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 3 December 2020 · Shabbos 5 Dec 2020 · י״ט כסלו תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Channa on her birthday on Sunday. Wishing you a happy and successful year with continued growth and achievement!

Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday one day later. Wishing you a year of continued success, with much nachas from your Family and with much joy!

Kislev is a month of much light at the darkest time of the year.

There are the lights of Channukah, and the celebrations of great Chassidic Masters, The Alte Rebbe, The Mitteler Rebbe and The Rebbe.

Yud Tes Kislev on Shabbos, is the celebration of the release from prison of The Alte Rebbe. It is a day of great celebration all over the world, and is regarded as a Yom Tov and the Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus.

From whatever angle one looks at Kislev, we see victory over forces of evil in both the physical and spiritual.

The Alte Rebbe said regarding Yud Tes Kislev, 'Whoever rejoices in my simcha, I will take him out from distress to relief, from gashmius to ruchnius, and out of Gehinom.' - Sefer Hasichos

There will be many Zoom sessions all over the world celebrating this day, both before and after Shabbos. Everyone is welcome to join.

This was also reflected in this weeks Sedra Vayishlach, where we see a terrified Yaakov preparing to meet Esav and his army, who were out to kill him, and the ensuing events.

I heard an amazing dvar Torah from the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchak, explaining the scene where Yaakov approaches Esav and bows down 7 times, then they hug each other, tarry together temporarily, part ways, and agree to reunite in the future more permanently in Har Seir. As follows:

It says in Gemorra Avodah Zarah that before the destruction of the Second Temple, the Greeks were heavily persecuting the Jews.

For 26 years the Romans joined together with the Jews to resist the Greeks.

Why 26 years?

The Romans are descendants of Esav, And we are descendants of Yaakov.

Yitzchak's (the father of Yaakov and Esav) name has the numerical value of 208 which equals 8x26 (26 is the numerical value of one of Hashem's Names, and represents purity).

Yaakov's name has the numerical value of 182 = 7x26

So there is 1x26 missing (because Yitzchak had 8x26, and he passed 7x26 to Yaakov) GUESS WHERE WE WILL FIND THIS!?

Esav was evil and impure (tameh). The numerical value of tameh is 50

The numerical value of Esavs name is 376 = 7x50 plus 26 (this 26 was hidden deep down in his being below all the impurity)

So when Yaakov was bowing down to Esav, each bow (set of 26) purified 1 level of Esav's impurity.

After 7 bowings, Esav was now pure, which allowed the revelation of his hidden level of G-dliness (the 8th and missing 26)

They therefore hugged each other. This represents the temporary period many centuries later when the Romans got together with the Jews for 26 years

They then agreed to part company, and Yaakov and Esav agreed to reunite permanently in the future.

This will be with the coming of Mashiach - may it be soon, so that we can all celebrate Kislev in Yerushalayim, when we will all be released from the DARKNESS OF EXILE TO THE LIGHT OF REDEMPTION.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a month filled with much light (and doughnuts!)

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

HISTORY

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 November 2021 · Shabbos 20 Nov 2021 · ט"ז כסלו תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday next week. Wishing you much success in your new business project, all in good health and happiness!

Mazal Tov Rivky, whose birthday is one day later. Wishing you continued success in all your activities, and much happiness and nachas from all your children, in good health.

Mazal Tov Talya on your birthday next week. You are so far away in Australia, and I hope we can see you some time. Wishing you a great and happy year.

There are so many celebrations in Kislev and so much light in the darkest month of the year.

One of the highlights of Kislev, is Yud Tes Kislev marking the release from prison of the Alte Rebbe, Reb Shneur Zalman of Liadi, and which marks the 'Rosh Hashanah' of Chassidus, when we restart the learning cycle again of his famous work TANYA.

His name Shneur, which means 2 lights, reflects his expertise in both the Nigleh of Torah (The Rav's Shulchan Aruch), and the Nistar (hidden aspect) - Tanya.- his 2 main works.

I saw in this week's Sedra Vayishlach, and a point made by the Zohar, a connection which I found interesting.

Vayishlach (Based on a Sicha of the Rebbe Likutei Sichos Vol 5)

At the end of the Sedra it speaks of Esavs descendants, and our Sages say that Magdiel and Iram allude to Rome (Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer..)

Hashem told Avraham that the Jewish People would go into exile 4 times, the fourth would be the Romans. Our current exile is an extension of the Roman exile, since the culture, legal system, and even many of the languages of Western Civilisation, derive from the ancient Romans.

(in V33:14 Yaakov predicts that he will come to Esav in Seir. The Baal HaTurim points out that the word avo - I will come, has the numerical value of 4, ie I will come to you in Seir after the 4 Exiles!

At first the Romans actively opposed G-dliness, destroying the Second Temple in 70CE.

Since then however, Western culture has become progressively refined, and has gradually shed its opposition to G-dliness, and has begun marshalling its material and cultural resources to contribute to the spiritual refinement of the world.

We can facilitate this process by further studying of the Torah and deepening our observance of its Commandments.

This will allow us to identify the difference between Jewish and Roman values, and then elevate the latter by revealing their innate Divine potentials

Zohar

In the Zohar, the following prediction is recorded:

'in the 600th year of the 6th millennium, (this works out to be 5500 or 1740 and onwards), there will be an opening of the Supernal Gates of Wisdom, and the lower wellsprings of wisdom, preparing the world for the 7th millennium (ie Shabbos, - the final Redemption)

If we look back we can see that this refers to the rise of the Chassidic movement, (Baal Shem Tov 1698-1760, and THE ALTE REBBE 1745-1812), and the industrial Revolution.

May the refinement of the world continue, with the arrival of Mashiach, and the revelation of HIS STORY (the Story of Hashem)

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing a Kislev full of light.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

HOW TO BE A MAN

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 December 2022 · Shabbos 10 Dec 2022 · ט״ז כסלו תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH there is a double celebration this week in LA and BEH these will be celebrated together on Shabbos. This is the BARMITZVAH of Gavriel, and the BRIS of Shmuel and Rivky's new baby boy BH. These 2 celebrations are linked in the Dvar Torah following. (Sicha of the Rebbe Likutei Sichos Vol 15)

Mazal Tov Shmuel and Rivky for the birth last Shabbos. Wishing you many simchos and much nachas from him and all your Family. Looking forward to the bris BEH this coming Shabbos. Mazal Tov Pesach and Chanie on the Barmitzvah of Gavriel today. We are so proud of how Gavriel did kria and said his Maamer today. I am sure you are also proud of him. Wishing you much continued nachas, and we look forward to the rest of the celebration! Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday next week. We are missing you in LA. Wishing you a wonderful year!

In connection with the abovementioned, the Barmitzvah is obviously linked to this week's Sedra Vayishlach, where Torah derives that Barmitzvah should be at the age of 13. In another sichah the Rebbe does show a link between Barmitzvah and Bris milah, when Avraham circumcised Yitzchak. The Hebrew word used here was both higamel and yigamel. The first 2 letters of higamel add up to 8 (alluding to bris), and the first 2 letters of yigamel add up to 13 (alluding to Barmitzvah)

In relation to the Barmitzvah V34.25 says that 'Shimon and Levi, Dinah's brothers each took his sword.....' and single-handedly attacked the people of

Shechem (to avenge what they had done to their sister - this was an act of self sacrifice on their part, mesiras nefesh, as they put their lives at risk) The Midrash relates that at that time they were only 13 years old! - and the verse refers to them as ISH, - a grown MAN who is intellectually mature and therefore obligated to keep the Mitzvos. Although it is possible for a child below 13 to have high intellectual ability, nevertheless, because he is immature, he will lack the feel, 1. of the precious nature of fulfilling Mitzvos and 2. not understand the great loss incurred by not keeping them. In the Zohar and other sources it says that 4 names are used to describe man - Adam, Ish, Gever and Enosh, and the greatest title is Adam. So the Barmitzvah boy is linked to the level of ISH, a level characterised by a mixture of intellect (seichel) and emotion. But the Rebbeim instituted that he says a Chassidic discourse related to the level of ADAM (characterised by a high level of intellect, higher than ISH. Another element is, that according to Mosaic tradition, a 13 year old boy must start to keep Mitzvos because it is halachah ie the Will of the Almighty - accepting the yoke of Heaven even without any understanding!

In short Torah is describing the potential of Barmitzvah TO REACH MANHOOD.

- The level of intellectual and emotional maturity (ISH) is not enough.
- There has to also be the level of ADAM - full intellectual maturity.
- At the base of this should be the foundation of accepting the yoke of Heaven even without understanding.
- But above all this, the 13 year old must also attain the level of self sacrifice, which transcends intellect - 'AND EACH ONE WENT FOR HIS SWORD....'. This self sacrifice reflects practically in everyday life as a total devotion to Hashem

Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov!

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

THE BATTLE OF EDUCATION

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 30 November 2023 · Shabbos 2 Dec 2023 · י"ט כסלו תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much achievement, one small step at a time, with much happiness, in both physical and spiritual.

Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday one day later (plus 1 year!) Wishing you continued success in all areas Rivky with much nachas from your whole Family.

Both your birthdays are at such a beautiful time of the year, being so close to Yud Tes Kislev and Chanukah, bringing so much light into the world.

In connection with this week's Sedra Vayishlach, and this week's Tanya reading, I saw 2 interesting Dvar Torah which were linked.

Of course Tanya is connected to the Alte Rebbe, the founder of Chabad Chassidus, whose Yom Tov we celebrate on Yud Tes Kislev, this Shabbos.

In this week's Sedra Yaakov is battling physically with 'a man', interpreted to be the guardian angel of his brother Esav. They were fighting all night, and when the man saw that he could not overcome Yaakov, and that dawn was approaching, he struck Yaakov on his upper thigh bone, dislocating his hip.

The Hebrew word used for the thigh bone is yerech, and it is also used to describe 'one's children'.

Our Sages therefore explain what was happening, as follows:

Yaakov represents Jewish SPIRITUALITY, COMPASSION, and KINDNESS.

And he is battling with Esav.

Esav opposes these qualities, and hates Yaakov.

When Esav sees that he cannot overcome Yaakov himself, he attacks his thigh - HIS CHILDREN, to discourage them from following the lifestyle of Yaakov.

Ie Because young children are easier to target he goes for them, attracting them to assimilate into his lifestyle and environment of violence etc.

In Essay 7 of Kuntres Acharon from this week's Tanya, the Alte Rebbe speaks about 'the flow of a mighty river (ATAN - letters A-Y-T-N)'. This is referring to our capability of allowing the flow our Soul power of Chochma (Conception) into the inner depths of our heart.

In our dark exile (the exile of Rome - Esav), this flow of life and light is concealed and blocked.

The flow will naturally take place in the future coming of Mashiach (hinted by each of the letters A-Y-T-N indicating the future tense, being the first letter in front of the root to indicate the various forms of future) -when Esav will be extirpated forever.

But the Alte Rebbe mentions that even now in exile, we each have the capability to bring down this G-dly light and flow from the state of atan into the innermost point of our hearts through arousing the abounding COMPASSION and KINDNESS of Hashem.

This is brought about by us doing acts of Compassion (character trait of YAAKOV) and Kindness (character trait of AVRAHAM)

And this is brought about by us doing CHARITY, and other acts of KINDNESS as it is written (Amos Chap 5) "And charity like a mighty river"

It is interesting also to note that the letters AYTAN are the same letters as TANYA, and it is said that Tanya will be instrumental in the work we need to do prior to this era!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov with much success in the education of our children and ourselves.

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

SMALLNESS

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 December 2024 · Shabbos 14 Dec 2024 · י״ג כסלו תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Dov Hyman a refuah shleimah, and soon. Thinking about you Dov!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha, who are today celebrating the bris of their new baby boy, who has been named Matan Asher. What a beautiful name! wishing you much Chassidishe nachas from him and from all of your Family BEH.

Mazal Tov to Naomi, whose birthday is also today. Wishing you a wonderful year Naomi with many continued simchos!

Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin whose birthday is next week. I hope all is going well with you in Australia Talya, and wishing you a year of much continued success in both the material and spiritual BEH!

It is with much joy that I welcome Leslie Hyman to our Family Group. Leslie is, I think a second cousin. She is Dov's sister, and is on the Tuch side of the Family in our Family Tree. I am attaching the Tree again for everyone's perusal, and to also act as an introduction to everyone. I think there are some names missing from your side of the Family, Leslie. It would be nice if you could supply these. And I am sure that Kevin will be updating the Tree with this and all the above new Family developments.

Welcome Leslie! So nice to re-establish old Family contacts!

What caught my interest this week, was a short and beautiful Dvar Torah in Hayom Yom, which was linked also to the Parsha Vayishlach as follows:

Hayom Yom 8 Kislev

When a person contemplates on how great is the kindness of Hashem Blessed be He, ie how a TINY person like ourselves can bring satisfaction to the Greatest of the Greatest (G-d), of whom it is said, " His greatness cannot be fathomed" (Tehillim), this should cause us to always be in a high-spirited mood to carry out His Divine Service with an eager heart and soul.

Sedra

Yaakov declares to Hashem, "I have BECOME SMALL from all the kindnesses, and from all the truth that You have rendered to me..."

And the Alte Rebbe, whose Yom Tov we will be celebrating soon on 19th Kislev, explains this verse in a letter after his release from prison as follows:

"With every single favour that Hashem bestows upon a man (or woman), this ought to make him VERY HUMBLE"

The closer a person is to Hashem, the more he recognizes how insignificant and unworthy he is.

Yaakov states that Hashem has given him everything that he needs. - 'Yesh li kol'

Whereas Esav boasts about all his possessions.- 'Yesh li rav'

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayishlach ↑ Vayishlach · Contents · By date וישלח

STRENGTH

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 December 2025 · Shabbos 6 Dec 2025 · ט"ז כסלו תשפ"ו

Text says "this week's Sedra Vayeshev", but the content (Esav approaching Yaakov) is Vayishlach, the calendar parsha; kept under Vayishlach.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezliel Ben Ester.

MAZAL TOV TO DOVI LEVY ON HIS ENGAGEMENT TO RIKKI MAGALNIK TODAY. This is such beautiful news from our first grandchild. We wish the couple much happiness together, and that Shmuel and Rivky should have much nachas from them and from all their children BEH!

Mazal Tov to Channa on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Channna, with lots of new activities BEH!

Mazal Tov Rivky on her birthday next week. What a birthday present you received this year Rivky re Dovi above BH! Wishing you many more milestones and achievements.

Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin on her birthday tonight. Wishing you much success with your University studies and all your other amazing activities Talya, and with much happiness.

We wish long life to Avi on the passing of his grandmother Etta Rea Vogel ah. Wishing you only simchas in the future Avi!

I am very happy to welcome new Family members to our Group ie Kevin and Isanne Ossey. Isanne's maiden name was Heiman and she is related to us through the Stein Family.

As mentioned last week, Kevin has made an amazing Family Tree of the Stein family which I attached there.

And as always, as a way of introducing new Family members to everyone, I am attaching Kevin Marks' Family Tree showing the members of our Group in red, with an accompanying Word doc, explaining how to use the sheet.

Welcome Kevin and Isanne, and please feel free to make comments, and let us know of any news from your side of the Family!

In this week's Sedra Vayeshev, Esav is approaching Yaakov with 400 terrorists, all fully armed, after Yaakov is leaving Lavan from Aram Naharayim. He is travelling with his wives, beautiful Family, and the huge wealth that he has amassed through all his 20 years of HARD WORK for Lavan, who endlessly tried to trick him, and actually also wanted to kill him after he left Aram Naharayim.

And now he has to face Esav and his army, who have always stated their intention to kill him.

And Yaakov is terrified!

He prepares a three pronged strategy for defence ie a generous gift to appease Esov and use diplomacy, to pray to Hashem, and to prepare for war if it becomes necessary.

He then sends messengers to Esov and in V 32-5, says, in endearing terms, ...Im Lavan garti.I have sojourned with Lavan...

Rashi points out that the word garti has the same letters as the word taryag, whose numerical value is 613, which refers to the number of Mitzvos that we have been given by Hashem.

Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon explains Yaakov's hidden message to Esov, couched in words of endearment, as follows:

I have sojourned with the wicked Lavan, in the wicked city of Aram Naharayim for 20 years, and I have not been influenced to follow their bad ways. On

the contrary, I have stayed faithful to keeping and living according to Hashem's 613 Mitzvos..

To achieve this is not easy, and reflects my RESOLVE AND STRENGTH - an underlying warning to Esov!

(Thereafter, Yaakov actually battles (wrestles) for a whole night with the angel of Esov, and overcomes him, before actually meeting with Esov the next day....)

Gut Shabbos to all

וישב

Vayeishev

Bereishis 37:1 · parsha 9 of 12 in Bereishis · 9 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5777 — RELEASE 231
2017 / 5778 — YERUSHALAYIM 233
2018 / 5779 — LIVING IN THE MOMENT 236
2019 / 5780 — LIGHT AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT 238
2020 / 5781 — A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS 241
2021 / 5782 — THE ORAL LAW 244
2022 / 5783 — LISTENING TO THE FLAME 246
2023 / 5784 — A PIT FULL OF WATER 249
2024 / 5785 — GOOD ATTITUDE 251
2025 / 5786 — WATER AND LIGHT 254

Vayeishev ↑ Vayeishev · Contents · By date וישב

RELEASE

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 December 2016 · Shabbos 24 Dec 2016 · כ"ד כסלו תשע"ז

Dear Family.

Hope everyone is well.

We want to wish Batsheva success with her make-up course she will be joining in New York. We will miss you in London Batsheva, but understand that it is a good opportunity!

This week we celebrated the RELEASE from prison of the Alte Rebbe (19th Kislev) and on the 10th of Kislev we also celebrated the release of the Mitteler Rebbe from prison.

I heard an interesting point about the connection between these 2 releases from a sicha of the Rebbe in Likutei Sichos Vol 25.

Both the Rebbes, at the time of their release, were saying the Psalm 55 which contains the verse "padah beshalom nafshi ..." -" He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle against me, for many were with me".

Psalm 55 is found in Day 10 of the month, where the 150 psalms are split up into the 30 days of the month.

The Psalms are also split up into Days of the Week ie 150 Psalms divided by 7. In this case Psalm 55 occurs on Tuesday.

So it can be seen that the Alte Rebbe was saying this Psalm because he was released on a Tuesday

And the Mitteler Rebbe was also saying it because he was released on 10th Kislev.

This in itself is interesting, but what I found more interesting was the point in the sicha as follows:

The sichos and maamarim of the Alte Rebbe were very short and highly concentrated, and therefore difficult to understand by the many.

And he was reading Tehillim at the time of his release relating to the day of the week. - not many people read it in this set up because it involves reading many more Psalms per day.

The Mitteler Rebbe who was the next Rebbe after the Alte Rebbe (and was his son) had a style of voluminous expounding of the sichos and maamarim of the Alte Rebbe.

There was therefore much more explanation, and therefore more accessiblity for "the many"

And, yes, you got it, he was saying the day of month Tehillim ie Day 10, which is less Tehillim per day and therefore said by many more people!

In relation to Channukah coming up next week, this was also a RELEASE for our People from the Greek enemy battling against us at that time.

There was a huge military victory, and there was also the miracle of the oil of the Menorah.

And isn't it interesting that down the centuries we commemorate this victory with the lighting of candles, and Chanukkah has become synonymous with the lighting of candles, while the military victory has faded into the background. (not in any way to minimise the importance of military victory, and the massive role the army plays for our security)

Wishing everyone a lichtiche Shabbos and Chanukkah (and not to forget to read Tehillim every day, at least as divided up into 30 portions)

Vayeishev ↑ Vayeishev · Contents · By date וישב

YERUSHALAYIM

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov and Gut Channukah · sent Thursday, 7 December 2017 · Shabbos 9 Dec 2017 · כ"א כסלו תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday tonight. Wishing you a wonderful year with much progress and happiness.

Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday tomorrow. Wishing you also an amazing year Rivky with much happiness and achievement in both your physical and Spiritual work.

Both your birthdays are always so connected to the Chassidic Yom Tov of the Alte Rebbe,Yud Tes Kislev, the lights of Channukah, the light of Chassidus, and you both brought so much light into mine and Mommy's lives.

Mazal Tov to Naomi for your birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much achievement and joy. We were so excited to hear that Talya is visiting London on business soon, and look forward to seeing her BEH.

Kislev is such a beautiful month, like a golden month in the middle of winter, and so many interesting things happened this week, and with Channukah coming up next week.

The following happenings of the week are all connected ie todays Yom Tov of The Alte Rebbe YUD TES KISLEV, CHANNUKAH, and YERUSHALAYIM.

- You know it is so easy to read something which looks simple, thinking that we know the meaning, and really we can overlook important npoints. For the first time today I learnt something new in todays Hayom Yom. It said

'Today (is a day) of farbrengen and good resolutions towards establishing times to study the revealed Torah and Chassidus publicly, and in bolstering the ways of chassidim, in true friendship.' But look more carefully at the Hebrew ie the first letter of each of the first 4 words Yom, Hisvaadus, Vekabalas, Hachlatos. You see the name of Hashem yud kay, vov, kay, the same way the Rambam starts his Mishneh Torah ie his first 4 words also convey this message of Hashems name!

- The word Channukah has many meanings which are all linked, Eg 'inauguration' or 'setting up' which relates to 'setting up' or re-setting up' the Temple. The word chinch (education) is also connected ie 'setting up' a child for life. I read an interesting essay from Shimshon Rafael Hirsch,s Timeless Torah, where he described 5 Channukahs:

- Channukah of Mosheh (setting up Mishkan in the desert)
- Chanukah of Shlomo
- Chanukah of Zerubavel
- Channukah of the Maccabees
- Channukah of the future

These all relate to the building or inauguration of our Holy Temple in YERUSHALAYIM. He writes very beautifully and brings out very beautiful lessons which I cant go into right now. The important point for today is that they all relate to YERUSHALAYIM!

- We know that YERUSHALAYIM is our eternal city of gold, but yesterday, the world has started to recognise this too, albeit with much resistance! Someone pointed out a very interesting commentary from the Baal Turim on yesterdays Torah reading in Parsha Vayeshev. Bear in mind that this is the reading which took place on the very same day as the dramatic announcement and recognition from the world, that Jerusalem is the capital City of Israel, took place. The Chumash reading was the story of Tamar. On the outside her actions appear those of a woman of poor repute, but underlying these actions were noble intentions. And in truth the

offspring from her actions resulted in the Dynasty of Dovid Hamelech, from which Mashiach will eventually result. And now listen to the commentary of the Baal Haturim on this story - 'THE SAME WAY THAT TAMAR WAS INITIALLY VIEWED WITH DISGUST, AND IN THE END WITH HONOUR, SO YERUSHALAYIM WILL IN THE END BE VIEWED IN HONOUR. AS IT IS WRITTEN IN HONOUR I (HASHEM) WILL DWELL THEREIN'

May this be very soon in our days.

Gut Yom Tov, Gut Shabbos and Gut Channukah to all.

Vayeishev † Vayeishev · Contents · By date וישב

LIVING IN THE MOMENT

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 November 2018 · Shabbos 1 Dec 2018 · כ"ג כסלו תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

And for those who participated in Yud Tes Kislev activities, I hope they were inspiring.

.

We attended a beautiful event in London where Rabbi Yossi Jacobson gave a remarkable 2 hour talk, where he linked The Alte Rebbe, Channukah, and the parsha Vayeshev in such a beautiful way. It was an amazing event, attended by such a wide spectrum of Jews, and so many, all coming together to celebrate, listen and sing and dance together BH.

This week, I also registered for that talk on 'meditation' which I mentioned last week, and it is some aspects of this talk, by Rabbi Adam Stein, which I would like to share.

By the way, it is an online course and one can still catch up part one and the rest of the course at Chabad.org. it will also always be available there in the future.

And so the essence of what is being spoken about is how to REDUCE STRESS, and how this is achieved, by learning how to LINK-IN TO THE PRESENT MOMENT.

Worry and stress are caused mostly by past failures and disappointments, and fear of the future.

By homing into the PRESENT, the past and the future start to drift away to various degrees, depending on how effectively one can tune in to the present.

These days there are thousands, and more like millions of people using stress relieving techniques such as yoga, meditation and dozens of other techniques. Most of them are not kosher.

The technique described by Rabbi Stein is an AUTHENTIC TORAH APPROACH, and has existed and been accessible to us for centuries. It is markedly different from these other techniques.

For someone who has explored the meditation routes, it is very exciting for me to see and access our own Torah way, which I can see, is so much more real.

How to do this:

The first stage is to practice focusing on a concept, which will create a deep connection to the idea, which will lead us to home into our own Essence, which is our G-dly Essence. We then become united with this Essence.

And as a fringe benefit, we achieve a worry-free, and stress-free life.

This is accessible for everyone, no matter what our emotional or intellectual levels are.

For the actual details, it would be better to hear this direct from Rabbi Stein himself.

https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/course_cdo/aid/4181450/jewish/Stress-Less.htm

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chanukkah

Vayeishev ↑ Vayeishev · Contents · By date וישב

LIGHT AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos, Gut Channukah and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 19 December 2019 · Shabbos 21 Dec 2019 · כ"ג כסלו תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I already wished Channah and Rivky Mazal Tov for their birthdays, but today is Rivky's actual birthday.

This time of year always reminds me of the births of Channah and Rivky, because I have vivid memories of the Chanukkah lights burning at the sides of their cots in the hospital when they were born BH!

And there is so much to do with LIGHT at this dark time of year in Kislev: (in the Northern hemisphere)

1. The most obvious one is Channukah which will start celebrating on Sunday night.
2. The 19th of Kislev is the Rosh Hashanah for Chabad Chassidim. It is the day when the Alte Rebbe was freed from prison and when Chassidus started to spread in the Jewish world. The Alte Rebbes name was Shneur Zalman, and Shneur means TWO LIGHTS. People say that this refers to the 2 lights of Torah, Nigleh (Revealed Torah) - he wrote a Shulchan Aruch, and Chassidus - his famous book is the Tanya, which we start learning again every 19th of Kislev.
3. It is still a week away, but Liora Davidoff's birthday is on 30th Kislev, and Liora means LIGHT IS TO ME.
4. And all the births in Kislev (and any month) brings increased LIGHT to the world BH.

For the 19th of Kislev celebration this year we heard a delightful talk from Rabbi Shisler of Johannesburg.

He spoke extensively about LIGHT, and I will try and select some examples that he spoke about, showing us HOW WE CAN EACH INCREASE OUR OWN LIGHT AND THEREFORE MAKE THE WORLD A LIGHTER PLACE.

There is a very big difference between a light room and a dark one.

If one turns on the light on in a dark room, it vividly reveals what is already there. It brings clarity because previously we may not have understood what all the items in the room were about.

In a similar way Chassidus shines a light on Torah, so that we can understand concepts with more clarity

Step 1

An example given was : it says in Gemorra 'that even although a Jew sins he is still a Yisrael.'

So one can just understand this in its simple sense, which makes no one any the wiser.

But Chassidus comes along and explains how high is this level of Yisrael (as we learned last week), and he is even at this level at the time he is in this 'low' phase of his life. This apparent low phase is ripe with tremendous potential when he is really very close to his inner Essence which is closely linked to Hashem. And it teaches us to look deep at any Jew, and recognise this Essence and greatness.

Step 2

Here we make decisions to take on work which is not in our comfort zone, like Torah and Mitzvos which seem boring, or going out of our way to help others etc

He brought a humorous story of someone who went to a hotel, and he phones down to reception saying that he is trapped in his room. So the receptionist says just go out of the door. So he replies that there are 3 doors - one goes into the bathroom, one goes into the cupboard, and the other one has a sign on it which says 'Don't Disturb!'

To get out of our prisons we need to tackle the areas where we don't want to be disturbed.

Step 3

If we do go ahead and work in this area, it is usually difficult, but we can work on ourselves and push on like a soldier or servant, and of course, we may make excellent progress and achieve. This is usually the case with hard work.

Step 4

Chassidus teaches us to do this, not only as a duty, but also with great joy, until one really enjoys it, and understands the great joy and rewards. Like shining a light on the darkness. At this stage one would not give up this way of life for anything, even though it seems difficult to others, and may actually be difficult!

Step 5

This brings one to a personal Redemption, creating much LIGHT and understanding, and is part of the general Redemption for the whole world.

And Channukah comes along to tell us to keep increasing the light - on the first night 1 candle, on the second night 2 etc

And in the same way, to learn Chassidus in a conscientious way

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Happy Channukah, with much light.

A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

2020 / 5781

Gut Chanukkah, Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 December 2020 · Shabbos 12 Dec 2020 · כ"ו כסלו תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and starting to enjoy Chanukah.

A BIG MAZAL TOV TO HIRSHEY FOR PASSING HIS FINAL NURSING HURDLE AND IS NOW A REGISTERED NURSE BH! Amazing achievement Hirshey. I know that you have been dreaming about this since at least the time that you got married. And you have pushed through and overcome so many obstacles, and have now actually achieved your goal (or at least one of them). I am sure that your victory must be very sweet and full of light!

Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday next week on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you to have a sweet and happy year Leora.

Mazal Tov to Naomi on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you a happy year with many celebrations.

Mazal Tov to Avi on the birth of a nephew from his brother Aron. Wishing you many simchos!

We wish Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Greg. Wishing you only celebrations in the future.

As we know Channukah is the Festival of Light.

Connected to a different type of light in this week's Sedra Vayeshev, we read (39:3) '(Joseph's master, Potiphar) saw that Hashem was with him (Joseph), and that Hashem granted SUCCESS to him (Yosef) IN EVERYTHING THAT HE DID."

Now why did Potiphar tribute the success of Yosef to Hashem? It could very well have been from Yosef's own talents!

And Rashi comes to explain: "The Name of Hashem was constantly on his (Yosef's) lips"- (So that even a non-Jew could recognise that Yosef's success was connected to Hashem.)

In an extract from a Sichah from the Rebbe, he explains:

(Yosef was a 17 year old boy, and he had everything in the world to be upset about, and to feel sorry for himself.

His brothers hated him and were jealous of him, tried to kill him, and then instead sent him into slavery, where he found himself in a foreign country - Egypt.

He had to deal with the seductions of Potiphera, and was thrown into prison for many years.

Yet he rose out of all of that to become second in charge of the whole of Egypt, with only Pharaoh above him!!)

"How did he do this?

One would think that Yosef would have been inclined to either escape to solitude, or at least seek revenge from all his oppressors.

Yet he did no such thing, and instead REMAINED FOCUSED ON DOING HIS WORK FAITHFULLY, THEREBY SHOWING THE WORLD THAT BELIEF IN G-D MAKES A PERSON GENIAL, RESILIENT, IDEALISTIC, AND RELIABLE.

Yosef became and remained capable of such seemingly superhuman behaviour by studying Torah. Throughout his years in Egypt, he constantly reviewed the teachings that he had studied with his father.

The spiritual fortitude he acquired through studying the Torah, enabled him to overcome every hardship.

It allowed him to bring LIGHT INTO THE WORLD, despite the disappointments and seeming injustices that life had presented him with, and to be a positive influence, inspiring others to tap into the source of his energy and optimism.

We too can maintain a consistent schedule of Torah study despite our other commitments, and similarly play a positive role in the world."

Wishing everyone a Happy Chanukah and a gut Shabbos, with much light.

THE ORAL LAW

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chanukah · sent Thursday, 25 November 2021 · Shabbos 27 Nov 2021 · כ״ג כסלו תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

There are 2 big birthdays taking place today BH

Both of them involve decades!

Mazal Tov to Renee on your 80th birthday today. It says in Pirkei Avot ben shemonim ligvurah which means that you have reached 80 with strength, and have the strength to reach further with the help of Hashem. Wishing you continued achievement, all in good health and happiness.

Mazal Tov to Rivky on your 40th birthday today. It says in Pirkei Avot ben arbaim lebinah which means that you have reached the age of clear understanding. Wishing you to keep advancing from strength to strength in all the many activities that you are involved with, both secular and spiritual.

I saw a nice connection between this week's Parsha Vayeshev and Chanukah, from Reb Levi Yitzchak's teachings taken from a letter to his son The Rebbe on his 36th birthday.

The story of Chanukah took place at the time of the Second Temple, which was well before the formation of the Mishneh.

So why is there no book of Mishneh dedicated to Chanukah (and not even 1 chapter), as there are for other Festivals!? (It can only be found in the Talmud.)

In our Parsha it says "Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his sons..."

The Midrash commenting on this verse explains it as follows "All the Torah Laws (Halachos) which Shem and Ever had passed on to Yaakov, Yaakov passed on to Yosef.

The word that the Midrash uses is Halachos, which refers to the Oral Law. It is within the Oral Law where the details of how to fulfil and keep the Torah are explained in both a clear and practical way, and it is this that Yaakov passed on to Yosef.

We can now draw the connection to Chanukah, where the main decree of the Greeks was to cause the Jews to stop practicing, and to forget the Torah.

More specifically, the decree was against the Oral Torah.

Now if we count the number of candles we light on Chanukah, it is 36. (not including the shamash)

And the number of Tractates in the Talmud (Oral Torah) is also 36. (although we seem to have 37, it is possible that Tamid is not counted because it is not a complete Book)

This signifies that the true victory over the Greeks, was the continuation and commitment to upholding the Oral Law.

(And I presume that this is the reason that Chanukah is represented mainly in the Talmud and not in the Mishneh)

Gut Shabbos and gut Chanukah, with light, understanding and strength to all!

LISTENING TO THE FLAME

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos Gut Chanukah · sent Thursday, 15 December 2022 · Shabbos 17 Dec 2022 · כ"ג כסלו תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH we just returned from the beautiful double simcha of Gavriels bar-mitzvah and the bris of Dovber in LA. Thanks again for all the hard work and love that went into these events, and all the hostings. Besides being with so many members of our Family, it was also nice to be together again with Chanan (Ashley), Reuven (Ravin) and Annette, and Brian and Sharon, and Ariel all the way from Sydney. We should always be able to share in each other's simchos!

Mazal Tov to Channah whose birthday was this week. Wishing you a year of continued achievements and with much happiness

Mazal Tov to Rivky who was born a day later (plus 1 year!) for your birthday and Mazal Tov again on the birth of Dovber. Wishing you continued growth and happiness in everything that you do!

Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin whose birthday was this week. It looks like you are having a great trip in EY Talya. One good thing should lead to another, and with much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on passing her Broker exam! You have put in many years of hard work to achieve this Mariasha, plus all your other responsibilities. Well done and wishing you much success!

This week was also the Rosh Hashannah of Chassidism, where we celebrate The Alte Rebbe's (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi) release from imprisonment. Yud tes Kislev

And we are now heading into Channukah!

So LIGHT has been a prominent feature of the week and I thought to share a few thoughts on this subject.

- I remember with fond memories, the Chanukah lights shining next to the cribs of both Channah and Rivky, our first 2 children, while they were in hospital after their births.
- The Alte Rebbe's name Shneur, means 2 lights (shnei or). These reflect his mastery of Chassidus (the inner dimension of Torah) and Nigleh (the external dimension), where he is known for his famous works of Tanya and Shulchan Aruch. We learn daily sections of Tanya in a yearly cycle, and the new cycle started this week.
- The Hebrew word for light is or and it has the same numerical value as the word raz, which means secret.
- Channukah celebrates a major war victory and the rededication of The Temple. Yet the main message that has come down every year through the centuries, are the little Chanukah lights!
- The 5th night of Chanukah can never fall on Shabbat. It is the darkest time of the year, and it cannot even benefit from the light of Shabbat. Therefore there is a custom to increase in the giving of Chanukah gelt on this night, to illuminate it with joy and Mitzvah.
- From Yanki Tauber - The soul of man is a candle of G-d. We can sit and gaze at a candle flame for hours. It is luminous, warm, romantic, but most of all it is spiritual. The flame itself is a perfect, integral whole, emanating calm and tranquility. If we look closer, we will see a clash of forces. The flame is straining upwards trying to pull away from its wick. But look again and see how it clings to the braided cotton that supplies it's fuel and sustains its life. Back and forth, up and down it strives. The soul of man too is a clash of divergent forces vacillating between selfhood and selflessness. This is what makes us spiritual beings. (Summarised)

- And as we LOOK at the Chanukah candles next week BEH, we can LISTEN to their own story.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chanukah to all!

A PIT FULL OF WATER

2023 / 5784

Gut Chanukah, Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 December 2023 · Shabbos 9 Dec 2023 · כ״ו כסלו תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Naomi on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a great year with many celebrations Naomi!

Mazal Tov to Liora on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you success in all your activities and studies with much happiness, Liora.

Wishing Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Gregg ah, on the second day of Chanukah. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and you should have only occasions to celebrate.

Happy Chanukah to all for tonight!

I saw a nice sichah from the Rebbe this week on Parsha Vayeshev, which also showed its connection to Chanukah, based on the verse 37:24, that Yosef's brother's threw him into a "pit which was empty, and had no water."

Torah and water

So the question is, why does Torah add the extra words, that there was NO WATER? Surely if it was empty, it is self-understood that there was no water?

So the Gemorra (Shabbos 22a) explains that it comes to teach us that there was no water, but there were snakes and scorpions.

The deeper meaning from our Sages is that water is referring to Torah.

And that when a person is devoid of Torah, 'water', then 'snakes and scorpions' (ie things which oppose and fight against holiness) will automatically be there. There is no middle ground.

And, Just as water descends from a high to a low place, so too Torah only flows to a 'low place' ie a person who is HUMBLE.

This is because Torah is the infinite essence of Hashem's mind.

And for a limited human mind to become connected to the essence and mind of Hashem, it has to relinquish its ego. Otherwise the persons ego and intellect interpose between the infinite and the finite.

And if no 'water' (Torah) can enter the 'pit', (the person), then automatically there will be 'snakes and scorpions', harmful elements that oppose the presence of G-d.

Torah and oil

The above discussion took place in the section of Gemora also discussing Chanukah, and therefore there must be a link.

Also, Chanukah usually falls at the same time as our Sedra, Vayeshev. (as is this year)

The Greeks wanted to make the Jewish People 'forget Your Torah', meaning the Essence of G-d within Torah.

The miracle of the cruse of pure olive oil of Chanukah alludes to this untarnished Essence of the Torah.

And the Jewish People were able to safeguard this 'oil', despite the pressures of Greek Hellenism, through their battle.

Wishing everyone a Gut Chanukah and a Gut Shabbos, with much light, allowing our beings to be filled with Torah.

GOOD ATTITUDE

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chanukah · sent Thursday, 19 December 2024 · Shabbos 21 Dec 2024 · כ' כסלו תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Dov a continued Refuah shleimah!

MAZAL TOV TO SARITA WHO IS CELEBRATING HER BAT-MITZVAH IN LA THIS SUNDAY. Wishing you a year of much happiness Sarita with much achievement and many Mitzvos! Enjoy your Party BEH!

Mazal Tov to Channah for her birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much happiness with good health Channah!

And one day later (plus a year!) Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday. Wishing you a year of continued achievement in all that you do Rivky, with much happiness!

Tonight is the important Chassidic Yom Tov of Yud Tes Kislev, celebrating the release from prison of the Alte Rebbe. It is known as the Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus. Gut Yom Tov to all

And Channukah coming up next week

All the above bringing much light to the world!

I heard an interesting Dvar Torah from Rabbi Gordon today based on the teachings of the Rebbe as follows:

In this week's Parsha Vayeshev, Yosef escapes death and is sold into slavery, and then brought down to Egypt and purchased by Potifar, an influential Egyptian.

From the time that Yosef joins his home, Yosef is appointed to be fully in charge of his (Potifar's) household, because " he liked Yosef ...and he saw that HASHEM WAS WITH YOSEF IN EVERYTHING THAT HE DID, AND THAT HASHEM MADE HIM SUCCESSFUL" (V39:3), and as a result the Egyptian's house becomes blessed.

Now, is it not strange that Potifar should see that it is Hashem who is with Yosef!? How could he see that? Normally one just recognizes that another person has strengths or talents?

So Rashi tells us "That the Name of Hashem was constantly on Yosef's lips." Ie he was constantly verbalizing, every day, that his success in his work was coming from Hashem and not directly from himself.

So let's look more carefully at what is happening here. Yosef is a 17 year old boy hated by his brothers, thrown out of his home, sold off into slavery and lands up in a foreign country, surrounded by dangerous people and the unknown.

He had every excuse to feel sorry for himself, and become a victim, depressed etc

But what was Yosef's ATTITUDE?

- He smiled every day (Read between the lines "He (Potifar) liked Yosef")
- He praised Hashem every day (Rashi's comment as mentioned above) - Verbalising a 'Baruch Hashem'
- He spread the Knowledge of Hashem to those around him by verbalizing his recognition of Hashems kindnesses
- He became successful with his work, and brought success to those around him

The next stage of Yosef's life is where he is taken to prison for 10 years. Here again he rises to leadership within the prison.

And when he gets out of prison he rises to leadership over the whole of Egypt, feeding Egypt and the whole world, while still maintaining his unshakeable faith in Hashem!!

And as the Yosef story unfolds, it becomes very clear to see that everything that happened to him, was part of Hashem's overall plan, confirming his faith.

All of our personal situations come from Hashem.

They can be very difficult, but they are all for our good.

By being optimistic and positive, permeated with our recognition and knowledge of Hashem, we can be greatly successful.

Gut Shabbos to all, Gut Channukah, and with much light and joy!

WATER AND LIGHT

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos and Happy Chanukah · sent Thursday, 11 December 2025 · Shabbos 13 Dec 2025 · כ"ג כסלו תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Naomi whose birthday is tomorrow. Wishing you a successful and happy year Naomi, with many simchos. I hope all going well at Harvard and looking forward to good news BEH

Wishing long life for Claude and Joy on the yohrtzeit of Gregg coming up this week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah!

In this week's Parshah Vayeshev, in V 37:24, Yosef's brothers throw Yosef into a pit, and it says. "The pit was EMPTY, there was no WATER in it." (from shiur of Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon ah)

Rashi asks the obvious question - If the pit was empty, why do we need the extra words that there was no water?

And he answers that Torah is teaching us that there was no water, but there were snakes and scorpions. (ie it was empty of normal items that usually fill a pit, but there was therefore something else)

There is a famous Torah teaching which explains that the bor - pit in the verse is referring to a person's head, and water is referring to Torah Teaching

Nature abhors a vacuum. A person cannot just be empty-headed.

Ie, if a person does not have anything meaningful to fill his head, like Torah Teaching, (water), then it is going to have negative stuff in some form or another (ie snakes and scorpions)

Connected to the above and related to Chanukah which is coming up next week, it is known that the Rebbe Rashab would study his Gemarra for half an hour after lighting his Chanukah candles. (at a slight distance away from the candles)

The Rebbe explains (in Reshimos) that this practice highlights the special CONNECTION OF TORAH TO LIGHT

And it is a lesson for all of us that Chanukah is a time to increase our Torah learning.

Furthermore, since the Greeks wished to prevent us from studying Torah, we respond by increasing!

Gut Shabbos and a Happy Chanukah to all with much light!

מקץ

Mikeitz

Bereishis 41:1 · parsha 10 of 12 in Bereishis · 10 of 54 in the Torah
9 letters

2016 / 5777 — OLIVE OIL 257
2017 / 5778 — FACETS OF LIFE 260
2018 / 5779 — THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY' 262
2020 / 5781 — CHALLENGE 264
2021 / 5782 — LIGHT 266
2022 / 5783 — SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO 268
2023 / 5784 — OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE 270
2024 / 5785 — FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES 273
2025 / 5786 — A RARE OPPORTUNITY 276

Mikeitz ↑ Mikeitz · Contents · By date מקץ

OLIVE OIL

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 December 2016 · Shabbos 31 Dec 2016 · ב' טבת תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and enjoying Channukah.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on continually getting good grades in his courses BH. Michayil el chayil!

The halacha for lighting candles on Channukah is that all candles and oils can be used , but the optimal way to perform the mitzva is with OLIVE OIL (as used in the Temple Menorah), and one should pay extra for it.

There was an interesting letter that the Rebbe wrote to someone, and he was discussing the paradoxical qualities of oil, with a message.

Thereafter I saw an essay by Rabbi Yosef Jacobson who used this letter as a Guide for Life.

So the points the Rebbe mentioned about oil were as follows

1. It is made by crushing the olives (Shmos Rabbah, Parshas Tezaveh)

This alludes to Humility

2. It permeates deeply through all solid entities (Yoreh Deah) - like other foods, materials, our own body etc

This reflects its connection to all entities.

3. Conversely oil does not mix with other liquids (Shmos Rabbah)

This alludes to its discreteness

4. And it rises above all other liquids (Shmos Rabbah)

Which indicates elevation.

The Rebbe then gives the following message as follows

1. The beginning of Divine Service must be characterised by kabbolas ol as in 'my soul will be as dust to all'- Siddur

2. Then one must 'Love ones fellow' ie if he sees that his or her fellow's body does not ascend and become one with the light of his soul, he must extend himself and permeate through to him.

3. In the process he himself does not descend and become mingled with undesirable qualities of his fellow. On the contrary, he ascends to great heights, until ultimately.....

4. He reaches a lofty and elevated level (he himself is limited, but the work he is doing is that of The Holy One Blessed be He, and therefore he is now comparable with Him (Bertachos 345b)

Rabbi Jacobson as a guide for life takes these 4 points as follows:

If a human being wants to be a source of LIGHT and WARMTH (like oil) for himself, his family, community, and the world, he must learn to cultivate the 4 properties of oil

1. Be humble ie the antithesis of arrogance and self-inflation

2. Through the above crushing of oneself one will become 'oil' and penetrate others deeply and share with others, and become more open to others.

3. Yet the above should not cause one to lose ones identity. The beauty and magic of a relationship lies precisely in the fact that 2 individuals choose to share themselves with each other- the discreteness of oil.

4. The above 3-fold process of crushing oneself, bonding with another, and at the same time remaining distinct - this allows one to gain a true appreciation of ones unique individual place in G-d's world.

One realises that in some small fashion one owns something that nobody else in the history of humanity ever had or will have. And this is not arrogance. It

is an appreciation that we were each conceived with purpose and love, and just like oil we too can rise to the top.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Channukah to all with lots of Light and Warmth

FACETS OF LIFE

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chanukah · sent Thursday, 14 December 2017 · Shabbos 16 Dec 2017 · כ"ח כסלו תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mommy and I were learning together on Tuesday and we came across some interesting points about the Chanukah DREIDEL, and how this also represents FACETS of our own lives.

- The dreidel has 4 facets, each with a Hebrew letter representing a particular aspect.

I think everyone knows how the game is played.

The Gimmel (gantz) wins whole kitty

The Hei (halb) wins half the kitty

The Nun (nisht) means no win, but also no lose

The Shin (shtell) means loss, ie one has to pay into the kitty.

This also represents different facets of our personal lives, or how each day is going ie:

Some days we will feel elated - Gimmel

Other days happy but not elated - Hey

And then there could be days when we are not only feeling not so good - Nun,

But we could even feel like we are 'losing it' and quite upset - Shin.

This is only when we look at one facet at a time.

But really the DREIDEL is one entity with all 4 facets.

And the 4 facets together spell out the word Nes Gadol Hayah Sham. Which means' A great miracle happened there'

This means that the Macabees were being oppressed by the Greeks (facet of Shin), but they did not focus on this. They rather focused on fighting and being victorious (facet of Gimmel).

And a Divine miracle happened, and they were victorious against all odds.

- This can be seen in next weeks Parsha Vayigash, which is always close to Chanukah.

Yaakov and Klal Yisrael were heading into a dark exile.(going down to Egypt)

And where does Yaakov send his son Yehuda?

GoShNaH -the same 4 letters as on the dreidel!!!

And what does he set up over there? A Yeshivah.

He recognised the seeds of Redemption within the exile, as long as we retain our connection to the Divine, in the same way as it occurred with the miracle of Chanukah.

- And one more connection.

If you add up the numerical value of all the 4 letters on the dreidel, it adds up to 358.

This is the same value as the word MOSHIACH.- 358

Ie when Moshiach comes, He will show us how every FACET of our life, even the darkest of them, is part of the Divine purpose, thus illuminating the darkness of exile.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chanukah to all.

THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY'

2018 / 5779

Gut Chanukah ans Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 December 2018 · Shabbos 8 Dec 2018 · ל׳ כסלו תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Chanukah.

Mazal Tov to Leora Davidoff on her first birthday BH on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you a happy year and bringing your parents much nachas.

Mazal Tov Naomi on your birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with good news for your whole Family.

We have just re-started learning Tanya, one of the Books written by The Alte Rebbe, in its yearly cycle.

And so it is a good opportunity to get to know this very Holy work, which is so essentially needed by ourselves to engage in our inner journeys and battles.

It was written in a way that it is accessible to everyone, no matter what level we find ourselves, and it has been translated into many languages.

Some of the Alte Rebbe's other writings are very deep, intricate and rich, and very hard to understand, but he has written Tanya in a much simpler format.

Every Jew has 2 souls, and they are continually battling with each other to try and take control of 'THE LITTLE CITY' IE THE BODY.

The one soul is animalistic in nature, and the other is G-dly.

The first section of Tanya - Likutei Amarim - describes this battle and teaches us how to engage and understand what is happening within, and help us make correct decisions in our lives.

It starts off with the word Tanya which means 'we have learnt', but tanya also has the same letters as the word etan.

Etan means ancient and strong, and refers to a deep level of our being, which will be revealed with the coming of Mashiach, may this be soon. And the Book Tanya will help us prepare for this.

And what is it that we have learnt (tanya)?

In Nida end of chap 3 it says 'An oath is administered to every Jew in Heaven before he descends to this world - Be righteous and be not wicked, and even if the whole world tells you that you are righteous, in your own eyes you should regard yourself as wicked.'

But this requires to be understood because did we not also learn somewhere else (in Pirkei Avot chap 2), 'Be not wicked in your own eyes'. And furthermore if a person sees himself as wicked, he will become depressed and will not be able to serve Hashem with a happy heart?

And, to make things even more complicated, if he is not at all aggrieved by his self appraisal, he may be led to carelessness, and sin without even being perturbed!?

And so if you want to find out how to solve this predicament, please read on in Tanya! It does take many months of work, but it is worth every minute.

Gut Chanukah and Gut Shabbos to all.

CHALLENGE

2020 / 5781

Gut Chanukah Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 December 2020 · Shabbos 19 Dec 2020 · ד' טבת תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Chanukah.

Tonight is the eighth night of Chanukah and all eight candles are burning brightly.

But why do our Chanukah menorahs have eight lights when the Menorah of the Bet Hamikdash only head seven lights?

The Rebbe explains this in a letter dated seventh of Teves 5740, and further in a Sichah, volume 10 page 291 as follows.

As explained in our sacred sources, there is an inner symbolic significance in the numbers seven versus eight.

Seven represents the natural order as reflected in the seven days of the week.

Eight on the other hand, represents the supernatural, and beyond nature.

Every Jew has hidden deep within himself or herself a fiery love of G-d. As it says in Tanya chapter 14, "Even the most unworthy among the worthless (of Jews) is capable of sacrificing himself for the sanctity of G-d."

Although a person might not uncover this internal connection to G-d under ordinary circumstances of his life, there comes a point, WHEN CHALLENGED, that this power will surface.

It is called mesiras nefesh, i.e. to sacrifice one's life for Hashem, and this is supernatural and beyond nature, as occurred with the Jews against the Greeks.

The Greeks were not interested to eradicate the populations that they conquered. Their goal was to assimilate the population into their culture (to Hellenize)

the Greeks appreciated the wisdom and the beauty of the Torah, and were happy for the Jewish people to study Torah, but in an intellectual manner only.

What they opposed was the idea that Torah and Mitzvos are a unique means of connecting to Hashem, which takes us beyond human limits.

And that is why, when they entered the Sanctuary of the Bet Hamikdash, they defiled all the vessels of pure oil that they found (i.e. they weren't interested to destroy it, only to defile it)

But this set off the fury of Mattisyahu and his sons and the subsequent victory of the few over the mighty Greek army.

And the subsequent search and finding by a miracle, of the one cruse of pure oil, which was re-instituted back into the service of the Temple.

It was this beyond- nature response of our Jewish people to protect our connection to Hashem, which brought about the significance of the number eight into Chanukah.

And we can all tap this resource within ourselves, EVEN WITHOUT A CHALLENGE!

Gut Chanukah and Gut Shabbos to all.

LIGHT

2021 / 5782

Gut Chanukah Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 December 2021 · Shabbos 4 Dec 2021 · ל׳ כסלו תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on the birth of their first child Emma Joyce. Such nice news. And of course Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba the grandparents! Wishing you all many simchos and much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you a happy year with lots of learning Leora!

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok, the Frierdike Rebbe said that one has to pay attention to the story that the Chanukah candles are telling.

In relation to this I saw a collection of sayings about light

Hisvaadus 5746 vol2 p132

A little bit of light dispels a great deal of darkness

How much more so a lot of light.

When one increases in light one reaches a state, where he not only dispels darkness, but eradicates it

Tanya Chap 19

The candle of G-d is the soul of man.

Just like a candle naturally always flickers upwards, so too the soul of a man has a natural desire to connect and unite with G-d

Hayom Yom 13th Teves

When a lantern is placed, those who seek light, gather around.

For light attracts.

Talmud Sotah 21a

Rabbi Menachem the son of R. Yose expounded the verse "For the Mitzva is a candle, and the Torah is light"

Mitzva is identified with a candle to teach that just as a lamp guides or protects us temporarily, so does a Mitzva.

Just light, protects permanently. So the study of Torah protects eternally

Tonight is the 5th night of Chanukah.

The 5th night of Chanukah can never fall on Shabbos, and can therefore never be lit by Shabbos

It is therefore a custom to give Chanukah gelt, especially on this night.

Wishing everyone a lichtige Chanukah, with much light, which eradicates all darkness. Gut Shabbos.

SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO

2022 / 5783

Gut Chanukah, Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 22 December 2022 · Shabbos 24 Dec 2022 · ל' כסלו תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Liora whose birthday is on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you a wonderful year with much progress at School and all your other activities Liora. Love from all of us!

Wishing Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Gregg. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and wishing you only simchos in the future.

I saw an interesting editorial to this week's Sedra Mikeitz, and a connected story, which I would like to share.

The editorial was based on works of The Rebbe.

In last weeks Sedra, we see how Yosef moves twice from difficult situations and then rises to prominence in those very circumstances, in the house of Potiphar and in prison.

On each of these occasions, as he rose up and began to indulge in feelings of security, he was shown just how fragile that security was, by landing on his next low.

In this week's Sedra, Yosef is again promoted, and this time he moves from imprisonment to Second-in Charge of the whole of Egypt!!

In contrast to his previous promotions, Yosef now remains in this prominent post to the end of his life. He is granted not only full control over his own life, but over everyone else's lives as well.

YOSEF WAS ABLE TO EXTRICATE HIMSELF FROM THE DEPTHS AND SOAR TO GREAT HEIGHTS, BY LEARNING TO SURRENDER HIS EGO. As soon as he acknowledged G-d's presence and providence in his life, abandoning the illusion that his achievements were the result of his own prowess, true success followed. He let go of his ego.

In connection with starting the new learning cycle of Tanya by the Alte Rebbe, and linked to the above, I saw a short story recounted by Reb Aizel, who told over what he had heard from the Alte Rebbe at a farbreng, on the line in Tanya which says that, "One should humble oneself.. even before the lowliest of men mamash (absolutely)".

The Alte Rebbe related, that today, someone who had transgressed the whole Torah, had come to him. The Alte Rebbe had put his head down for 3 minutes, addressing the above thought, and said "I found 7 areas in which I was inferior to him! (If you think about it, this was a great Rebbe comparing himself to a less than ordinary Jew)

When Reb Aizel related this story, he pounded on the table and said "Only the Rebbe could do something like that!"

Wishing everyone a Gut Chanukah a Gut Shabbos, and a Gut Chodesh

OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE

2023 / 5784

Gut Chanukah, Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 December 2023 · Shabbos 16 Dec 2023 · ד׳ טבת תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Chanukah.

Tonight is the last night, when all 8 flames are shining together - such a beautiful sight.

I learnt an interesting halachah in this week's Rambam learning, which was connected to the theme of Yosef's life which we are learning about in our current Sedras.

Rambam (Laws of Divorce)

The first of 10 principles, for a divorce to be effective in Jewish Law, is that the man must divorce his wife VOLUNTARILY.

Yet in Chap 2 (2:20), the law states, "When a man, who is compelled to divorce his wife by Torah Law, refuses, the court should have him beaten until he consents, and says "I want" (to divorce). The get (Bill of Divorce) is then written, and this get is kosher! This applies in all times and in all places."!

The glaring question is, how can this be regarded as "voluntary"? Surely it is forced, which would make the get invalid!

The Rambam explains as follows:

The ESSENCE OF A JEW wants to be part of the Jewish People, and wants to perform all the Mitzvot of Torah, and avoid all it's transgressions.

But it is his evil inclination which forces him, against his real will, to act contrary to his Essential nature.

Therefore, when a person's evil inclination presses him to negate the performance of a Mitzvah (in this particular case to give his wife a get), and the court forces him to say 'I want', he is not considered to have been forced against his will. Rather the force has been against his evil inclination! And his real essential self is truly saying 'I want'

Sedra. (adapted Sicha of the Rebbe)

The Sicha compares the life and journey of Yosef, to the descent of our neshamos into our bodies.

Yosef's life begins in the comfort of his father's home and he enjoys a special relationship with his father.

His journey takes him down to Egypt, the most corrupt and depraved of countries where he was a slave, faced many challenges and was sent to prison for 12 years.

Yet, Yosef triumphed and reached an even higher position than he had enjoyed in his father's house, becoming second in charge over the whole of Egypt.

In addition to his triumph and ascent, he also retained his spiritual purity and goodness, as Torah refers to him as Yosef HaTzadik.

Similarly, each of our neshamos comes down from a high plane, where it enjoyed proximity to Hashem, basking in His light and glory, and it then descends into the 'prison' of the human body, where it must endure many temptations and overcome all sorts of trials.

But the soul remembers and longs for its source above.

The purpose of our souls journey to this world is to overcome the evil inclination and conduct our lives according to the dictates of Torah.

Overcoming the obstacles which try and prevent us from doing Mitzvot, enables us to attain a greater spirituality than would have been possible had the soul remained above.

Wishing everyone a Gut Chanukah and Shabbos with much light!

FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chanukah · sent Thursday, 26 December 2024 · Shabbos 28 Dec 2024 · כ״ז כסלו תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

We continue to wish Dov a Refuah shleimah, and soon! Lots of love from all of us Dov.

Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday next week on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you a very happy year Leora with much achievement!

We wish long life to Claude and Joy on the yohrtzeit of Gregg. You should have only happy occasions in the future BEH

As a child growing up in SA with its good weather, affluence and good life, it never entered my head seriously to explore our roots and the life experience of my parents or their Families etc.

We were totally involved in sports, getting on with our education and lives etc, oblivious of our past, our history, and Jewishness.

But now, through our growing Family Group, more keeps coming to light BH.

This past week I have been in touch with Selma, Leslie Hyman and Kevin.

Leslie has provided us with much more information about the Tuch side of our Family, and Kevin has updated this on the attached, updated Family Tree, which he created and continues to update. Kevin was also reminiscing on his parents (Zelda and ah Stan) trip to Baltimore in the 70's and how happy they were to meet the extended Hyman Family!

But my main surprise and revelation this week, came from Selma, and I quote in her words:

"My father only ever acknowledged his Hebrew birthdate and although his birthday was registered as the 16 December, he always said he was born on the 'fimfde lichtel' (excuse my Yiddish) His all time favourite food was latkes, with kreplach a close second

So Chanukah is always a special celebration for us, especially the 5 th night "

This really 'blew me over', firstly, because I never knew this connection of Uncle Maike (Meyer) to the 5th night of Chanukah, in a period of my life when I did not even know what was Chanukah. And secondly for the great importance of the 5th night of Chanukah (which I am starting to understand.)

And this emerged right now before this Chanukah!!

Together with the following article that I saw this week from Rabbi Yehudah Shurpin in Chabad.org:

"Every night of Chanukah is a time of joy and celebration, but the fifth night of Chanukah holds a special place in many traditions, including Chabad. On this night the Rebbes would traditionally host Family gatherings called latke evenings. It is also customary to give additional Chanukah gelt, more than on other nights." !!

Rabbi Shurpin continues to explain this exceptional specialness of the 5th night of Chanukah:

- It can never fall on Shabbat. Therefore it works out to be the darkest day of Chanukah (and of the year). And because the purpose of Chanukah is to bring light to the darkness, we need to bring a more powerful light to that night. (with the extra celebrations) ie the light that we bring is more powerful.

- Chanukah Gelt. Some people only give Chanukah gelt on one of the nights of Chanukah. Therefore this would be the best one to use because it never falls on Shabbat (when one cannot handle money). But also the Mitzvah of Tzedakah brings extra happiness and light which again strengthens the above point.
- On the 5th night there are now more lit candles than unlit. (just past halfway). This symbolises the tipping point in bringing more light to the world.
- Yom Kippur Katan occurs always on the day before a Rosh Chodesh. It is a day, like Yom Kippur, to do introspection and teshuvah. The 5th night of Chanukah is the day before Rosh Chodesh Tevet, but on this month, the 5th night of Chanukah has the power to reach these spiritual heights of other months, with its joy and celebration alone.

Another interesting story about the 5th night of Chanukah occurred in our community in Stamford Hill many years ago. It involved Mr and Mrs Gluck ah who were close friends of us and my parents. It is a long miraculous story, and so I am attaching it for those who have the time.

Gut Shabbos, and Gut Chanukah, with lots of light and continued revelation and miracles!

A RARE OPPORTUNITY

2025 / 5786

Gut Chanukah and Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 19 December 2025 · Shabbos 20 Dec 2025 · לי כסלו תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

MAZAL TOV TO ZALMY AND NECJHAMA DINA ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BOY TODAY! THIS IS SUCH WONDERFUL NEWS BH! WISHING ALL TO BE WELL AND THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE MUCH JOY AND NACHAS FROM HIM. THE BRIS SHOULD BE BESHAAH TOVAH UMATZLACHAS!

Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday this Shabbos. Your birthday this year is also on Rosh Chodesh Leora which gives it very special significance - see explanation below! And so we wish you a very special day and a very special year!

This coming Shabbos is very special and rare.

It is one of 4 possible occasions in the year when 3 TORAH SCROLLS are taken out (On Simchat Torah we always take out 3 Sifrei Torah, but the other 3 possible times are circumstantial)

So this week, when 3 factors coincide ie Shabbos falls on Rosh Chodesh Tevet during Chanukah, we take out 3 Sifrei Torah (The other 2 occasions when this can occur are Rosh Chodesh Adar in the week of Shekalim, and Rosh Chodesh Nissan)

If the shul does not have 3 Sifrei Torah, they would have to un-roll the Torah to each of the 3 separate readings which are needed for Shabbos.

Interestingly, 'by coincidence' the discussion about this in the Gemarra came up in the Gemarra that I was learning this week (Megilah p29b)!

So what is the significance of 3 Sefer Torah.

I picked up the following points from 2 articles I saw this week:

- The Rebbe mentions that such a Shabbos is not ordinary, and points to a Divine moment of elevation and opportunity
- The Zohar states that when a Torah Scroll is taken out of the Ark for public reading 'the Gates of Mercy are opened in Heaven.'
- The Baal Shem Tov says that at the moment of opening of the Ark, when even a simple Jew recites the Brich Shmei prayer from the depth of his heart with pure faith, the Holy One Blessed Be He, fulfils that persons requests either in whole or in part.
- Each individual Torah Scroll is a symbol of Hashem's profound love for the Jewish People, as the Torah is his most precious gift to us. 3 Scrolls represent a triplicate manifestation of this love. And this in turn elicits a reciprocal intensified love and joy from the congregation.
- The intensified opening of The Gates of Heaven, make it an opportune time for our prayers and wishes to be accepted.
- Interestingly, the 3 variable occasions for 3 Sifrei Torah all relate to issues which Mosheh Rabeinu had difficulty understanding ie the Menorah, the Half Shekel, and the Sanctification of the New Moon.

This Shabbos is therefore A RARE OPPORTUNITY for our prayers and wishes to be fulfilled in Shul!

Kevin Ossey and Kevin Marks got together to work on the Family Tree relating to all of us, this last week, and Kevin Marks has combined the 2 Family Trees together - See attached. He has requested for everyone to look at their details and be in touch with him if there are any mistakes. Many thanks to both of you!

Gut Chanukah and Gut Shabbos to all

ויגש

Vayigash

Bereishis 44:18 · parsha 11 of 12 in Bereishis · 11 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2017 / 5777 — LONG - SIGHTED 279
2017 / 5778 — PERSISTENT PRAYER 282
2018 / 5779 — INSULAR V WORLDLY JUDAISM 285
2020 / 5780 — EFFORT AND SWEET FRUIT 287
2020 / 5781 — TWO KINGS, TWO GIANTS 290
2021 / 5782 — MIRACLES CONTINUED 293
2022 / 5783 — WEEPING? 295
2023 / 5784 — ART OF ELEVATION 297
2025 / 5785 — OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST MIRACLES 299
2025 / 5786 — SIMPLE SINCERITY IN ACTION 301

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

LONG - SIGHTED

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 January 2017 · Shabbos 7 Jan 2017 · ט' טבת תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on your upcoming birthday. You should have a Good Year Shmuel.

Mazal Tov to Chanie who also has her birthday next week. Wishing you also a Good Year.

This week (Vayigash) and last week's Sedra has been the story of Yosef, his dream interpretations, rise to power in Egypt and the drama with his brothers etc

I saw a very interesting essay from Rabbi Jacobson discussing Yosefs interpretation of Paroh's dream and his rise to power after his imprisonment.

On the outside, Yosefs interpretation of the dream looks very simple ie 7 fat cows represent 7 years of plenty and 7 thin cows represent 7 lean years etc.

Therefore our Rabbanim struggle with 3 major questions regarding this.

1. Why was Paroh so impressed with Yosefs simple interpretation, and why could none of Paroh's wise men come up with the same interpretation?
2. Yosef had been taken out of prison to come and interpret Paroh's dream, and he was young (I think in his 20's). How could he, standing in front of the King, have the chutzpah to start advising Paroh about storing food in the years of plenty, so that they would have food in the lean years?! Yosef could have been executed for this!
3. And what is so amazing about this advice? One does not have to be a geni-

us to understand that if you are going to have 7 full years followed by 7 lean years, that you should take action in those 7 good years to prepare!

In a Channuka sicha in 1973 The Rebbe explains this as follows:

Paroh's wise men wanted to interpret the dream as Yosef did, but they could not understand why the fat cows and lean cows appeared in his dream at the same time. Ie how could plenty and famine co-exist at the same time? They were therefore compelled to search for other farfetched solutions.

And this therefore was the brilliance of Yosef's interpretation.

He saw that this one important smal detail as needing interpretation.

And therefore his telling Paroh what to do was not advice, but was part of the interpretation of his dream!

And Paroh straight away understood this brilliance, andsaw that his dream was not only predicting a future event, but it was also offering him instruction on how to deal with the problem.

This impressed Paroh so deeply that he straight away appointed Yosef to be second in command of Egypt.

Now all these events in Torah don't just come to tell us a story, they also detail the timeless trends running through each individual's being, and for instruction

We all experience cycles of plenty and cycles of famine in our own lives.

When things are going well with us, we are often smug and feel independent of others ie we may fail to invest time and energy to cultivate genuine emotional intimacy with ones wife or husband, to develop real relationships with friends, and to create a sincere bond with Hashem.

And if, chas veshalom, a time of famine arrives, we suddenly see the need to reach out and connect with our loved ones and Hashem.

But will we have the tools to manage the crisis well?

THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF YOSEF'S WISDOM: ONE MUST NEVER DETACH THE YEARS OF PLENTY FROM THE YEARS OF FAMINE.

WHEN ONE EXPERIENCES PLENTY, DO NOT LET IT BLIND OUR VISION FROM WHAT IS TRULY IMPORTANT IN LIFE. CHECK OUT OUR PRIORITIES IN THE TIMES OF PLENTY, AND TAKE ACTION NOW.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

PERSISTENT PRAYER

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 December 2017 · Shabbos 23 Dec 2017 · ה' טבת תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Big Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on the birth of Liora! You should bring her up to Torah, Chupah and Maasim Tovim and with much nachas. Wishing Talya Davidoff a safe trip. It was such a nice surprise to have you with us for Chanukah. And thanks for all your help. Hope everyone had an enjoyable and miraculous Chanukah.

A lot of things we hear in Torah we kind of listen to with half an ear. Like, is it really true? Or do MIRACLES really happen? Or does PRAYER really work? Well yesterday we have all witnessed a miracle happening in front of our eyes in the last few hours of Chanukah.

- Shlomo Mordechai Rubashkin, a Lubavitcher in the meat industry, was sentenced to 27 years imprisonment for fraud. This was 8 years

ago.

Even if he was guilty, the sentence was, to put it mildly, very vicious and anti-semitic! 27 years?? At the same time that he was running his large successful business, he was also a shaliach in his local area, providing all kinds of Jewish services to the local community. Many appeals have been submitted since his sentencing, and people have been praying and saying Tehillim for him daily, and for sure his large Family have been doing this.

This week on the 8th day of Chanukah, the Prison Officer gave him permission to light the Menorah for himself and the other inmates in prison, for which he was very grateful. And this allowance was to be only for half an hour. Just before the lighting, the Officer called him in for a meeting. On

hearing this, Rubashkin's heart dropped. What had he done wrong? IN THE MEETING THE OFFICER TOLD HIM TO PACK HIS BELONGINGS AND LEAVE PRISON. HE WAS FREE! Bear in mind this was 8 years into a 27 year sentence and with no pre warning or expectation. President Trump, encouraged by bipartisan leaders across the political spectrum and in the legal world, had commuted the prison sentence.

All across the Jewish world there were spontaneous celebrations, last night. And today this has continued. This has not only been in the Lubavitch world, but Chassidim from all denominations have been celebrating, and I am sure there has been an even broader recognition and joy amongst Klal Yisrael.

In prison Rubashkin lived with FAITH and HOPE and he TRUSTED that he would gain his freedom. He called it his aleph, beis, gimmel. Aleph for Emunah (Trust), Beis for Bitachon (Faith), and Gimmel for Geulah (Release). I believe he purchased a pendant for his wife with these 3 letters, while he was in prison. And he and others PRAYED and said Tehillim for 8 years. As we all know aleph stand for 1, beis for 2, and gimmel for 3. He was released on the 2nd day of Teves just before the night going into the 3rd of Teves, on the 8th day of Chanukah. In his terms this meant 2, beis - bitachon, heading into 3, gimmel - geulah and freedom on Chanukah!!

- Funnily enough I was learning a maamer from the Alte Rebbe today, and we were learning about TEFILAH (PRAYER) The Alte Rebbe was saying that it is very difficult for man to reach up all the way to Hashem with his own efforts (it is possible though), and it is difficult for Hashem to come down and burst into our lowly world. Prayer is the position of peaceful meeting between man and Hashem, where man makes his effort to move towards Hashem, and Hashem makes a move towards man. And there is a kind of equality. Dayan Raskin mentioned to me that this why some people have a custom on Shabbos when we say hamotzi, to keep the 2 challos next to each other in an equal way.

• Our prayers are heard, and by a loving Father.
Sometimes we need to be PERSISTENT, and this is a test of our FAITH. And then we receive an answer, and this can even be through a MIRACLE, and even in our days.

Gut Shabbos to all, and we should continue to hear good news, especially the news of the Geulah for all Yisrael.

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

INSULAR V WORLDLY JUDAISM

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 December 2018 · Shabbos 15 Dec 2018 · ז' טבת תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I saw an interesting dvar Torah from the book The Inside Story, based on the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe from this week's sedra Vayigash.

The question raised is like this:

Yaakov finds out that Yosef is alive and is second-in-charge of the whole of Egypt and he has, and still is, keeping, and totally dedicated to, Torah.

And so Yaakov, who is now preparing to travel to Egypt, sends Yehuda ahead of him to set up a Yeshiva in Egypt.

But why Yehudah?

Would it not have been easier for Yosef to do this with his position and dedication?!

Answer:

Yaakovs children had a conflict of world-view, and were divided into 2 factions.

On the one side were 10 of the 12 brothers led by Yehuda, who lived as reclusive shepherds, with minimal interaction with society, lest this damage their spiritual lives. (this can still be seen today where there are groups of ulra-orthodox Jews living insular lives)

On the other side, and in contrast, Yosef was a fortuitous achiever in business and politics, who saw no contradiction to being the viceroy of Egypt, and re-

taining a state of perpetual connection with Hashem. His spiritual and moral integrity was unaffected by the immoral environment in which he lived.

Who was the victor? - Yosef.

Yosef already understood his victory from his dream, where his brothers and father were bowing down to him, prostrating their approach to his.

The first 3 generations of insular Judaism was coming to an end, as we were now entering our long exile (going down to Egypt), and was to be replaced with the challenge of living a spiritual life within the material world.

BUT NOW OUR QUESTION IS EVEN STRONGER! IF YOSEF'S APPROACH IS THE CORRECT ONE, YAAKOV SHOULD HAVE SENT YOSEF TO START THE YESHIVAH. SO WHY DID HE SEND YEHUDAH!?

The first 3 generations of Jewish life were not a false start.

They were a foundation of all that was to follow.

It was from this foundation that Yosef drew his strength to preserve his faith in an alien environment.

And that is why Yaakov chose Yehudah to establish the Yeshivah.

Yes, in our daily life we must be a Yosef, but our education must be provided by Yehudah!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

EFFORT AND SWEET FRUIT

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 January 2020 · Shabbos 4 Jan 2020 · ז' טבת תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We have just come out of Chanukah, and next week is Asarah BeTeves ie the fast of the 10th of Teves

And I saw some interesting articles which link these events, and which offer some practical applications.

Chanukah

On the last day of Chanukah, the Torah reading describes (amongst other things), the making and the lighting of the Menorah.

The oil used in the Menorah of the Bes Hamikdash had to be kasis ie well crushed

The word kasis is made up of the Hebrew letters kof-sav-yud-sav, and this refers to the First and Second Temples as follows:

Yud-sav has the numerical value of 410, which is the number of years that the First Bes Hamikdash lasted

Kof-sav has the numerical value of 420, which is the number of years that the Second Temple lasted!

We can appreciate the infinite greatness of the Third Bes Hamikdash, by reflecting on the fact that both previous Temples had to be destroyed to make way for the eventual Third and Eternal Bes Hamikdash with the coming of Mashiach!

10th of Teves

This is one of 4 Fasts instituted by the Rebbeim in connection to the destruction of the Bes Hamikdash

10th of Teves marks the first of the tragedies ie the day when Nebuchadnezer laid siege to Yerushalayim.

Now the 10th of Teves fast has a greater intensity than the other 3, because if it would fall on Shabbos, we would still have to fast.

All fasts are an eis ratzon ie a time ripe with potential for good, and to correct past deficiencies.

And therefore 10th of Teves has an even greater potential for doing good than the other 3 fasts.

Practically

I saw today a letter written by the Rebbe in answer to a women who apparently had difficulties, and I saw this having practical relation to the above.

The Rebbe answers:

'...your current mood is a passing mood, and the more you exert yourself, the quicker the mood will disappear. Clearly you have the strength and the talents that you can use, not only for your own benefit, but also for the benefit of many others.

Just like with everything in existence, one has to transform things from the potential to the actual, and develop them.

IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF CASES THIS DEMANDS EFFORT, THOUGH ONLY EFFORT THAT THE PERSON HAS THE ABILITY TO PUT FORTH.

When a person contemplates that through his (or her) effort during a relatively short time, he will benefit himself for many years to come, and benefit others by improving their physical or spiritual matters, or both, he will understand easily that the devotion, effort and exertion, are all worth it.

It is appropriate to say, that normally it is impossible to change from one extreme mood to the total opposite mood. However this does not have to be the case, and it suffices if you will decide to go in the correct direction ie towards a productive life, and to actually begin so, by MAKING A FIRST STEP.

Then step by step, which accumulates more steps, you will soon enough find yourself in the path of the King ie the path which leads to a life of inner satisfaction and fulfilment.....

I hope that you will very soon start actualizing, not to be overwhelmed by the effort or exertion, and soon you will see the SWEET FRUIT of your labour as well.'

May this be also for all of us, each progressing from our own levels.

Gut Shabbos!

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

TWO KINGS, TWO GIANTS

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 25 December 2020 · Shabbos 26 Dec 2020 · י״א טבת תשפ״א

Dear Family,

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday next week. Good memories from your last birthday Shmuel! I hope this year will be just as good. Hatzlochah with everything!

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff in Long Beach on your birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with continued growth and achievement.

We wish Devorah Leah long life on the passing of her grandfather. We were all very fond of him, and will miss him a lot. Wishing you only simchos in the future.

The choice of Haftorah for this week's Parshah Vayigash is interesting because it speaks about Ezekiel's prophecy of the stick of Yehudah and the stick of Ephraim. (Ephraim being the relation to Yosef), presumably relating to the meeting or conflict between Yehudah and Yosef in this week's Parshah.

But we see that there are much more important events in this week's Sedra, for example Yaakov's descent to Egypt with his whole family and the start of the exile in Egypt? And the whole drama of Yosef with all his brothers. And the Sages would always only choose a Haftorah which reflected the essence of that week's Sedra?

We must therefore come to the conclusion that this meeting/conflict between Yosef and Yehuda is of a very essential nature and needs close analysis. (Reference Talks on the Parshah by Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz)

From the time of the sale of Yosef by his brothers, and stretching all the way through history thereafter these two giants of our people are interacting with

each other, either in a way of battle or interaction in one form or another. They never quite join up. It is an epic clash between two Kings throughout our history, and this will continue to the end of days between the Mashiach ben David (descendant of Yehudah) and Mashiach ben Yosef

So what is the difference in nature between these two Kings?

Yosef encompasses perfection even from birth. He is smart, handsome, successful and more loved than his brothers. He has the ability to rise up to the highest of positions in an easy fashion, even through difficulties, and he displays tremendous talent in governing even whole countries, while never forgetting and moving away from his roots of Judaism. To assist him in his worldly talents, he knew 70 languages.

Yosef represents the level of a Tzadik.

The weakness of Yosef is his inability to recover well when he falls, as seen with Shaul's history. (A descendant of Yosef)

Yehuda on the contrary, came from low beginnings. He wasn't the first born and didn't have any particular talents. He started out as a peasant farmer. One of his descendants was Rebbi Akiva who also started out as a peasant and became one of the greatest Torah scholars of our people . Yehuda begins entirely from below and works his way up. He has the quality of A Baal Teshuvah. He may fall many times but he thrives on his ability to deconstruct his personality in order to reshape it into another form, to make changes within himself. It appears that his unique point is continuity and endurance. His daily occupation is that he focuses on his family and their Jewish pursuits.

When Yaakov blesses his sons before his death, he gives Yehuda and Yosef the biggest and most significant blessings. In short Yosef is given grandeur and Yehuda is given eternity.

This conflict between Yehuda and Yosef has still not been resolved, and it is still not known who will be the true Mashiach. But it is for this reason that our Sages chose this Haftorah for this Sedra!

And how does this relate to ourselves.

We live between Yehuda and Yosef, and when these two elements work in perfect harmony within ourselves, the symphony of life is formed.- Steinsaltz

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

MIRACLES CONTINUED

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 December 2021 · Shabbos 11 Dec 2021 · ז' טבת תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had a nice Chanukah.

2 Mazel Tovs to the Newton Davidoffs:

A big Mazal Tov for Dani and her Choson on their engagement! Amazing news. We are all so happy for you. Mazal Tov Chanan and Naomi. This should be the first of many more engagements!

And Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday next week. What a nice birthday present!

Chanukah is over, and we are no longer lighting the beautiful candles at night, but in a Sicha, the Rebbe encouraged all men, women and children to do all they can, even after Chanukah, to illuminate the world, and this should be done with joy. (Sichos Kodesh 5734 Vol 1 p236)

And then I saw another article this week in 'Mashiach Day by Day', which I think, helps us to understand the above, better:

Someone asked the Rebbe 'Can the Rebbe perform MIRACLES?'

And the Rebbe answered, 'This world is not separate from the higher worlds, but is another step, the last one, in a long chain of worlds.

Everything in this world comes from, and is influenced by, the higher ones.

A miracle is something that you could not have calculated.

When a Jew connects himself (or herself) through his Divine spark, with G-d, through fervent prayer, Torah, and Mitzvos, he can change this physical world 'from above', in a way that is beyond calculation.

This power is not the prerogative of one Jew, but of every Jew.

The Rebbe also responded:

'Now I want to ask you a question, and at the same time, to try and perform a miracle.

..Since 6m of our people in Russia, Poland and Hungary have been lost to us through Hitler, we have a special task to accomplish - the work that those 6m Jews could have done (or at least a major part of it)

Everyone counts. No Jew is expendable.

Every one of us must use his full strength to add to the side of good.

Through this we will gain a life of happiness and harmony.

All this can be done with a life of Torah and Mitzvos, tested by our 35 hundred year history.

Beginning tomorrow, each of us - myself included - should add more Torah and Mitzvos in his own personal life, and influence the environment in the same direction.

IF WE FOLLOW THIS THROUGH, THIS WILL INDEED BE OUR MIRACLE.'

Gut Shabbos to all with much continued light!

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

WEEPING?

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 December 2022 · Shabbos 31 Dec 2022 · ז' טבת תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I would like to share 2 issues which came up this week

The first is an interesting lesson from this week's Sedra Vayigash, which I heard from Rabbi Y Gordon, explaining part of a sicha from the Rebbe, on the verse 45:14, "He (Yosef) then fell upon the neck of his brother Binyamin AND WEPT, and Binyamin WEPT upon his (Yosef's) neck." (This took place at their reunification after having been parted for 22 years)

Rashi explains that each had prophecy and foresaw the destruction of the Temples in each other's territories in the future, and therefore WEPT.

Now the verse uses the plural expression of necks about Yosef weeping on Binyamin's shoulders. The First and Second Temples in Yerushalayim were both in Binyamins territory, (plural), and hence Yosef was weeping about their (plural) destruction.

With Binyamin weeping on Yosef's neck, here neck is in the singular, and Rashi says that Binyamin was weeping for the destruction of the Temple in Shilo, which was in Yosef's territory.

But now the Rebbe asks an interesting question - If they were both weeping about the destruction of these 3 Temples, why did they not just weep about the Temples in their own territory? Why did they have to weep about his brother's Temple or Temples?!

And the Rebbe gives a beautiful answer (amongst others) - When someone else has a problem and you are trying to help them, there may come a point

where there is nothing further you can do, except WEEP AND PRAY FOR THEM.

BUT FOR ONE'S OWN PROBLEMS THERE IS NO WEEPING. Here there has to be only efforts to resolve the issues, and steer clear of becoming a victim.

(As it says in Hayom Yom 9TH Adar Sheini - "My father (the Rebbe Rashab) writes in one of his letters: A single act is better than a thousand groans. Our G-d lives, and Torah and Mitzvot are eternal. Quit groaning and work hard in actual avodah, and G-d will be gracious to you.")

The second issue is that today is Hei (5th) Teves, and without going into details, it is a day where we make resolutions to buy more books and increase our Torah learning.

Also, coming up on Chof (20th) Teves is the Rambam's yohrtzeit, and so I decided to contribute to these 2 events by offering for free all the PDF files of my Studying Rambam Series. (See Offer attached)

Please feel free to make use of the Offer, but I would also be very happy for everyone to pass this on to all your associates, or communities.

I am happy to announce that on the first day of our campaign (yesterday) we had a wonderful response of uptake on our website BH.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

ART OF ELEVATION

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 December 2023 · Shabbos 23 Dec 2023 · י״א טבת תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well. We wish a refuah shleima to Shmuel Levy's father, Reb Ephraim.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year in both gashmius and ruchnius Shmuel, with nachas from the Family, together with Rivky, and with much joy!

Mazal tov to Chanie Davidoff on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of happiness, good health, and much continued success in the education of your Family together with Pesach!

I heard an interesting explanation from Rabbi Manis Friedman, on Chap 7 of this week's Tanya learning, which gives us a small insight into how much precision and thought is found with Torah and with our Rebbeim.

The Alte Rebbe is discussing the forces which oppose Holiness.

This world is made up of mainly 'not-good', with a little bit of good mixed in. Ie Holiness on one side, total evil on the other side, and an intermediate zone called klipat nogah, which is a neutral zone, which can go either way (can be converted to good or the opposite)

The Alte Rebbe brings an example to illustrate how to handle the klipat nogah zone, with a stories from the Gemorra, about RAVA and RABBAH.

Eating food just for the sake of pleasure, is taking neutral food and demoting it and ourselves, towards not-good.

RAVA used to eat rich wine and meat to broaden and stimulate his mind to enhance his Torah learning and service of Hashem. Even although this ap-

pears to be an indulgence, he was doing it with the right intention, and so he elevated the food and himself towards Holiness.

Or on an even higher level, to have these foods on Shabbos and Yom Tov, when it is an actual Mitzvah to enjoy.

These actions convert the hidden energy inside the food

Another example is when someone makes a humorous remark to lighten the mind and heart so that we can serve Hashem with more joy.

As RABAH did with his students. He would take some time away from his Torah teaching, to make a humorous remark, related to his teaching, to bring additional joy to his students, to make their learning more effective.

However there is a more remote story, where RAVA also brought in humour to the study of his students, (as was the case with RABAH) and the Alte Rebbe carefully and precisely chooses this quote rather than the well known version about Rabah

Why?! (The Rebbe explains on this chap of Tanya)

Very briefly, each story in Torah has a new lesson for us.

So here we can see that even although RAVA already came to the Torah class with a happy heart and mind from the rich foods, he still used techniques to add to the joy of serving Hashem, by taking some time off Torah to make a focused humorous remark to further broaden and lighten the mind and heart of his students.

Even although we are already happy, we should make extra efforts TO SERVE HASHEM WITH MORE JOY, which will elevate ourselves and the world to the side of Good and Holiness.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos with much enjoyment!

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST MIRACLES

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 January 2025 · Shabbos 4 Jan 2025 · ד׳ טבת תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

MAZAL TOV TO TALYA DAVIDOFF ON HER ENGAGEMENT TO MICHAEL, THIS WEEK! What wonderful news for Talya, Chanan and Naomi. (Sorry, but I did not get the full name of Michael).Wishing you both, much success in the future, and many more simchos for the whole Family!

Welcome to Esther Miriam Davidoff to our Family email Group. As the grandchildren go over Bar or Batmitzva, they usually get their own emails, and that is what has happened with Esther. So, it is really nice to have you on the Group Esther! Esther is interested in the history and genealogy of our Family, amongst many other things, and so I am posting again the Family Tree made by Kevin. Kevin has marked your name in red Esther, which means that you are now one of the email Group. Wishing you happy exploring of the Family, and feel free to ask questions, contact members, and contribute!

Today is, or has been, the last day of Chanukah, which is also called Zos Chanukah, with all 8 candles plus the shamas burning brightly.

Chanukah has been miraculous for our ancestors, and it continues to be miraculous for us today. And especially on the last day, when the menorah is shining in all its glory.

In relation to this I saw a beautiful short video about one miracle which occurred recently on Zos Chanukah, in our time. We actually know the person to whom the miracle occurred ie Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin.

His trial and imprisonment is well known, but I never knew the connection to Zos Chanukah!

It is a true story about TRUST and MIRACLES

Here is the link - enjoy!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1ju9itOLEE&ab_channel=Vayimaen

There is lots of deep meaning to the Rubashkin story attached, and so its message is probably adequate for this week.

It is especially, an opportune time on the last day of Chanukah, to request miracles from Hashem, who hears our requests, and responds to our needs.

And this also applies to every day in the year!

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayigash ↑ Vayigash · Contents · By date ויגש

SIMPLE SINCERITY IN ACTION

2025 / 5786

GUT SHABBOS · sent Friday, 26 December 2025 · Shabbos 27 Dec 2025 · ז׳ טבת תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.
Wishing a refuah shlemah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

We wish long life to Shmuel Levy on the upcoming yohrtzeit of his dear father, Reb Ephraim ah, next week. We have fond memories of Reb Ephraim where we use to meet at all the simchos in the Family, and his presence is very much missed. His neshamah should have an Aliyah. BEH the bris of Zalmy and Nechama Dina's baby is called for this coming Sunday in North Hollywood. It should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas.

Today's HaYom Yom was very beautiful, and I wanted to share it, as follows:

"When Mashiach comes, we will appreciate the distinctive quality of

- Hodaah (acknowledgement of G-d and belief in Him) and
- Temimus (SIMPLE SINCERITY ie the pure faith with which all Jews believe in G-d, His Torah, and His Mitzvos

When it comes to study, even the highest levels of understanding have their limits.

Hodaah by contrast, is a feeling that has no boundaries.

Mashiach will endow us with an understanding of the superior worth, as expressed IN ACTION, of sincere, heartfelt, earnest Divine Service."

Gut Shabbos to all

ויחי

Vayechi

Bereishis 47:28 · parsha 12 of 12 in Bereishis · 12 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2017 / 5777 — BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS 303
2017 / 5778 — SUBLIME GREATNESS 305
2018 / 5779 — REAL LIVING 309
2020 / 5780 — TORAH STUDY 311
2021 / 5781 — OUR DEEP TORAH 314
2021 / 5782 — FISH 316
2023 / 5783 — LEFT AND RIGHT HEART 318
2023 / 5784 — LIFE 321
2025 / 5785 — THE BRIDGE 323
2026 / 5786 — THE POWER OF STORIES 325

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 January 2017 · Shabbos 14 Jan 2017 · ט"ז טבת תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again to Chanie Dahan whose birthday is today and Shmuel Levy whose birthday is tomorrow.

In this weeks Parsha Vayechi, Yaakov is giving blessings to his children before passing on.

I saw an interesting Essay in Chabad.org on the blessing that was given to ASHER (the eighth child), and this is also another aspect of OLIVE OIL which we discussed 2 weeks ago.

The portion of land which Asher had in Eretz Yisrael was very fertile, and the abundant olive oil that they produced for the whole country made them very wealthy.

And the blessing that Yaakov gives Asher is 'From Asher will come rich food (shmeina)....'

Rashi says 'There will be an abundance of olives in his region and the oil will flow like a fountain.'

Rashi also points to the blessing that Moshe gave to each Tribe before his passing, which for Asher was 'And he will dip his foot in oil.'

Here (with the blessings of Moshe) Rashi connects the dipping of feet in oil to the High Priests, who were anointed with oil, and he says,

'BECAUSE THE WOMEN WHO CAME FROM ASHER WERE BEAUTIFUL, THEY WERE SAUGHT AFTER BY THE HIGH PRIESTS.' The

Midrash also finds other links to make this connection. The word shmeina also means oil, and eight, referring to the 8 garments worn by the High Priest!

The essay goes on to say, that this seems odd, ie why would such Holy men as the High Priests pursue a wife from a neighbouring Tribe just because she was beautiful?

But apparently, Asher's daughters were renowned for their beauty and refinement.

Their exquisite modesty demonstrated an internal commitment to spirit over flesh, and an immense respect for the body that housed their soul.

Unknowingly, they projected their inner commitment through their physical appearance - for the beauty of their soul shone unhindered through the body, reflecting there.

And the Priests recognised that these women would best understand and support their work.

Asher's daughters were also remarkable mothers.

With their modesty and integrity, they transmitted a firm sense of commitment to their children ie the unspoken message of one who values Hashem's impression more than the social impression, and the beauty in maintaining appropriate boundaries.

Their children were therefore not only fit to be Priests physically, (because their fathers were Priests), but also emotionally and spiritually.

Gut Shabbos to all our beautiful daughters, daughters-in-law, sons, sons-in-law, uncles, aunts and cousins

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

SUBLIME GREATNESS

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 December 2017 · Shabbos 30 Dec 2017 · י"ב טבת תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on your upcoming birthday. You can invite Mommy to celebrate with you this year Shmuel. Wishing you a shnas hatzlocha and happiness.

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff who also has a birthday this coming week. Lots of celebrations for you at this time of year BH. Wishing you a happy year with many more simchos.

Wishing Mommy an enjoyable trip in California.

I heard a fascinating talk from Rabbi Yossie Jacobson this week, based on a talk of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

We are now in the last Parsha of Bereishis, Vayechi, which focuses on Yaakov (YISRAEL), his final years, and we are moving on next week to the Book of Shmos, which is dominated by MOSHE RABEINU.

The talk I heard focuses on YISRAEL.

The name of a person is very closely linked to his deepest inner being and reflects his nature and function, and the talk analyses the name YISRAEL, which is personal to Yaakov, but also personal to each one of us who are also called Yisrael. (as an inheritance)

The night before Yaakov met Eisov in a previous Parsha, where he spent the night on the other side of the Yabok river battling with 'some man', was very mysterious, and there are many commentaries trying to analyse who this man was.

We are going to focus on the commentary of the Rashbam, who was a grandchild of Rashi.

He says that when you find similar events in Torah, they are actually all linked to each other, and each one helps explain the others.

He therefore links the story of Yaakov fighting 'the angel' to the story of Moshe who was being attacked by a serpent on his way to Egypt to save the Jewish people, and the story of Yonah who was swallowed by a whale while running away from the city of Nineveh.

The common denominator in all these stories, was that each one, ie Yaakov, Moshe, and Yonah were trying to escape the request being demanded to them from Hashem.

- Moshe had spent a week arguing with Hashem why he was not suitable for the job of leading Bnei Yisrael.

And all his arguments were true. How could he face up to the most powerful nation of those times ie Pharoah, and he had a speech deficit etc. Moshe then reluctantly agrees to go, and on the way a serpent is about to swallow him up, and his wife Tzipora saves his life by giving a bris milah to their son who had been born recently, and the serpent relents and lets Moshe continue his journey.

- With Yonah, Hashem had asked him to go to the City of Nineveh to get the people there to do teshuvah. This city was not Jewish and it would have been dangerous for Yonah to be there and he did not see the point, and nor did he feel he had the capability. And so he tries to escape by taking a ship to Tarshish, and then this huge storm arose which was going to drown all the passengers, and only when Yonah volunteered to jump into the sea (because he knew the storm was due to him), did the storm subside. - Then the story with the whale, his escape, and then agreeing to do Hashems will in Nineveh.

- And so the Rashbam links the story of Yaakov to these 2 stories and explains that they give us the clue of what was really happening with Yaakov that night. He was running away from facing Esav, which is what Hashem was demanding from him. The'angel' came to stop him from running away and fought with him the whole night, but could not overcome Yaakov. So he then damages Yaakov's thigh so that he cant run away. And at this stage Yaakov agrees to go back and meet Esav, and he asks the angel for a blessing.

And what is the blessing? THAT YOU SHOULD NOW BE CALLED YISRAEL.

Yisrael refers to the inner calling for GREATNESS within each one of us, and our ability to fight and overcome and succeed.

We hear it. Yet we see that it is too difficult, and beyond our capabilities. In truth we are not wrong, because at this stage the work does look like it is beyond our capabilities. And so we may opt to go to the couch with our magazines and snacks and mobile phones instead.

And so how do we achieve this GREATNESS?

Torah teaches us that Hashem puts in front of us 'shoes that look way too big for us to wear'!

But by jumping into them (taking on our mission) we grow, and we come to 'fit into those shoes'.

And the fact that we had the courage to go into our shoes, now gives us the potential to grow! (As in the story of the Ark - initially it looked too heavy to carry, but when it was lifted, it, the Ark, carried those who lifted it).

And if we resist, or run away, Hashem may bring upon us situations that endanger our lives, to thrust us into this greatness.

And in life we see examples of this.

What training does a man and women have to go into a marriage together? Two people who hardly know each other , marry, and have to build an important section of the world together. And even more difficult, what training do the husband and wife have in bringing up children, and all different types of children etc? Yet by accepting the challenge we grow into the roles of what Hashem expects from us, and with His help.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

REAL LIVING

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 December 2018 · Shabbos 22 Dec 2018 · י"ד טבת תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much achievement and settling down in California.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel (Levy) on your birthday next week. Hatzlochah Rabbah with everything Shmuel!

This week,s sedra is Vayechi - 'And he lived', referring to the 17 BEST YEARS OF YAAKOV'S LIFE IN EGYPT

It is interesting that this subject kept appearing this week in different forms:

1. An explanation from the Rebbe on why the 17 best years of Yaakovs life were in the most immoral country in the world at that time?
2. I got this forward from Mommy - see attached.
3. We watched another instalment of Rabbi Stein's course on Living in the Moment titled TOMORROW IS GOING TO BE GOOD. This course is really so essential and useful, and am therefore attaching the link again. - most interesting!

https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/4181470/jewish/Tomorrow-Is-Going-to-Be-Good.htm

4. An article on Faith - Reacting to Inconvenience from Kesser Shem Tov

In summary, the core of the above points is to home into the present, by shutting the door to all past difficulties, and current and future worries, and focus in fully on one's current task.

This is best understood directly from the course, by learning and practicing according to Rabbi Stein's teaching.

From this point of a deep relaxed and joyful feeling, we become open to FAITH, and a feeling of certainty that TOMORROW IS GOING TO BE GOOD, DEVOTING OUR LIVES TO GOOD DEEDS.

Of course this is no guarantee that life will be without difficulties, but now there is the potential of thriving with the difficulties.

As Rabbi Stein puts it, the function of the difficulties are really just tests of our Faith. Or put another way, a training ground for our Faith.

And this brings us back to why the best years of Yaakov's life were in Egypt?

The Rebbe explains that when Yaakov saw that his children were coping with the challenges of this immoral environment, and were holding on to the teachings of Torah, he knew that his Family had internalised his teachings and that the future of Klal Yisroel was secure.

And as was mentioned last week, he had set up a Yeshiva in the midst of this worldly life.

The last article described how Divine Providence applies to each one of us, regardless ie everything that happens to us, whether minor or major events, are all judgements relating to ourselves.

When we reflect on our situation and realise that our situation has resulted from our past deeds, and our current state has come from Hashem, we will be filled with remorse.

BUT AS A RESULT OF THIS TESHUVAH, OUR SINS ARE IMMEDIATELY FORGIVEN. - because we have turned our thoughts to reflect on G-d and His Ways

Wishing all of us success in really living, and a Gut Shabbos.

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

TORAH STUDY

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 January 2020 · Shabbos 11 Jan 2020 · י"ד טבת תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Chanie Davidoff on your birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much success and happiness in your new home in Longbeach and much nachas from all of your Family.

Mazal Tov Shmuel Levy on your upcoming 40th birthday next week - to be continued below!

Mazal Tov to Nechama, Mariasha's sister, who had a baby girl. Such good news, and wishing you all many more simchas!

Mazal Tov to Miriam Finkel and Shlomie Tunk on the birth of a baby boy. Wonderful news! And mazal Tov to grandparents Yidel and Dina.

In Judaism, significance is attached to events when they reach a decade, and this week Shmuel is celebrating his 40th birthday BEH.

And it so works out that this very much relates to this week's Sedra Vayechi - And Yaakov lived.

Shmuel has been teaching Torah to school boys for many years, and is well respected at Yavneh School in LA for his teaching and all the extra-curricular activities he does with the boys there BH

In a sicha from the Rebbe (Vol 10) on this weeks Sedra we see the POWER OF TORAH STUDY.

Yaakov lived for 17 years in Egypt. And the Baal HaTurim says that these were the best 17 years of his life.

When the Tzemach Tzedek (3rd Lubavitch Rebbe) was a young child, he asked his grandfather the Alte Rebbe, 'How could it be, that the elect of our Forefathers, Yaakov, had the best years of his life in Egyypt, a land of terrible morals and corruption?'

And the Alte Rebbe answered, that Yaakov sent Yehudah ahead of him before they went down to Mitzrayim, to ESTABLISH A HOUSE OF TORAH STUDY, and so, even in Egypt it is possible to say that Yaakov truly lived.'

But this raises a question.

Isn't it more obvious that Yaakov's joyous years in Egypt were related to being with Yosef, who he had not seen for 22 years?

And especially to see him in such a high position, and nevertheless, he was still conducting himself like a son of Yaakov, unaffected by the corruption around him!?

And not only that, but he was also transforming the gloom of Egypt into a blaze of holiness!

And so, because Yaakov's joy was so obvious, why did the Tzemach Tzedek question these 17 years?

And why did the Alte Rebbe answer as he did (ie in a different way than would have been expected)?

The answer is, that the Tzemach Tzedek understood how great is the restriction of the atmosphere of Egypt, and how it limits spirituality.

And the Alte Rebbe understood how TORAH STUDY CAN RAISE AN INDIVIDUAL ABOVE ALL LIMITATIONS, so that he can truly be alive ,even while in Egypt.

The reason for this is that Torah is rooted in Hashem's essence. And just as Hashem defies all limitations, so too does Torah.

Even although Torah descends within the physical, it remains essentially limitless. And by cleaving to Torah, one can withstand even the spiritual trials and tribulations of Egypt.

And this is the work that Shmuel has dedicated his life to. Teaching Torah.

Kol hakavod Shmuel!

It says in Pirkei Avot, that when a person reaches 40, he reaches understanding - binah (because when Avraham reached 40, he achieved a clear recognition of Hashem -Midrash)

The Rebbe mentions in another Sicha (Eikev 5744) that one should make every effort to reach higher levels of understanding within the category of 'a 40 year old achieves understanding.'

Wishing you a great year Shmuel, with much joy and Chassidishe nachas from all the children, together with Rivky.

And we should all continue to connect with our beautiful heritage of TORAH.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

OUR DEEP TORAH

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 December 2020 · Shabbos 2 Jan 2021 · י"ח טבת תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

In this week's Parshah (Vayechi), we learn about the brochas that Yaakov gave to each of his children, i.e. the 12 shevatim, just before his death.

The brochah to Yissachar was to be great in Torah study, and he describes Yissachar as a strong boned donkey (who bears the load of Torah), and who pays his dues (mas) with work (oved)

The tribe of Yissachar produced brilliant Torah scholars throughout the centuries and as Rashi mentions, they provided 200 heads of the Sanhedrin.

I saw a very interesting and deep explanation regarding this brochah of Yissachar from the Rebbe's father Reb Levi Yitzchak as follows:

It says in Gemorra Chagigah that you get two types of Tzadik

- Tzadik shelo oved (a Tzadik 'who does not work') - he learns his studies 100 times (100 times being the standard high level current in his times). Of course this is a huge effort and that that is why he is called a tzadik. But it is only a tzadik according to the normal level of big effort.
- Tzadik oved (a Tzadik who works) - he learns he studies 101 times. This means that he exerts himself beyond his limits, and that is why he is called an oved.

The Gemorra goes on to explain this with an example of a donkey rider who charges one zuz for carrying a load for 10 parsa (a certain distance), but if he carries for 11 parsa, then his fee doubles to 2 zuz.

Reb Levik explains this as follows from the teachings of the Arizal:

There is an angel, who is not a good angel, by the name of mas (in Hebrew this is spelt mem and samech, and the numerical equivalent is therefore 100).

This angel's job is to make one forget ones Torah learning. But it cannot do this if one puts in effort beyond one's nature.

And why does the Gemorra use the example of a donkey? Because it is hinting towards Yissachar and Torah study.

And we can now understand better the end of Yissachar's brochah which said vayehi lemas oved, which can now be understood with a new translation, that the angel mas could not have influence over him because he was an oved ie the second category of Tzadik who is an oved who goes beyond his nature. (101)

And even more interesting he brings an explanation from the Tzemach Tzedek as follows.

The numerical value of the Hebrew word zecher, meaning to remember, is 227.

The numerical value of the Hebrew word shachach, meaning to forget, is 328.

And what is the difference between remembering and forgetting (i.e. subtract 227 from 328)?

Amazingly this is 101!!

How deep is our Torah and our Sages!

And in relation to ourselves, this means that occasionally, we should also try to push ourselves beyond our limits.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

FISH

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 December 2021 · Shabbos 18 Dec 2021 · י"ד טבת תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well,

Mazal Tov Shmuel (Levy) on your birthday next week. Wishing you a year of continued achievement, nachas from children and much happiness, together with Rivky. Lechaim!

Mazal Tov Chanie on your birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you and your Family to continue moving from strength to strength, and to settle well in your new home in LA, with much happiness. Mazal Tov for this also!

Mazal Tov to Renee and Roy on their 60th Anniversary! What an achievement BH! To many more healthy and happy years together.

In an extract of a Sicha from The Rebbe, in this week's Parsha, Vayechi, we see lessons that we can learn from FISH.

When Yaakov blessed Menasheh and Ephraim he said '..and may they multiply abundantly (veyidgu) among mankind on earth.'

And Rashi explains that the term veyidgu means 'May they be like fish (dagim) which are fruitful and multiply,....'

Fish are completely submerged and concealed by their native environment, water, and are constantly dependant on it for their survival.

Fish therefore express the notion of SELFLESSNESS (bitul) more than other creatures.

This selflessness is also the key to their great FERTILITY.

Selflessness ensures that our ego does not become an obstacle between ourselves and G-d. And thereby opens us up to receiving His limitless blessings.

The lesson that we therefore take from Yaakov's blessing, is to emulate the selflessness exhibited by fish, in our Divine mission on earth, and to receive Hashems infinite blessings.

Gut Shabbos and love to all.

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date וישב

LEFT AND RIGHT HEART

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 January 2023 · Shabbos 7 Jan 2023 · י"ד טבת תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We would like to wish Kevin Marks long life on the sudden passing of his father last week. Stan Marks ah, has been a dear friend of the Family ever since he married Zelda (ne Davidoff), our first cousin. Wishing you, your mother and your whole Family much comfort from Hashem, and only good news in the future, Kevin. Kevin is now part of our weekly email, and I hope you will slowly get to know everyone on the group. Welcome.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday this coming week. You should have a wonderful year Shmuel, with brochos in both gashmius and ruchnius and with much joy and nachas !

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (LA) on her birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a happy year Chanie and continued success with all the good things that you do!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty on his upcoming first birthday next week BH. Continue growing as the happy boy that you are, and give your parents much nachas!

Torah gives LEFT AND RIGHT much significance, and this week, I saw it discussed at least 3 times.

In this week's Sedra Vayechi. (48:11 - 48:20) Yosef brings his 2 children, Menashe (the older one) and Ephraim (the younger), to be blessed by Yaakov. Yosef places the older son in front of Yaakovs RIGHT so that his he can bless him with his right hand, and vice versa for the younger. But then Yaakov

'strangely' crosses his right hand over to the left to bless the younger son! Yosef tries to correct his father, but Yaakov indicates that he is doing this with full knowledge, foreseeing that the descendants of the younger son will be greater than that of the older!

In other words LEFT and RIGHT are real!? - Hard to understand!

Chassidus places much emphasis on left and right, and interestingly it came up in the Tanya of this week in discussion about the LEFT AND RIGHT SIDE OF THE HEART (Chap 9)

The Alte Rebbe is describing 2 levels of nefesh which are part of the make-up of a Jew ie the animal soul (nefesh habehamis) and the G-dly soul (nefesh haElokis), and where they reside in the body.

The animal soul is most manifest in the heart, and more specifically the LEFT SIDE OF THE HEART (biologically the blood in the left ventricle as we understand it today, is fully oxygenated and gets pumped to supply the rest of the body with all it's nutrients)

Because the animal soul resides here all lusts, boasting, anger and other passions are in the heart.

The Divine soul resides in the brain and from there extends to all the limbs. But the Divine soul also resides in the heart, but in the RIGHT SIDE OF THE HEART where there is 'no blood' (biologically this is where the blood has returned from all the organs deoxygenated). As it is written "The heart of the wise man is on his RIGHT.

This results in understanding and reflection in the brain, which flares up a fiery love to Hashem in the heart of discerning people.....etc

And then I heard an amusing vort from Manis Friedman this week (without a source) - Every Gemorra starts on page 2.

When the wise man starts to learn, he looks to the RIGHT and he sees page 1 missing (Hebrew goes from right to left). He understands that he has not yet even begun to learn.

The fool, whose heart is on the LEFT, looks to the left and he only sees page 2. He thinks he is already up to page 2 at the start - just a light-hearted comment!

Tanya goes on to explain how all the nefesh components are essential, and we we can harness the passions of the animal soul and include them in our Service of Hashem.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

LIFE

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 29 December 2023 · Shabbos 30 Dec 2023 · י"ח טבת תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

We want to wish long life to Shmuel Levy and his Family with the loss of his father last Shabbos. The Neshama of Reb Ephraim HaLevi ah should have an aliyah. We will miss Reb Ephraim ah. He was always so much part of all the simchos in the Family, and I personally always enjoyed his company. HaMakom yenachem eschem besoch shear avalei Tzion BiYerushalayim. You should know only simchos in the future

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty on his birthday this Shabbos. Michayil el Chayil Shlomo, with all the wonderful activities you are doing and with much joy, bringing your parents much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Dovber Rosenfeld on his Barmitzvah in EY. Dovber is Rochi (Adler's) boy.

The theme of life and the opposite of life, came up so much this week and especially relating to Ehraim Levy ah and to this week's Sedra, VAYECHI (and he lived -Yaakov), with the passing of Yaakov at 147, and Yosef at 110.

Then there was a letter from the Rebbe to someone who had lost a relative.

And the 'Hebrew word of the Week' explanation was CHAIM - LIFE

Sedra

- The Baal Haturim points out the best years of Yaakov were the first 17 years of Yosef's life before he got sold and the last 17 years of his life in Egypt, when he found out that Yosef was still alive and joined him there.

17 plus 17 is 34, which is the numerical value of Vayechi (Yaakov) -Jacob lived.

Letter from The Rebbe

- When a close person passes on, by the will of Hashem, those left here can no longer see him with their eyes or hear him with their ears. But the soul, in the World of Truth, can see and hear. There is a mourning period prescribed by Torah, and when that comes to an end, and the soul sees that its relatives then return to a normal and fully productive life, it then is happy..
- In order that the above be accepted not only intellectually, but actually implemented, it is necessary to be occupied.
- Displaying simple Jewish faith, fulfilling our lofty mission as sons or daughters of our Forefathers and Mothers, and spreading the light of Judaism, is what truly gratifies the soul in the World of Truth.

Hebrew Word CHAIM

- Chai is singular, and Chaim is plural, indicating multiple phases, of a single never-ending life.
- When Mosheh tells the Jewish people, in the last days of his life, '..to choose life', he is not saying 'choose life over death'. Rather he is saying, that you can spend life with self-centered pursuits that are pleasurable but fleeting, or you can invest in that which is eternal ie LIFE
- The Jewish Tradition is to say 'may their neshamah have an aliyah (ascent). Because the soul continues ascending, even after passing on.

Torah requires us to 'Serve G-d with joy.'

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

THE BRIDGE

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 January 2025 · Shabbos 11 Jan 2025 · י״א טבת תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Continued good wishes for Dov.

We wish Shmuel Levy long life with the upcoming yohrtzeit of his father Reb Ephraim ah. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, Shmuel. I was very fond of Reb Ephraim ah, and we would always make a good connection with each other at all the Family simchos. I am sure that he is being missed by all. Tizkeh leMitzvos for all that you have done, and are doing, for him.

And a few days later is Shmuel's birthday. Mazal Tov Shmuel. It should be only simchos in the future for you and all your Family. Wishing you hatzlachah rabbah begashmius veruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (LA) on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much joy, with especially much nachas from all your children BEH.

Thinking of all those in California affected by the shocking difficulties being experienced there. Wishing to hear good news, and also especially from EY.

Last Friday night we had Avri Davidoff and her friend, over for the Shabbos meal. It is the first time I have seen Avri for many many years, and it was really nice to meet again and catch up! Avri is now living in Kent UK. Welcome to our Family Group Avri! See attached a Sheet of our Family Tree, which you can use as an introduction to everyone. The names in red are the ones who get the weekly email. Kevin Marks made this beautiful record, and I will ask him to edit it now with your details. Also, please keep on asking all those deep questions about Torah and life!!

In this week's Sedra Vayechi, Yaakov is about to pass away, and Rashi tells us that he wanted to reveal to his Family the end of all exiles, but Hashem concealed this knowledge from him.

I saw a beautiful explanation about this from Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz ah, as follows:

The above event teaches us a fundamental truth in life, ie THAT SOME THINGS ARE BEYOND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

Even although Yaakov was a great prophet, and, as reflected in his blessings to each of his children, he could see their futures. But when it came to revealing the ultimate future which he 'got wind of', Hashem withdrew this from him.

This is not due to any fault in Yaakov or his children. It is just that some aspects of the future, or the Divine, are meant to remain mysterious.

Faith involves believing in something beyond what we can see, explain or fully understand.

It requires us to accept that there are realities beyond our grasp.

Faith, then, is THE BRIDGE, between what we know, and what we sense lies beyond, inviting us to live with humility and trust.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayechi ↑ Vayechi · Contents · By date ויחי

THE POWER OF STORIES

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 2 January 2026 · Shabbos 3 Jan 2026 · י"ד טבת תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

A refuah shleimah for Yechezkel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on the bris and naming of their new son - Ariel Rachamim Alexander. Wishing you to bring him up to Torah, Chuppa, and Good Deeds, all with much joy BEH

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday this coming week. Wishing you a year of much hatzlochah Shmuel in both gashmius and ruchnius, many simcos, and much nachas BEH

Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (California) on her birthday this coming week. Wishing you a year success in everything that you do Chanie, and with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty whose birthday is at the end of next week. Wishing you to continue growing and achieving Shlomo, and stay the very sweet boy you are, giving much nachas to your parents.

The theme in this weeks Farbrengen Publication was the POWER OF A STORY, and the story featured has a very close connection to Rahel and I, and so I decided to share it.

The son in the story grew up to be Reb Nissan Pinson, the Frierdike Rebbe, and Rebbe's shaliach to Tunisia, where he and his wife, had a great influence on Rahel's life, and subsequently both of our lives.

As an introduction:

The Rebbe Maharash once said: "People say that relating a story of the Baal Shem Tov on Motzaei Shabbos is a segula for parnasa. The truth is that these three points are not necessarily so - lav davka. It does not necessarily have to be about the Baal Shem Tov - it can be about any tzaddik; and it is not only applicable on Motzaei Shabbos - it can be at any time; and the segula is not only for parnasa - but for all good things as well. "

And the Story:

R. Nochum Yitzchok Pinson

R. Nochum Yitzchok Pinson was born in 5645 (1885) in Pahar, and was a talmid of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch. He lived in Starodub and Charkov, and was moser nefesh for Yiddishkeit and the chinuch of his children under Communist rule. He was arrested by the Communists in 5699,(1939) and passed away in a gulag in 5702. (1942)

Not blessed with success in business, R. Nochum Yitzchok struggled to put food on his table. Forced to work long hours and make frequent trips, his children's chinuch (Jewish education was being overlooked.

In his town, there was no Chasidic cheder, and his children were educated in the spirit of the times. Torah study was supplemented with Russian language and secular studies, until the Torah education became secondary. As people said then, "They anyway won't become Rabbonim, so however much Torah they learn is fine."

Though R. Nochum Yitzchok was greatly pained by their depraved chinuch, and more than once he interrupted their secular studies, he couldn't stop it. The prevailing culture was strong, and his relatives accused him of depriving his children of a living. He consoled himself that when his parnassa stabilizes he'll devote himself to his children's chinuch, but that time was not coming. During his business trips his children were left entirely without supervision, and they made bad friends.

Upon returning from one long trip, the severity of the situation hit him. He cried to himself, thinking, "What kind of life is it if my sons won't be faithful Temimim?" But what could he do? He had no money, and the closest yeshiva was in Kharkov - 500 km away! He sold his gold watch and some other items, and he told his wife that he will be taking their ten and twelve-year-old sons to yeshiva.

When the news reached his wife's family, they barged into his home and berated him, "Have you lost your mind? Where are you sending these young boys? Now, when the government is shutting down yeshivos, you must give them a general education so that they can be doctors or engineers, and be able to support you!"

But R. Nochum Yitzchok was adamant, and his wife also realized the urgency. With a heavy heart, she packed up food and clothing, and bid them a tearful goodbye.

After three whole days of traveling, they arrived in Kharkov, to find that the Yeshiva had lost it's premises. R. Nochum Yitzchok was at a loss of what to do next, but the resolve to give his children a Chassidic chinuch did not allow him to give up so fast. He remained in Kharkov for two weeks, and after they had reestablished the yeshiva in a new location he deposited the boys with the Rosh Yeshiva.

Entering the yeshiva, a new world opened up before the boys - tens of bochurim and boys devoted to Torah and avodas Hashem (the Service of Hashem). The enthusiasm of the bochurim won them over, and in a short time, they became outstanding temimim and influenced their younger brothers and sister. The family became a shining example of Torah, avodah, and tzedaka, and R. Nochum Yitzchok's wish for ehrliche (sincere)children materialized even better than he had imagined.

Gut Shabbos to all

שמות

Shemos

Shemos · Va'eira · Bo · Beshalach · Yisro · Mishpatim · Terumah · Tetzaveh · Ki Sisa · Vayakhel · Pekudei

שמות

Shemos

Shemos 1:1 · parsha 1 of 11 in Shemos · 13 of 54 in the Torah
9 letters

2017 / 5777 — NEVER GIVE UP 330
2018 / 5778 — NAMES, LETTERS, HUGS, AND KISSES 333
2018 / 5779 — A FREUDIAN SLIP 336
2021 / 5781 — CONTROLLING UNWANTED URGES 339
2021 / 5782 — SECRET OF SURVIVAL 342
2023 / 5783 — OUR GIANTS 344
2024 / 5784 — GENTLE MIGHT 346
2025 / 5785 — THE SWEET WAR 348
2026 / 5786 — THE BURNING BUSH 350

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

NEVER GIVE UP

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 January 2017 · Shabbos 21 Jan 2017 · כ"ג טבת תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

This coming Motzei Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of The Alte Rebbe, one of the giants of our People.

The Alte Rebbe (Shneur Zalman of Liadi) is well known for authoring the books Tanya, and his Shulchan Aruch but he wrote much more, besides everything else which he accomplished.- may his memory be blessed.

And I therefore felt like focusing on Tanya this week, especially because the discussion lately has been about the level called Beinuni, and gives us an important lesson of NEVER TO GIVE UP.

Tanya is also called Sefer shel Beinunim - The Book for Intermediates.

In todays portion of Tanya, the Alte Rebbe says 'The rank of Beinuni is one that is attainable by every person, and each person should strive after it.'

The Gemorrah brings down 5 distinct types of people (Brachot 7a)

1. Tzadik who prospers
2. Tzadik who suffers
3. Beinuni -- Intermediate
4. Wicked who prosper
5. Wicked who suffer

Within each person there are 2 Souls

1. The G-dly Soul which resides in the Head, and can spread its influence from there to the Heart and rest of body

2. The Animal Soul which resides in the Left side of the Heart, and from there tries to spread its influence to the rest of the body.

These 2 Souls are in constant battle with each other to capture 'the little city' ie the body and take control over it.

With the Beinuni, the Animal Soul never attains enough power to capture the 'little city' but on the other hand it's strength is never weakened.

Emotions, worldly lusts, and thoughts keep rising from the heart, but the G-dly Soul keeps recognising these and will work to analyse, thrust them out, or oppose, or use other methods to resist.

And then there will be times when the G-dly Soul is in the ascendency, and the Animal Soul tries to pull it down.

The battle can be fierce as we can all attest, as we all have these challenges in some form or another. Some with money, some with marriage, some with eating, challenges with children, friends, jealousies, etc etc

Now, very few people reach the level of Tzadik, and so the question arises - why should the Beinuni therefore bother!?

It is so easy just to give up and fall back into this 'so easy and comfortable ' zone, where everything looks so rosy and peaceful.

The Beinuni understands that there are going to be battles every day.

He understands that he is going to 'take up arms' for this battle and is ready and prepared.

He knows it is going to be difficult.

He understands it is a life long battle.

He understands that he may never fully over power the Animal Soul, and succeed

But he also knows that besides these 2 forces battling within him, there is also Hashem standing on the sidelines. As our Sages have said (Kiddushin 30b) 'If the Almighty did not help him, he could not overpower his evil inclination.'

And he knows that every small battle he wins every day, each one brings joy to Hashem (and therefore himself)

And when he loses, he knows it is only temporary, and he is ready to get up and try again.

He knows that the 'comfort zone' of doing nothing is sterile and dangerous.

He knows that all his work will be rewarded in some way or another.

THEREFORE HE NEVER GIVES UP THE BATTLE, AND HE DOES THIS WITH JOY.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

NAMES, LETTERS, HUGS, AND KISSES

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 January 2018 · Shabbos 6 Jan 2018 · י״ט טבת תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Thanks to everyone who hosted Mommy while in California.

BH she enjoyed her trip very much.

This week we started the second Book of Chumash called Shmos, and the first sedra is also called Shmos (NAMES)

I have seen it said in sichos of the Rebbe, that the name of a person is very deep in the essence of his soul.

That is why, when a person faints, or is unconscious, they may respond when you call their name, drawing their essence back into the body.

This is connected to our exile, and the exile in Egypt, but I want to rather link it to something else interesting that I learned this week in a maamar of the Alte Rebbe printed in his siddur. (Chanukah)

The topic was about the source of SPEECH and LETTERS within ourselves.

If one thinks about it, it is fascinating where letters and words arise from!

As part of the analysis the Alte Rebbe describes what happens with our words of prayer.

Our Sages say that the Angel called Matat, who is the highest of the angels, is 'sitting and braiding crowns for his Creator', and it is explained that these crowns are from the prayers of Am Yisrael.

And we have to understand how it is possible for the lowly, physical words we utter down on earth, to reach so high up to become crowns to our Creator?

It is known that the letters and words of our prayers, are raised up by angels, raising them from one level to a higher level.

4 worlds are described and within each world there are chambers (hechalot), where angels at different levels, raise these letters from one level to the next, one chamber to the next, one world to the next, going higher and higher, passing the letters on from one to the other - 'vekara zeh el zeh veamar', and 'umekablim zeh el zeh'

The Zohar says that there is a malach (angel) supervising the prayers and it 'gafif lah venashik lah batechilah, veachar kach maaleh osah leolam haelyon heimeno' - it EMBRACES (the words of prayer) and KISSES them initially, and then passes them up to the next level of angel above it, and in this way it is transported higher and higher, until it reaches the height of heights where the chief angel Matat 'braids them into wreaths for the Creator'.

And why is the expression of KISSING and EMBRACING used?

KISSING expresses a 'bonding of spirit with spirit'

The angel interprets the spirit of the words (ie their passion and meaning that has been applied by ourselves), and incorporates this into its own spirit. He then passes it onto a higher level angel, and this higher level interprets and bonds with the words as picked up in the lower level angel, 'bonding spirit to spirit' at a higher level etc.

The HUG refers to the 'surrounding' as is stated in Baba Metzia 'that the angel of Hashem camped around those that fear Him', and every Jew has an angel which surrounds him or her (except very great neshamas who do not need this)

And so all our words of prayer reach to a place beyond our intellect.

And the Alte Rebbe states that this is also the source where all LETTERS OF SPEECH are stored and originate, and are drawn upon by our mind to express ideas in the form of physical speech.

And he says this is the area called Yechidah in the soul.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, with the assurance that all our prayers are heard Above.

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

A FREUDIAN SLIP

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 December 2018 · Shabbos 29 Dec 2018 · כ"א טבת תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This weeks parsha is Shmos and we move onto the life and leadership of Mosheh Rabeinu and our enslavement in Egypt etc

I saw an interesting article by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks this week which I would like to share.

It was about Freud and the last book that he wrote called 'Moses and Monotheism'. It was published in 1939 when Freud had taken refuge in Britain and was living in London.

For some reason, at this desperate time, he wrote this book to try and prove that Moses was an Egyptian?!

So Freud made a mistake , and we can learn a lesson from his mistake, because it is a very easy mistake to make, and it is one which we all can make, in one form or another.

And what was his mistake?

Freud notes that many scholars have identified a common theme in the life stories of heroes (and heroines), in relation to their childhood.

Ie the heroes birth is fraught with danger. As a baby they come close to death. The child is rescued and brought up by adoptive parents. Eventually they become heroes and discover their true royal identity, and reach some high and privileged position.

The heroes adoptive parents are humble ordinary people, and eventually he discovers that he is actually of royal blood.

And what was the story of Mosheh?

Just the opposite!

He was the child of Jewish slaves, and his adoptive parents were the Royal House of Egypt!

And he became the greatest leader of all time, but humble and no special privileges etc.

So Freud saw this and failed to see what it meant.

And this is where he made his mistake - he concluded that THAT THE STORY OF MOSHEH WAS A FABRICATION DESIGNED TO CONCEAL THE FACT THAT MOSHEH WAS REALLY THE SON OF PHAROAH'S DAUGHTER! - because his story did not fit into the theory of scholars and himself.

And what was it that he and the scholars couldn't see, and that so often also deludes us?

It is the definition of greatness and heroism.

The world defines greatness as wealth, beautiful houses and palaces, splendour of looks, privileges etc

Mosheh didn't have all these and Freud therefore errs about his origins.

The story of Mosheh in Torah, takes a myth and turns it upside down.

TORAH SHOWS US THAT TRUE GREATNESS IS MORAL COURAGE

Mosheh is a son of slaves, and fights his way up by being true to Hashem and true to his people.

He recognises G-d's image in the weak, the powerless, the afflicted and the suffering - fighting for their cause.

What an opportunity Freud missed in that very dark time of our People.

He could have delivered this message of hope reflected by Mosheh and our deep enslavement in Egypt.

But he made a 'Freudian slip', from which we can learn a great lesson.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

CONTROLLING UNWANTED URGES

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 January 2021 · Shabbos 9 Jan 2021 · כ"ה טבת תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, Reb Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

He was the author of the famous Tanya, among his many writings.

In this week's Tanya, we learn more about the level of a Beinoni. (Chap 14), and connected, I saw 2 interesting letters from the Rebbe.

Basically (and this is in very simple terms) the Beinoni is an intermediate between an evil person and a Tzadik. Within himself (or herself), his animal soul remains strong and desires evil, but these desires do not find practical expression, due to the restraining force of his or her Divine soul, and also help from Hashem.

This rank of Beinoni is attainable by everyone, because everyone can at any time or hour be a Beinoni.

Every man is given the choice, ability, and freedom, to act, speak and think, even on items which are contrary to the desire of his heart, and diametrically opposed to it!!

He knows that even the most 'unworthy' Jew is capable of sacrificing his life for Hashem, if he is forced to deny Him, because of the hidden love to Hashem deep within his heart. Therefore he reasons that he also has this hidden love, even although he may not feel it.

Therefore he will attempt to divert his attention when challenged to do, or say or think something evil, and he will say to himself, 'I do not want to be a

rasha, even for a moment, because under no circumstances do I want to be parted from the One G-d.

Instead, I desire to unite my soul with Hashem through action, speech, and thought connected to His Torah and His Commandments.

As for the 'unworthy' Jew, the reason he sins is because he forgets about this hidden love for God within his heart. But as for me, I have no desire to be such a fool, to deny the Truth.'

The two letters that I saw this week from the Rebbe, connected to the above, were questions about UNWANTED URGES, and mental health.

The Rebbe answers:

Unwanted urges

Hashem asks of a person, based on his abilities.

There are people who were born with anger, kleptomania (the urge to steal), the nature to hit others etc. Yet Hashem commands that these are severe prohibitions?!

Therefore these people must have been equipped with additional powers to overcome their natural urges.

When these powers are utilised, it is certain that they will be successful.

In order to make it easier, it is advised that these urges should be dealt with medically as well (obviously only if this is too severe an issue)

Mental health

Mental health, whatever its cause, consists of dissonance between the actual facts (reality) around the person, and the way he or she sees and perceives these things in his mind.

As a result he experiences anxiety, or fear that someone wishes to harm him, and so on.

From time to time there are changes from one extreme to another, from unreasonable fear to unreasonable exuberance, a total fragmentation of the psyche and perspective.

We are taught (through the Mitzvah of Tefillin) to subordinate our heart (emotions) and mind (intellect) to the True G-d, about whom it is written, 'I am Hashem who does not change.'

This automatically causes harmony between one's intellect, emotions, and the surrounding reality.

Wishing everyone a very happy Shabbos

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

SECRET OF SURVIVAL

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 24 December 2021 · Shabbos 25 Dec 2021 · כ"א טבת תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida and Mendel on the birth of a baby boy BH! We are all so happy BH! Mazal Tov to Sara and Aaron Glick on the birth of a baby girl BH - Gila Lieba. And Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba. Keep them coming Boston Davidoffs! And this is following on the birth of a baby girl to Alisa and Juan - Emma Joyce, and the engagement of Dani Davidoff

All such wonderful news, and all so appropriate to the theme of this week's Sedra Shemos! (see below)

I saw an interesting letter from the Rebbe this week, based on our Sedra, as follows:
'We are told how a handful of Jews - 70 souls - managed to survive on the foreign soil of Egypt, in the midst of an overwhelmingly powerful and hostile people. They survived, not by imitating their non-Jewish neighbours and trying to hide their identity, but on the contrary, by realizing that they were different, and by guarding most zealously and uncompromisingly their identity and spiritual independence.

Our Sages point out this SECRET OF OUR SURVIVAL in their commentary on the first verse of the Sedra 'And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt.' 'Because they did not change their names and their customs, they were redeemed from Egypt.'

Moreover, not only did they manage to survive in such adverse circumstances, but they MULTIPLIED IN NUMBER, AND GREW STRONG

IN SPIRIT, until they received the Torah at Sinai, bringing light to the entire world, and accomplishing the purpose of creation.

This lesson should especially be remembered in our own day, when the Golus has become so tragically devastating, both physically and spiritually. Jews, dispersed throughout the world, are everywhere surrounded by a demoralised and hostile world, a world in which basic principles of humanity and justice are trampled upon, a world so confused that darkness is mistaken for light and light for darkness, a world living in fear of atomic self-destruction G-d forbid.

In this dark Galut, we Jews must realize more than ever before, the teaching of our Torah, Torat Chayim (the Law of Life), that only through the preservation of our identity and spiritual independence, based on the solid foundations of our Torah and Mitzvot, and nurtured through an uncompromising Torah-true educationof our children, can we ensure the survival of our people, spiritually and physically, AND MOREOVER, GROW AND PROSPER.' - The Rebbe.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and continued news of engagements and births for the whole Family, and Klal Yisrael!

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

OUR GIANTS

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 January 2023 · Shabbos 14 Jan 2023 · כ"א טבת תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of the Rambam (Maimonides), and next week is the yohrtzeit of The Alte Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi. And 4 interesting points came up this week, linked to these great people.

- RAMBAM was born in 1135 in Cordoba Spain. His family traced their ancestry to the

compiler of the Mishnah, Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi, and through him to King David. Encouraged by his father, and his teacher, the famous Ri Migash, he pursued studies in Jewish Law, philosophy and medicine. At the age of 13, him and his family were forced to flee the invasion of fanatical Muslims, Almohads, and for 10 years they wandered about, until settling for a period in Fez, Morocco. Yet despite all this he rose to be rightfully recognized as one of the greatest Jewish scholars of all time. His most famous work (one of many) is the Mishneh Torah, which crystalises all of Jewish Law, and derives the 613 MITZVOT ie the Commandments which Hashem wants us to perform.

- In todays 'Mashiach Day by Day', it says that in the future, Mitzvos will become nullified

(Nidah 61b). A person, who is an independent entity, can be commanded to follow the Will of G-d (and not his own). But when Mashiach comes, we will stand in complete unity with Hashem, where our will and Hashems, will be

one. And therefore commandments will no longer be necessary (Sefer Hasichos 5752 p31).....

- THE ALTE REBBE lived from 1745-1812. He was a descendant of the Maharal of Prague, and

as with the Rambam, to Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi and King David. One of his main achievements was the continued revelation of the Hidden Torah in the form of Chassidus.

In today's 'Hayom Yom' it states that the Alte Rebbe instituted that we should, every day, study the current daily portion of CHUMASH from the Sedra of that week. This was done also by the Rebbeim.

- Subsequently, the Frierdike Rebbe instituted the further daily study of TANYA (one of the

main Chassidic works of the Alte Rebbe), and saying the daily portion of TEHILLIM (PSALMS) - King David.

And subsequent to this, the Lubavitcher Rebbe instituted the daily learning of Rambam's MISHNEH TORAH. The Rambam said, in the introduction to Mishneh Torah, that if one learns Chumash plus Mishneh Torah, this covers completely the whole Torah.

In summary, and linked to the above Gedolim, we have the opportunity each year, with daily study, to work through Chumash, Tanya, Tehillim and Mishneh Torah. - and there are ample translations of all of these into English!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

GENTLE MIGHT

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 January 2024 · Shabbos 6 Jan 2024 · כ"ה טבת תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Tonight is the Yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidus, and so I thought to summarize what we have been learning from his famous book, Tanya (also known as Sefer Ha Beinunim - Book of the Intermediates) this week, in the section Likutei Amarim Chaps 12 and 13

The Alte Rebbe has been discussing various characteristics of a person in the category of Beinuni (Intermediate person).

The Beinuni is intermediate between the Tzadik (a very high level righteous person with different levels) and a Rasha (an evil person with different levels)

The Beinuni is battling with two opposing forces within himself, each trying to gain dominion over the 'Little City' - the body, and each one trying to exert it's influence so that the body act according to it's dictates

These forces are termed the Yetzer Hara - Evil Inclination, and the Yetzer Tov - Good Inclination.

(also referred to as the Animal Soul vs the Divine Soul)

In the Beinuni the Yetzer Hara creates a desire in the left side of the heart where it resides, and demands that the Beinuni act accordingly.

The Beinuni holds back and directs this desire to the mind for contemplation.

Here it is immediately challenged by the Divine Soul residing in the brain, which extends to the right side of the heart where the Yetzer Tov reveals itself.

The battle wages back and forth, but the Beinuni keeps going beyond himself with efforts, in thought, speech and action so that his life should be dominated by his Good Inclination.

As an example, in relations between man and his fellow, the Alte Rebbe states, "As soon as there arises (in the Beinunu) from his heart to his mind, any animosity, or hatred, G-d forbid, or jealousy, anger or a grudge and their like, against his fellow, he will bar them (these feelings) from his mind, and will refuse to even think about them.

On the contrary, his mind will prevail over, and dominate the feelings of his heart, to do the exact opposite of what his heart desires, ie to conduct himself with kindness, and to display towards his fellow a disproportionate love, without being provoked into anger or revenge (even non-anger revenge) G-d forbid. But on the contrary, to repay offenders with favours (as taught in the Zohar on how Yosef conducted himself with his brothers)."

This same attitude will prevail in all the decisions in life that he faces, and because many of them will be very difficult, he also needs the " help of the 'Arbitrator' - the Holy One, Blessed be He, who judges between the 2 forces, and who comes to the aid of the Good Inclination."!!

And with this we can understand Pirkei Avot 4:1.

Who is a MIGHTY ONE? He who conquers his Yetzer (Hara). As it is written "The one who is slow to anger is better than a strong man, and he who masters his passions, is greater than one who conquers a city."

A Gut Shabbos to all with much happiness.

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

THE SWEET WAR

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 January 2025 · Shabbos 18 Jan 2025 · י"ח טבת תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Ariel a refuah shlemah after his tonsil operation in Sydney. I hope you are recovering well Ariel!

Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff on her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Sharon with good health and happiness. I hope all is well with you and Brian with the Californian fires!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty whose very significant birthday is coming up on Shabbos. This is his opsherin birthday where he has his first haircut, puts on Tzitzits and starts to officially wear a kappel! Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida, and wishing you all a wonderful celebration, with much nachas from Shlomo and all your children BEH!

In this week's Sedra, Shemos, we read about Moshe and the burning thorn-bush, (3:1-5) and in Tanya we have been learning about the Beinoni (the 'Intermediate' type of person, or 'Ordinary' person) - Chapter 12, but also Chaps 9-11

I saw an interesting article by Rabbi YY Jacobson, combining these themes, and it is also relevant now, because the upcoming 24th of Tevet is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, author of Tanya.

Moshe sees this blazing thorn bush, and he is amazed that the bush is not getting burnt.

Hashem then appears to Moshe and He tells him to remove his shoes, because the place where he is standing is Holy Soil.

The fire represents our Spiritual nature which is our desire to be good and moral.

The thorn-bush represents our mundane, careless side, overtaken by ugly emotions.

The burning bush embodies the duality that we experience in our hearts.

Moshe gazes at this sight, and wonders why the Spirituality (the fire) does not neutralise (burn) the Negativity, (the thorn-bush), and annul the duality?

Hashem responds to Moshe that he is on Holy Soil. Ie. We must try to encounter this Holiness in each of our situations, within the battle

This is one of the central themes of Tanya, ie. that the Beinuni, the ordinary person who has not yet reached the perfection of the Tzadik, is engaged in this battle between Good and Evil.

He is the hero of Tanya, who does not get phased by the negative side of his nature, because he understands that there is also a G-dly side to his or herself, and there is an inner conflict between these forces, trying to take control of 'the Little City' ie the body.

He realises that every situation that he finds himself is 'Holy Soil' and he engages in the battle. Sometimes he wins and sometimes he is down. For him the battle is what is important, and he knows that he may not conquer his opponent fully.

But he also knows that every battle brings pleasure to Hashem, and he engages the battles with joy, developing a real relationship with Hashem.

Torah and Mitzvos guide us through the battle.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Shemos ↑ Shemos · Contents · By date שמות

THE BURNING BUSH

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 January 2026 · Shabbos 10 Jan 2026 · כ"א טבת תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester

BH Mommy and I returned home this week after participating in many simchos and visiting many members of the Family BH.

I want to personally thank everyone for the wonderful care you have all shown towards us in one way or another. May you all be blessed with long, healthy and happy lives BEH!

And may the whole and extended Family keep growing and making many simchos

Attached find the update Family Tree from Kevin, including Ariel Rachamim Alexander Davidoff !

This coming week is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe (24 Tevet), and I saw an interesting vort connected to him, and the incident of the 'Burning Bush' in this week's Sedra, Shmos.

In the times of the Alte Rebbe, there was much suspicion and opposition regarding the Chassidic approach to Judaism, and in the city of Minsk, the Alte Rebbe had been invited to a public debate to discuss this.

One of the questions addressed to him was 'why Chassidim and Chassidus give so much importance to simple Jews, because some argue that this undermines the honour to Torah'

The Alte Rebbe replied that the Baal Shem Tov's approach is based on the first Divine Revelation to Moshe through the Burning Bush while shepherding his father-in-law's flocks in Chorev (V3:1 and further) - and the bush was burning and was not being consumed.

One gets simple thornbushes, and one gets fruit trees

Fruit trees symbolise Torah Scholars, as explained in Gemarra on the verse 'For man is a tree of the field'

However the 'flame of fire', representing an endless yearning for G-d, appears specifically in the bush, and not a fruit tree.

This concluded the Alte Rebbe, was what was shown to Moshe, the leader of the Jewish People.

It was to show him the greatness of simple Jews, whose hearts are burning like a flaming fire, and the bush was not being consumed.

Gut Shabbos to all!

וארא

Va'eira

Shemos 6:2 · parsha 2 of 11 in Shemos · 14 of 54 in the Torah
9 letters

2017 / 5777 — HOW MUCH POWER DOES MAN (OR WOMAN) HAVE? 353
2018 / 5778 — CHASSIDIC MELODY 355
2019 / 5779 — SONG AND JOY 357
2021 / 5781 — ASTOUNDING! 359
2022 / 5782 — GIANTS 361
2023 / 5783 — GRATITUDE 363
2024 / 5784 — ACTIONS and FEELINGS 365
2025 / 5785 — HUMAN CAPACITY FOR RENEWAL AND GROWTH 367
2026 / 5786 — SHOWING APPRECIATION 369

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

HOW MUCH POWER DOES MAN (OR WOMAN) HAVE?

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 January 2017 · Shabbos 28 Jan 2017 · א' שבט תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

The above question comes up in this weeks Sedra Vaeira.

Hashem is speaking to Moshe about going to Pharoah to ask him to let the Jewish People go, and Hashem says to Moshe 'I will harden Pharoah's heart...and therefore Pharoah will not listen to you...and then I will display my hand against Egypt (ie to strike them with plagues)'

BUT DOES NOT MAN HAVE FREE CHOICE TO ACT EXACTLY AS HE WANTS?!!

OR DOES HASHEM ALSO PLAY A PART?

The Rambam answers this question very clearly in Mishneh Torah, The Book of Knowledge, in the Laws of Teshuva, Chaps 5 and 6, summarised as follows:

Only human beings have the power to choose between good and evil. Man has full power to control his destiny.

Mans actions are in his own hands. G-d does not lead him in a particular direction nor decree any behaviours on him.

Shlomo Hamelech stated that G-d will Judge ones action i.e. one's reckless actions of youth will have to be accounted for.

Only fools believe they are bound by their astrology.

It is an essential point of our Religion (belief and understanding) that we are judged according to our deeds and are fully free to go in any direction that we choose, and that the consequences will follow accordingly.

Hashems involvement with Bechira. (Free Choice)

Even although man's destiny is in his own hands, Hashem can assist those along the Path who are sincere, and He can prevent those who are persistently wicked, from doing Teshuva.

(I do want to interrupt the Rambam here to make a comment ie to say that our generation is different to the time of the Rambam. The Rebbe has told us that there are no wicked Jews in our generation. When we misbehave it is like a child who does not understand. However I do believe that what the Rambam is saying is still relevant to us.)

What appears in Torah as decrees are not decrees but examples of where the sins have become so multiple that Hashem withholds Teshuva i.e. it is through the deeds of man that this situation has come about.

Punishment for aveirot (sins) can take place in this world (on one's person, on his possessions or on his children), in the World-to-Come, or both. It depends on the type of sin.

Teshuva will shield against this retribution.

Teshuva brings near those who were once far removed in a most exalted way.

Torah has already promised that ultimately Israel will repent, and will immediately be redeemed (Devarim 30,1-3)

Rambam actually brings up this very point about Pharoah, and explains, as did Rashi, that Hashem hardened Pharoah's heart because of the previous wickedness which Pharoah had wilfully committed against Hashem. Ie it was due to Pharoah's actions that caused Hashem to act in the way that He did.

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos.

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

CHASSIDIC MELODY

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 January 2018 · Shabbos 13 Jan 2018 · כ"ו טבת תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Pesach and Chanie are having a kiddush this Shabbos BEH, in honour of the birth of Leora. Mazal Tov again, and wishing you many simchos.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the Barmitzvah of his nephew in Miama. Hope you had a wonderful trip and simcha together with Rivky.

This coming Shabbos is mevorechim Shvat, when Mommy and I got engaged, and also Penina and Avi. Mazal Tov.

Today (chof dalet Teves) is the yohrtzeit of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of the Chabad Chassidic movement.

Today's Hayom Yom says that 'Chassidus is to bring life and illumination into everything, to shed light even on the undesirable - to become aware of one's own evil exactly as it is, in order to correct it.'

This week I came across some interesting CHASSIDIC MELODIES, and I thought it would be nice to share these, and take a 'break' from the intellectual.

It reminded me of another Hayom Yom (22nd Tammuz) which said:

' A chassidic vort makes the head clear and the heart clean.

A chassidic virtuous practice fills the home with light.

A CHASSIDIC MELODY FORTIFIES HOPE AND TRUST, BRINGS JOYOUSNESS, AND PLACES THE HOME AND FAMILY IN A STATE OF LIGHT.'

Enjoy, Gut Shabbos to all, and with grateful thanks to Hashem and The Alte Rebbe for everything.

<http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/2617193/jewish/Nigun-Reb-Mor dechai-Poltaver.htm> http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/2617193/jewish/Nigun-Reb-Mord echai-Poltaver.htm

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

SONG AND JOY

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 January 2019 · Shabbos 5 Jan 2019 · כ"ח טבת תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on moving in to your new home in Tarzana BH. And in the same week when you got engaged 2 years ago BH! It should be with much mazal and joy AND MUSIC AND SONG.

I saw a nice vort from The Rebbe this week on the concept of Cnaan.

In this week's sedra, Vaeira, it says 'I (Hashem) established my covenant with Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov to give them the Land of Cnaan.'

Cnaan becomes Eretz Yisrael. (it was called Cnaan before it became Eretz Yisrael)

Similarly Cnaan refers to a Jew's state before he starts his service to Hashem.

And Similarly, Cnaan represents all lands outside of Eretz Yisrael.

Once we start keeping Torah and Mitzvos, we make ourselves more receptive to sanctity.

And we make the land where we are living, more receptive to sanctity.

And we eventually transform ourselves and the land where we live, into a place of overt holiness.

THE WORD CNAAN TELLS US HOW THIS SHOULD BE DONE.

WITH SONG AND JOY.

Because Cnaan is an acronym for:

Kinor - a harp

Naim - pleasant

Im - with

Navel - a lyre (Tehilim 81:3)

- Representing song and joy.

In addition, the service of transforming the mundane into holiness, with joy, will bring about the Final Redemption, when we will merit the TEN STRINGED HARP of redemption. (Tehillim 92:4)

This is also referring to the corresponding expanded territory of the ten Nations of Cnaan, which Hashem has promised to give us in the future.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

ASTOUNDING!

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 14 January 2021 · Shabbos 16 Jan 2021 · ג' שבט תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is keeping well.

We are currently learning the laws of ASTRONOMY relating to the moon, and the calculations regarding Rosh Chodesh (New Moon), in Rambam's Mishnah Torah (1 chapter per day)

It is astounding to see the Rambam's brilliant knowledge of astronomy being hinted at, and how he has simplified it, so that everyone will be able to understand it, and apply it practically!

But there was another ASTOUNDING commentary which I came across regarding this subject (A Glimpse of Light - Dr J Schamroth)

In one of the laws it speaks about 'sighting the New Moon after two stars had appeared.'

And of course there would be lots of discussion about which size stars are being spoken about etc

But what amazed me, and this is what I would like to share, was the commentary about how many stars there are in the sky.

I am sure we all know the difference between a planet like earth, and the sun, and how powerful is the sun.

Stars are equivalent to the sun.

Would anyone like to take a guess on how many stars one can see in the sky with one's naked eye?

2500 in each hemisphere, i.e. 5000 in total.

And how many have been found to date with all our powerful techniques of observation?

In our galaxy alone there are an are estimated 100,000 million!

And our galaxy is but one of many millions of galaxies. Which brings the estimated total of stars in the universe to an estimated, thousand billion trillion stars (10 to the power 24)!!

And our Sages, 2000 years ago, in Talmud Brachot, estimated the number of stars to 10 to the power 18, and by including the other non- Zodiac constellations, this correlates quite closely with the modern day figure!!!

There are two ASTOUNDING points over here.

1. We know the power of one sun. Can we even begin to imagine the power of a thousand billion trillion stars? And can we even imagine such a number? And can we imagine how vast a space this is? And how powerful is its Creator?!!!
2. How did our Sages estimate such a figure when the maximum number that would be visible at any one time, would be 2500?! How could they even have the daring to say such a thing?!

Wishing everyone a very good Shabbos and a gut Chodesh!

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

GIANTS

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 December 2021 · Shabbos 1 Jan 2022 · כ"ח טבת תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

A big Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the bris today of their new baby boy, who is now named Shlomo BH! And it is well known that ELIYAHU HANAVI attends every bris

May you raise him to Torah, Chuppah and Maasim Tovim with much abundance and joy.

Your speech at the bris was beautiful Mendel.

Today I was given the honour of being the Sandek for the bris of Shlomo, for which I am very grateful to Mendel and Freida, and as such I believe that I am in a position to give brochos, (blessings.) - having sat in the Seat of ELIYAHU

And so I bless all the members of this group and their Families and extended Families, lives full of peace and goodwill between each other and one's associates, and strength to keep progressing and developing in life in all areas, with joy and good health.

All those who need to find partners should find them, and we should continue to have many engagements, marriages and simchos all based on the solid foundations of our Torah, one generation passing on the Traditions to the next.

Hashem should grant everyone, also, their own special needs.

This week was also the Yohrtzeit of the ALTE REBBE (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi), which followed soon after the Yohrtzeit of the RAMBAM (Maimonides), 2 giants of Klal Yisrael.

In a sicha from The Rebbe that I saw this week, The Rebbe points out that

"The Yohrtzeits of these 2 teachers should inspire us to establish fixed programs of study that focus on their works.

In particular:

1. Strengthening the commitment to the daily study of Rambam's Mishneh Torah (preferably 3 chapters a day, but one can also do 1 chapter a day)
2. Establishing a fixed program of study in the Tanya, and the Alte Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch.

In this context it is worthy to mention the custom of the Chassidim of previous generations, who would study a chapter of Tanya every day before davening Shacharis."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh, and love to all.

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

GRATITUDE

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 19 January 2023 · Shabbos 21 Jan 2023 · כ"ח טבת תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff (Brian's wife) who has an upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of good health and happiness with much nachas from your whole Family. It was so nice meeting up again with you and Brian at Gavriel's Barmitzvah.

We wish long life to Devorah Leah and the Goodman Family on the loss of a very young niece. Wishing you only good news in the futureBEH

I would like to share one important and simple lesson I learnt from this week's Sedra Vaeira.

In V19, Chap 7, Hashem says to Mosheh to tell Aharon to take his staff and raise his hand over the Egyptian waters, over their rivers, their canals, their ponds etc ....and they will become blood...And Aharon lifted the staff and struck the water of the River...

Rashi comments on this and says, that since the River had protected Mosheh when he was cast into it, therefore the River was not struck by Mosheh, not in the plague of blood and not in the plague of the frogs.

Rabbi Gordon in his shiur said that this comes to teach us the tremendous importance of GRATITUDE.

Here we have a river which protected Mosheh 80 years previously, being remembered and recognized, to the degree that Mosheh was not permitted to strike it with his staff!

How much more so, should we never forget the good we have received from others, and always show Gratitude!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all !

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

ACTIONS and FEELINGS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 January 2024 · Shabbos 13 Jan 2024 · ג' שבט תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who had a baby girl this week BH. And Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba! Wishing you all much nachas and many simchos!

We want to wish Avi long life for the upcoming Yohrtzeit of his dear father Reb Yisroel Meir ah on Thursday next week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and you and your whole Family should know only simchos in the future.

The Hebrew Word of the Week from Rabbi Mendel Kalmenson's book, 'People of the Word', is MAASEH - ACTION, which I found interesting, and would like to share.

The prevailing wisdom in today's society is 'Follow your heart - be true to what you feel.'

In Jewish thought the matter is more complex.

Certainly one's feelings are important, but Judaism is also skeptical about leaving everything up to our whims.

Sometimes action is required regardless of how we may feel at a certain moment.

Following Jewish Law (Halachah) focuses on how we navigate the physical world. Halacha literally means walking, ie a form of ACTION

The Mitzvot themselves are almost entirely focused on TANGIBLE ACTIONS, and give concrete expression to abstract principles such as justice, self-restraint, love for one's neighbour, righteousness, fairness etc

These are things which Torah considers simply too important to put off until we feel inspired by our emotions.

But how can we prevent actions from becoming mechanical and devoid of heart and soul?

Our Sages teach that our feelings can flow and follow from our deeds (Mitzvah 16 in the Chinuch) ie we can consciously cultivate feelings of excitement, passion and pleasure.

This involves work, as with any discipline.

All of this and more is alluded to in the Hebrew word of MAASEH which is related to the word measin meaning "to compel"

This reveals a common thread in Jewish thought, that many of the most fulfilling, impactful, and important things that we need to do in this world, do not come naturally.

We need to compel ourselves to act in accord with our highest values and ideals.

Otherwise our emotions and appetites are bound to lead us astray.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

HUMAN CAPACITY FOR RENEWAL AND GROWTH

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 23 January 2025 · Shabbos 25 Jan 2025 · כ"ה טבת תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is keeping well.

Mazal Tov again to Shlomo Kehaty on his beautiful opsherin this week. He has grown up overnight with his haircut, new kappel and tzitzis BH. Wishing Mendel and Freida much continued nachas!

Thanks Sid, for supplying more information for the Family Tree from your side, which Kevin has now updated, and he has also updated Avri onto the Group. Many thanks Kevin! See updated Family Tree attached.

I saw an interesting article from Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz on this week's Parshah, Vaera, which gives a deep insight into human nature, which I would like to share.

A number of the current Parshiot centre on the protracted confrontation between G-d (through Mosheh) and Pharoah, and it is Pharoah's complex character that catches our attention.

This battle draws us to reflect more deeply into human nature, and our own natures.

Pharoah grew up believing he was a god, with a very strong preconceived world view and value system, and he was defiant, with a hardened heart, against any change to his status quo from Mosheh and Hashem.

The Kotzker Rebbe points out that Pharoah's continued defiance against each plague and miracle, one after another, reflects his resolute commitment to his worldview

Pharoah goes through a life-changing ordeal.

He suddenly experiences thunder and lightning, with strange things falling from the heavens, etc, the likes of which he has never experienced in his life, and he is seized with terror.

He begins to think, for the first time (after the 7th plague - of hail, where he acknowledges that "G-d is righteous"), that perhaps he is not a god. This marked a pivotal shift.

At that moment an abyss opens wide before him, and he asks himself: What have I done with my whole life? This was the beginning of deep remorse.

But the happy news is that it also serves as a reminder to us of the enduring human capacity for renewal and growth, even when there is profound 'failure'.

Pharoah's experience, even although it is an extreme example, is universal.

Only by questioning the broader framework of our existence, can we open ourselves to genuine change.

True Teshuvah demands an honest confrontation with the entirety of one's life and values.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

Va'eira ↑ Va'eira · Contents · By date וארא

SHOWING APPRECIATION

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 15 January 2026 · Shabbos 17 Jan 2026 · כ"ח טבת תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff for her birthday at the end of the week. Wishing you a great year Sharon, with good health and happiness for you and all your Family. Thanks to you and Brian for staying in touch with our Family in CA, and being such good sports!

The theme of SHOWING APPRECIATION, came up a few times in this week's Sedra Vaeira, and in an interesting story that I read this week, which I would like to share.

Verse 7:19

Hashem tells Mosheh that Aharon should strike the waters of the Nile which would cause the water to turn into blood as the first plague.

Rashi explains that the reason Aharon and not Mosheh had to strike the waters here and in the plague of frogs, was because the river had once protected Mosheh as an infant when he was hidden there amongst the reeds!

This indicates how important it is to appreciate kindness. Mosheh would not strike the waters which had protected him 80 years previously!

Verse 8:12

Hashem tells Mosheh to instruct Aharon to strike the earth with his rod to initiate the plague of lice.

Again Rashi mentions the appreciation Mosheh was showing to the dust which had hidden the Egyptian which Mosheh had killed (after careful consideration), to protect Mosheh.

How much more so should we show appreciation to PEOPLE who have shown us kindness!

Story

I saw in the news yesterday, (The Times of Israel) that a real estate investor, Alon Abady, donated a 16 story building on Pico Boulevard in the Pico Robertson area, worth $103 million, to Chabad of Los Angeles.

This is the largest single gift ever made to a Jewish organisation, and the building is planned to be one of the largest Jewish centres in the world (300,000 sq ft complex) BEH BH!

And why?

In Abady's own words: "This is a lifelong dream, that also allows me to honour my parents and my children. When my Family immigrated to Los Angeles in the 1970's, Chabad was there for us. That was never forgotten."

Gut Shabbos to all!

בא

Bo

Shemos 10:1 · parsha 3 of 11 in Shemos · 15 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — ROOTS 372
2017 / 5777 — A STORY OF HOPE, FROM AUSTRALIA 375
2018 / 5778 — FOLLY AND MARRIAGE JOY 378
2019 / 5779 — HOLY LETTERS 381
2020 / 5780 — AN AMAZING STORY 385
2021 / 5781 — DIVINE PROVIDENCE 389
2022 / 5782 — REDEMPTION 391
2023 / 5783 — DYNAMICS OF FREEDOM 393
2024 / 5784 — VICTORY 395
2025 / 5785 — A TOUCHING STORY ABOUT RAMBAM 398
2026 / 5786 — PERSONAL FREEDOM 401

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

ROOTS

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 13 January 2016 · Shabbos 16 Jan 2016 · ו׳ שבט תשע״ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

BIG MAZAL TOV ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF PENINA AND AVI!!! WHAT AN ACTION PACKED WEEK IT HAS BEEN FOR ALL KIND OF RELATED ARRANGEMENTS AND TRAVELLINGS ETC BH.

Wishing the wedding to be beshaah tova umatzlachas, and you should build a Binyan Adei Ad together with much joy and in good health.

The Public Engagement is Sunday night at Bongarts 1494 Carrol St. Crown Heights, NY 11213 from 7pm onwards BEH.

The Dvar Torah for this week is dedicated to this good news.

By Hasgocha Pratis ('coincidence') this is the same week that Mommy and I met and got engaged in 1979!

Baty and Shmueli also got engaged in this upcoming week.

So when Mommy and I got engaged, we met because she had come to a European Convention of Neshei Chabad which was taking place in London, and the theme of the Convention was ROOTS.

Now when Avi and Penina got engaged it was on the Shabbos of last weeks Sedra, Vaera.

And Vaera starts that 'Hashem promises Moshe that He will soon fulfil the promises He made to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov'.

And Rashi comments on this with one phrase ' To the FATHERS' ie even although each one had their own specific nature and character, their primary virtues were that they were FATHERS.

AND THEN I WAS THINKING, ISNT THAT INTERESTING THAT AVI'S NAME STANDS FOR AVRAHAM AND AVI MEANS MY FATHER!

Part 2 to the story is that Mommy and I were having a Lechaim on the Anniversary of our meeting and engagement, and we were looking at this Book which was published, about the Convention.

And of course we were looking at one of the special events ie that one of the participants got engaged ie Mommy!

And so I was browsing through the Book and what caught my attention was the Letter which The Rebbe wrote to give his blessing to the Convention, which was on the theme of ROOTS.

And here again came up the theme of FATHERS and MOTHERS!

There were a few interesting points which I saw.

1. The roots of our Jewish people are our FATHERS AND MOTHERS, the founders of our People.

2. The roots of a plant are constantly the source of nourishment for the plant.

3. The roots do work for their own development and growth, BUT THEIR PRIMARY FUNCTION IS TO NOURISH THE PLANT TO ENSURE ITS FULL DEVELOPMENT.

4. The roots also PROVIDE A FIRM BASE AND ANCHORAGE FOR THE PLANT SO THAT IT DOES NOT GET SWEPT AWAY BY WINDS AND OTHER ELEMENTS.

5. Similarly our FOREFATHERS and FOREMOTHERS have provided distinctive qualities which have blended together to produce the unique quality of our Jewish People.

6. In particular AVRAHAM, who stood up as a single person against the whole world with mesiras nefesh, to recognise Hashem, which has been passed on to his Children till today (ie we are still a very small Nation in a world with many gods, continuing to express the work of Avraham's blief in one G-d)

7. MOTHERS and daughters. Here the Rebbe addresses the women in particular (as it was a Womens Convention) and brings out a beautiful point. Ie THE NATURE OF THE ROOT IS TO BE HIDDEN AND THEY DO THEIR WORK HUMBLY, AGAIN IN A TWOFOLD FASHION, OF ACTIVELY PURSUING ONES OWN GROWTH, AND THEN SECONDLY STREGTHENING THE GROWTH OF OUR PEOPLE. IE OUR WORTHY MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS ARE NOT CONCERNED WITH WHAT THE WORLD AND ITS FASHIONS ARE DECLARING OUTSIDE. RATHER THEY ARE CONDUCTING THEIR HOMES FROM THE INSIDE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF OUR SACRED TORAH AND MITZVOS. AND RATHER THEY ARE TAKING PRIDE IN OUR OLD FASHIONED, YET ALWAYS NEW AND ETERNAL ROOTS.

Welcome to the Family, Avi. And MAZAL Tov to you and Penina.

Gut Shabbos. Wishing all of us many simchos!

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

A STORY OF HOPE, FROM AUSTRALIA

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 February 2017 · Shabbos 4 Feb 2017 · ח' שבט תשע"ז

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Baty on your upcoming birthday!

Mazal Tov Baty and Shmueli on your engagement anniversary which was Yud Shvat

Wishing you both much success in all matters including bringing up your beautiful Family together.

I don't usually talk about engagement anniversaries, but seeing we mentioned Baty and Shmueli , and so let us also mention Penina and Avi's, and also Mommy and I last week.

This coming week is also the Yohrtzeit of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson ZLB.

Looks like its all happening in Sydney this week with Baty and Shmueli's celebrations, and an interesting story I read in L'Chaim weekly Publication, also about someone from Sydney.

I think the story is also relevant to this weeks Parsha Bo, which talks about going out of Egypt (Mitzraim)

Mitzraim has the same root as the word metzarim which means restriction, and applies also to ourselves individually, leaving all the areas of our lives which restrict us.

The story I read was about a man called Mr Mendel Glick from Sydney, who is a baker and owns a chain of Glick's Cakes and Bagels.

He recently celebrated his 91st birthday.

And this is his story:

Him and his family were from Europe and they got caught up in the War.

He says that the very fact that he can be sitting around a table today, and talking, is a pure miracle.

He went through 6 concentration camps and lost both his parents and 9 siblings.

He spoke of all the 'unbearable' trauma he had to endure in the camps, and without going into these details, I am sure we can imagine what it must have felt like, especially having also lost parents, brothers and sisters.

'When the Americans liberated Buchenwald in 1945, I was a living skeleton. I still remember an American soldier picking me up and taking me outside.. In hospital we were only allowed a teaspoon of warm water plus a lump of sugar every half hour.....As I began to recover the doctor said that in order to speed up the process of recovery, I had to start walking, since the human body requires motion in order to survive. I listened to him and adopted this attitude to this very day.'

'I then started working at an American military base nearby, polishing shoes..then promoted to kitchen which I liked most (brought back many memories of home....), learned the basics of catering....opportunity came to move to Australia where there was an aunt.....bought a ticket (note, one ticket) and set out on the journey. In Australia I became a cleaner, setting money aside to start my own business...and a few years later I finally opened my first Glick's shop on Carlisle Street.....other shops followed.....I help charities.....and along the same vein prints on his brown paper challah bags 'Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something'....and says there are still many people who need help, whether it be assistance, money, a piece of bread or a kind word. And even if is impossible to answer everyone's

needs, we can still do something to improve people's lives, and this is why I put this message on my bags.'

Today you can still see Mr Glick dressed in a white shirt and a white yarmulke, always busy, shaping another challah, or removing bones from the herrings.

He is a proud father of nine children, and a grandfather of over 120.

He was asked 'Some people say that you never go on holidays. Is that true?

'Yes ' he answers with a smile.

'Why should I? I have a job that I love and I have regular time to rest on Shabbos and Yom Tov.'

'What can I say - I AM A HAPPY MAN.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

FOLLY AND MARRIAGE JOY

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 January 2018 · Shabbos 20 Jan 2018 · ד׳ שבט תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We have now entered the month of Shvat and the 10th of Shvat is the Yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson.

The last maaamer which he said was 'Basi Legani' - 'I came into my garden,' which we always learn at this time of the year

This week we made a little impromptu farbreng at home just for the family in Stamford Hill,(Mommy,Shmuly, Zalmy, Chava and me) and we learnt a section from this maamer relating to MARRIAGE.

It is deep and interesting, and I thought it would be a good time to share a small section of it.

The pillars of the Mishkan were made of cedar wood ie ATZEI SHITTIM, and the Frierdike Rebbe explains it's significance by looking at the root meanings of this word SHITTIM:

1. Literal meaning is cedar wood
2. Shitah, connected to the root, means DEVIATION
3. Shtus, connected to the root, means FOLLY
4. Tishteh, connected to root, meaning when a man's wife will 'TURN ASIDE' to commit adultery ie a 'Sota'
5. When the Jewish People committed idol worship and licentiousness in the desert, they were camped at a place called SHITTIM

So the main meaning is a DEVIATION - SHTUS - from the centre, and deviation could be either to the left or the right, ie either negative or positive.

FOLLY - negative deviation

Our Sages tell us (Sotah 3a) that a person doesn't sin unless a spirit of folly (shtus) takes control of him.

This causes a covering up of the light and Holiness within us, and a feeling of separation from G-d, in all its different forms and patterns, linked to the 'animal' side of our natures.

FOLLY OF HOLINESS - Shtus Dekedushah - positive deviation

Just as a man has the potential for a deviation from the middle path, lower than reason and understanding (where man sinks to the level of animal), similarly he has a potential for a deviation above wisdom and knowledge, and can approach self-transcendence.

We see an example of such behaviour (in Kesubos 17a), where R Yehudah bar Ilay would act like a clown at WEDDINGS, and would dance in front of the bride twirling a branch of myrtle, or juggling. Some people rebuked him for this saying that his behaviour did not befit a Torah Scholar, but R Yehudah understood that his acts transcended knowledge, and brought him and those around him, to a high and wonderous level

And why did he choose to do this at WEDDINGS?

Because the Sages were aware of the high level achieved in marriage, and therefore their rejoicing here was boundless.

Practically, when we find ourselves trapped by habitual negative behaviour, we will always also have the potential, to DEVIATE to the opposite extreme.

Then, just as the service in the Mishkan (or Bet Hamikdash) was the transformation of darkness to light through working with animal and incense etc, and the revelation of G-dly light for the whole world, so our work and service in this area with our animal natures, will produce similar results.

And especially, wishing all those who are not yet married, to find their 'bashert' soon.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

HOLY LETTERS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 January 2019 · Shabbos 12 Jan 2019 · ו' שבט תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This coming week is Yud Shvat.

It is the day when the Previous Rebbe (Frierdike Rebbe) passed away in 1950.

It is also the day when the Rebbe (reluctantly) agreed to take the position of Rebbe, 1 year later in 1951.

The last series of discourses written by the Frierdike Rebbe is called Basi Legani. It is famous, deep and intricate and extremely interesting.

There are 20 sections, and the Rebbe would elaborate on 1 section each year, of the Frierdike Rebbe's maamer

The section for this year that we focus on, is the 9th (It started in 1950, and it is now the 9th year of the 4th cycle -2019)

I personally find it so interesting how the SHAPE OF HEBREW LETTERS each carry their own story, and this comes up a lot through the 20 sections of Basi Legani.

So before explaining how it comes up in section 9, I will have to summarise the previous sections.

Apologies if it is a bit complicated!

Basi Legani is from Shlomo Hamelech's Shir Hashirim, and means 'I came into my garden my sister, my bride'.

The Medrash explains that this describes the close relationship between Hashem and the Jewish People, and refers to the time in the desert when the

Shechina came down to earth (into the garden), which was the Sanctuary constructed by Mosheh Rabeinu.

The Medrash continues, that previously, from the time of creation, the Shechinah, through our sins, retreated from earth,one plane to the next, moving away from earth, moving through 7 planes as each generation weakened further.

It also returned back down again through 7 Tzadikim, Avraham, Yitzchak etc until Mosheh Rabeinu when it returned to earth.

It is also explained that the Shechina not only came down into the Temple, but also came into the heart of every Jew.

So there is an exact parallel between G-d's presence (or 'absence') in the world and in the Mishkan/Temple, and in each individual according to our own personal behaviour.

And the Maamer then brings us valuable lessons we can therefore learn, by examining closely the make-up and service in the Mishkan, and how we can apply this personally to ourselves as follows:

The beams of the Mishkan were made of cedar wood – shitim

The root of this word also means to deviate, and also means foolishness .

Just as man has the potential to deviate from the middle path to below the level of an animal, similarly he has the potential to deviate above the level of wisdom to self-transcendence

The beams of the Mishkan are called kerashim, or singular keresh קרש

The Zohar describes the nature of all the Hebrew letters and states that the kuf (ק)and the resh (ר) belong to the evil side.

In order to maintain themselves they attach themselves to the letter shin. (The Hebrew word for bond is kesher, made up of the same letters)

The word sheker (falsehood) is also made up of these same letters.

The eqivalent holy letters to kuf and resh are daled and hei. Look at their shapes – daled is similar to resh, and hei is similar to kuf:

ד ר , ה ק

And what is the difference in shape?

The daled has a yud extra at its top right corner - behind, and the hei has a yud on the bottom left – in front.

The daled and hei are holy letters, and are in possession of a yud which refers to G-dliness.

The letters resh and kuf do not have this yud

There is a whole further explanation of how the gimel (which also means give), gives to the daled (and that is why the yud is on that right side), and the daled gives to the hei. The yud is now in front and the hei gives. This is tzedakah – tzedek hei

Also both dalet and resh have the meaning of poverty, but the daled is humility, and the resh refers to a poverty of ruination.etc etc. For those interested there is an English translation of the maamer

Which brings us to the 9th section which speaks about the boards in the Mishkan standing erect – OMDIM, and pillars are also referred to as AMUDIM.

it is here explained how to convert the word kaneh, (shaft and also reed), which is the long left leg of the kuf (evil and darkness), into hineh – revelation and light (ie קנה to הנה) – so the long leg of the kuf has been shortened to make it a hei.

From the pasuk in Tehilim it says 'Destroy the wild beast of the reeds'

Which means that we convert the wild beast (kaneh), through our service – dealing with our animal souls,(equivalent to the sacrifices in the Temple), into hineh, which means revelation.

Ie converting darkness into light – PILLARS OF LIGHT, STANDING UP-RIGHT, connected to Above.

Which was the function of the Mishkan and Temple, to convert darkness to light.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

AN AMAZING STORY

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 January 2020 · Shabbos 1 Feb 2020 · ו׳ שבט תש״פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Next week is Yud Shvat, the day that The Frierdike Rebbe passed on, and the day that the Rebbe took over the Chabad leadership a year later.

Both these leaders lives were totally devoted to the Jewish People, and in particular, every individual that they could reach out to, either themselves, or through their Shluchim

So I thought that it would be nice to have a story this week for a change, and I saw this remarkable one, which contains so many beautiful points and lessons

I will summarize it, but am also attaching the full version below, for those who have the time. We have additional news though!

The story is about a 16 year old Chinese non-Jewish girl from a small town in China.

Her father was abusive, and so her mother left him.

This girl lived with her mother in poverty and despair, because, in addition, the mother was suffering from a terrible depression.

The story starts when the author of the story was on a trip to Singapore. She loved visiting Chabad Houses whenever she travelled 'to meet these Chabad families who dedicate their lives to unconditionally embrace their fellow Jews.'

It was Friday night and she went up to light candles in the Chabad House, and she saw a young girl of about 16, with Asian features, hiding in the shadows.

The girl asked in broken English if the author was a real Jewess, and whether she could hug her, and of course the author agreed.

And then she stood there watching the candle lighting, and crying.

She was invited to participate in the Shabbos meal etc, but she was too shy, and refused.

After the meal, the intrigued author was happy to find her and to sit down and talk to her.

After giving a background to her personal circumstances, the girl continued, saying that a co-worker of her mother had tried to help her mother, by giving her a page from a sacred book called Tehillim, which had been sneaked into China somehow or the other (Psalms of David - which was probably an English translation) - the mother knew some English because she was a teacher.

The mother knew nothing about the existence of Jews, but she was desperate to overcome her inner darkness, and she read this page over and over, connecting to the light through the mystical poems.

She now told her young daughter that somewhere in the world there exists a Nation of people who bring the purest light and peace to the world. She made it clear to her daughter that she (the daughter) was going to find these people and live among them, regardless of the effort that it will take.

The mother then found out that Jews pray in a synagogue, and the closest country that had one was Singapore. And the mother then sold everything that she could to buy a one-way ticket for her daughter, as a high school exchange student.

The first thing that the daughter did in Singapore, was to go directly to the synagogue address which her mother had had given her, and this was the start of her magnificent journey.

The Rabbi and his wife embraced her with respectful caution, and allowed her to have food and sleep on the couch.

'Do you know what is my biggest dream? The girl asked the author. And without waiting for an answer she continued 'To walk the streets of Jerusalem, wearing a long skirt, just like all real Jewish women.'

Of course the author was tremendously moved and discussed her with Rabbi Abergel, the Chabad Rabbi there, who had been watching her progress for the past few months to see if she was sincere. And he was gradually becoming more confident.

At the same time the author left money for her 'future Jewish sister' to purchase skirts, in contribution for her dream. SHE KNEW WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT THIS SPIRITUAL, LOFTY TEENAGER WILL FIND HER WAY!

A few months later the author contacted Rabbi Abergel to get news of how the girl was doing, and he replied that he had arranged the Sydney Rabbinical Court to help her with conversion and that she will eventually be sent to Israel to study.

At this point the author burst into tears - There is something so transcendental about impossible dreams becoming a reality!

The author actually, is not up to date with this girls story.

The girl has been a close friend with our family in Stamford Hill for the past few years.

She is intensely intellectual, and fully at ease learning all areas of Torah in Hebrew! And at the same time highly sociable and lively, always ready for a laugh or a smile.

About a year ago she got married to an amazing Ger from Italy (also an amazing story) here in Stamford Hill - one of the liveliest weddings I have ever seen, with guests coming from all over the world, who had been so touched by these 2 sincere souls. And they now have a little girl, their first child.

They are both 'power-house' Jews inspiring all who come in contact with them.

In the words of the author -'HER VISIONARY MOTHER WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL. SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD LIVES A NATION THAT KNOWS G-D, IS CONNECTED TO THE TRUTH, AND SINGS THE PSALMS OF THE GREATEST POET, KING DAVID!'

<https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/4624330/jewish/The-Impossible-Dream-of-a-Chinese-Girl-in-Singapore.htm> https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/4624330/jewish/The-Imp ossible-Dream-of-a-Chinese-Girl-in-Singapore.htm

Gut Shabbos to all

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 January 2021 · Shabbos 23 Jan 2021 · י׳ שבט תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year, Baty, with continuation of your amazing work in Australia!

Yud Shvat (the 10th of Shvat) which we mark on Shabbos, is the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe in 1950, and it is the day when the Lubavitcher Rebbe took over the leadership one year later.

Always linked to Yud Shvat, is the last maamer which was said by Frierdike Rebbe, called Basi Legani, which is based on the teaching that this world is a beautiful garden, and it is the ultimate place where Hashem wants to dwell.

This is an amazing revelation, especially when we understand how vast is the universe, and how tiny and insignificant is the earth in relation to the whole universe, and how great and beyond our understanding, is Hashem who created it all!!

And yet Hashem has selected our world for his ultimate dwelling place.

Even more than this, the Baal Shem Tov taught us that DIVINE PROVIDENCE in this world, does not only relate to man, but also to all of creation including animals, vegetation and even the inanimate.

The Alte Rebbe explains this from a source in Gemorra Chulin page 63a, where it says that Hashem's judgement is in the deep, in relation to the bird called a shalach, which dives deep into the sea to pull out a fish.

This is not just any fish, but it is a particular fish as decreed by Hashem.

So in relation to the above, I saw some beautiful extracts from the Frierdike Rebbe in Likutei Diburim volume 1, p177, which I would like to share in relation to Yud Shvat:

'One day in the summer of 1896 (he therefore must have been 16 years old), I was strolling with my father (the Rebbe Rashab) in fields in the country resort of Bolivke near Lubavitch. The crops were almost ripe and the grain and grass were nodding in a gentle breeze. "Behold G-dliness!" said my father.. (I have left this piece out because it is complicated). As we walked on we found ourselves in a forest. Deep in contemplation of what I had now been told concerning Divine Providence, and overwhelmed by the gentleness and earnestness of my father's explanation, I plucked leaf from a tree that I passed by, and held it for a while in my hand...(the father had to explain to the son how important was every leaf in creation, and how more care should have been demonstrated).'

'The concept of Divine Providence, as it is explained by the Baal Shem Tov, is well known - that even a whisper of straw and a plucked leaf that kick about in the open are governed by a Divine ruling that determines how many times they are to turn about and where they are to be thrown around. The Baal Shem Tov teaches that the Holy One Blessed be He, arranges sets of circumstances of various kinds in order to implement the Divine Providence that governs a minute creation, in order that the fallen leaf that has been rolling about since last year in some backyard or other, or a bit of straw from a stalk which someone used when thatching a cottage roof a few years ago, should now be moved from their places to somewhere else. To accomplish this a storm wind breaks out, shaking heaven and earth in the middle of a warm and sunny day- and thereby brings to fulfilment the Divine Providence that governs the little stray leaf and the old wisp of straw.'

And how much more so, must Hashem be considerate of us human beings!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

REDEMPTION

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 January 2022 · Shabbos 8 Jan 2022 · ו׳ שבט תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Thank you to all the Family in California for hosting us so well. We should always get together for many simchos!

I heard some interesting points from this week's Sedra, Bo, in a recorded shiur from Rabbi Gordon ah.

It is interesting that Torah, which is a Book of Law, goes through the whole book of Bereishis and a few Sedras of the book of Shemos before we get to the very first 2 Mitzvos, which we find in our Sedra this week.

There is a lot of discussion about why this is so, but it basically highlights that Hashem is in charge, and all is according to His Will.

What I found really interesting was the commentary of our Sages (he did not mention which Sages), that in the verse just before these 2 Mitzvos, it says '..lemaan revos mofsei be'eretz Mitzraim.' - (Pharoah will not listen to you) in order that My Miracles be further multiplied in the land of Egypt.'

Now if you take the first letter of each of the last 4 words in this verse, it is the acronym Rambam!

It is amazing how this Sedra:

- always follows soon after the Rambam's yohrtzeit,
- the above verse refers to Egypt where Rambam lived,

- and the verse is placed right before the first 2 Mitzvos of Torah, the area where Rambam has been the chief codifier throughout our history, to list out the full 613 Mitzvos that Torah comes to teach us.

The 2 Mitzvos are Rosh Chodesh observance, and bris milah (circumcision)

And Nissan now takes over as the first month of the Jewish calendar, from Tishrei (the start of Creation), which previously held this position. ie the Jewish Nation moves from a state connected to the natural world, to a state of miracles (Nissan root meaning is miracles), in preparation for the REDEMPTION FROM EGYPT

Rabbi Gordon pointed out that in the same way as the Jewish Nation was being clothed with 2 Mitzvos to merit the Redemption from Egypt, the Rebbe set out his 10 point Mitzva Campaign so that the whole Jewish world will merit the final REDEMPTION THROUGH MASHIACH.

These 10 Mitzvos are

1. Light Shabbos candles
2. Tefillin
3. Mezuzos on doors
4. Torah study
5. Tzedakah (Charity)
6. Home filled with books
7. Kashrut observance (dietary laws)
8. Love your Fellow
9. Jewish education
10. Observe Family Purity in marriage.

May this be soon in our days

Gut Shabbos to all

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

DYNAMICS OF FREEDOM

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 January 2023 · Shabbos 28 Jan 2023 · ו׳ שבט תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday which is today. It is a big one being one of the decades BH! Wishing you an amazing year with much peace and happiness, Baty, and much achievement in both material and spiritual matters! Also much nachas from all your children BEH.

This week's Sedra Bo, and many other Sedras in the Book of Shemos are discussing our exodus from Mitzrayim (Egypt)

I therefore found it interesting how both todays Hayom Yom and Tanya, were discussing how the freedom from Egypt relates to our own personal selves.

Hayom Yom 4th Shvat

The root of the Hebrew word Mitzrayim expresses constriction and limitation.

In relation to ourselves, this is referring to our 'animal soul' restricting and concealing our 'G-dly soul'.

This is so severe that the G-dly soul is compressed to the degree that it becomes diminished and obscured.

Our 'Exodus from Egypt' is the removal of these constrictions and bounds.

Ie the intellect in the brain illuminates the heart, bringing about fine character traits, which are then translated into actual practice.

In todays Tanya, Likutei Amarim Chap 19, and for many chapters before this, the Alte Rebbe has been explaining how Hashem enclothes himself in our intellect (Chochmah), and how this can effect the rest of our being, all the way down to action. I think, that this very much explains the above concept in much detail.

Gut Shabbos to all

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

VICTORY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 19 January 2024 · Shabbos 20 Jan 2024 · י׳ שבט תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV TO ZALMY ON HIS ENGAGEMENT TO NECHAMA DINA PIPERNO. We are overjoyed at this wonderful news! The wedding should be at a good and auspicious time, and wishing you to build an everlasting home together! The Lechaim will be at 1349 President Street, Crown Heights, NY at 8pm, this coming Sunday 21st Jan.

Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff (Brian's wife) on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful, happy year with good health Sharon!

Wishing long life to Avi and his Family on the yohrtzeit of his father today. His Neshama h should have an Aliyah, and there should be only simchos in the future BEH.

This Shabbos is the 10th of Shvat (Yud Shvat)

It is the day that the Frierdike (Previous) Rebbe - Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, passed away in 1950, and it is also the day, one year later, when the Rebbe (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson) seceded him as the new leader of Lubavitch in 1951.

The last Maamer recorded by the Previous Rebbe was called Baasi Legani, which was made up of 20 sections, and every Yud Shvat, the Rebbe would explain one of these sections as a 20 year sequence.

We continue learning these sections of the cycle every year, and this year we have been learning the 14th section

So I thought I would try to summarize the current stage of this deep and beautiful Maamer

- The Jewish People are called Tzivos Hashem (Army of Hashem) based on one of the Names of Hashem (Tzevakos) which is a Name of War, and refers to the Sefira of NETZACH and Hod (VICTORY and Glory)
- The king has great stature, and therefore, the greater is his power to seek victory
- To achieve victory, he will spend great and precious resources of his wealth, and will squander even his rare treasures, because the attribute of victory is rooted at a very high level in his soul. He will even risk his life for this.
- The Jewish People are the soldiers of the King, trying to fulfill G-d's will to achieve victory against the opposing forces, and therefore the Heavenly stores of treasures are opened up for them.
- These treasures are explained by the Zohar as being G-d's Infinite Light, which extends upwards without any bound, and descends below without any end.
- As G-dliness descends downwards through many contractions, it becomes more and more concealed, becoming enclothed in creation, which outwardly has an appearance the very opposite of G-dliness. Therefore beings in the physical realm may no longer recognizes Him (and even oppose Him c"v)
- Practically, even though we believe in Hashem, this hiddenness can result with ourselves, in excessive ego on the one hand or depression on the other. Both are not true
- Much discussion in the Maamer takes place around the nature of this Light
- Relating to ourselves, we need to understand that we are part of Hashems army, and we have been provided with the hidden treasures of Hashem. And with this we go to war in this world at many levels. We start by going

to war with our own difficult inclinations (yetzer hara) within ourselves. The victory is the establishment of Yerushalayim (as is explained in the Medrash that Yerushalayim is yirah shalem - complete fear (of Hashem). We reach this victory by extending ourselves with strenuous effort, (mesirat nefesh) to reach this level within ourselves. Through this effort of spending, and even sqandering, all our resources to attain victory, we reach to the infinite light high above, and below without limit.

- To illustrate this from the Medrash with a story: a king entered a country accompanied by dukes, prefects and commanders. One person said "I will choose a duke as my patron". Another said I will choose a prefect as my patron". And still another said " I will choose a commander as my patron". (ie they wanted particular benefits from these people). There was a clever person among them who said " I will choose the king, because the others are all subject to replacement, while the king is not subject to replacement".

Gut Shabbos to all, and with victory in our battle!

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

A TOUCHING STORY ABOUT RAMBAM

2025 / 5785

Gut Chodesh Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 January 2025 · Shabbos 1 Feb 2025 · ג׳ שבט תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

I want to wish Avi long life on the upcoming yohrtzeit of his father next week. I was very fond of Reb Yisrael Meir ah and we wish his neshamah to have an Aliyah. Only many simchos in the future for your whole Family Avi!

I came across a famous and interesting teaching in this week's Sedra Bo, to do with an acronym in V11:9.

The verse says that Pharoah will not listen to you, in order that my wonders will be multiplied in the Land of Egypt (Revot Mofsay Be'eretz Mitzrayim).

The first letters of these 4 words spells out the name RaMBaM, ie Moses Maimonides.

And part of this teaching is that:

- Sedra Bo always falls in close proximity to the yohrtzeit of Rambam
- Rambam lived a large part of his life in Egypt
- Isn't it also interesting, that straight after the above verse , comes the first Law in Torah about calculating the New Moon. And Rambam is famous for his Mishneh Torah, which is a book crystalising the whole of Torah into its Law form, and deriving the 613 Mitzvot.

So I thought that I would share a summarised story from Rambam's life, which appeared in a recent Lechaim Publication, which demonstrates how much potential each human being has, and how careful we have to be in dealing with children and their education:

Rambam would dream a lot while sitting in class as a young child, or while praying.

His father was the Chief Rabbi of Cordova, and he would put aside hours of his time to teach his son Torah. In response to Moshe's inattention, he would keep prodding his son, with a stern gaze full of disappointment and sadness, and at the end of the lesson he would sigh and shake his head.

Young Moshe would often be sent away from the class. Of course Moshe was upset to see that his father upset, and when he came to the part in shmoneh esrei prayer where we ask Hashem to 'Grant us wisdom, understanding and knowledge..', these words seemed to spring out of the page towards him. He hoped that Hashem would grant this to him, so that his father would be proud of him!

Moshe resolved to try as hard as he could , but the sun, trees and fountain outside the window, kept drawing away his attention.

Suddenly his father's voice cracked like a whip, "If you don't understand, at least look in at the Holy Letters....!!

"I cant" replied Moshe

His father replied, "You cant because you don't try! Enough! Get out of my sight!"

For a moment Moshe could not move. His father's words pierced his heart like a spear. Then he ran to the very outskirts of the town. He threw himself into the cold river where he swam to the other side, and dropped down exhausted, and fell asleep. When he awoke it was night. Where should he go now?

Moshe found himself wandering to the Synagogue, where he entered and opened the Ark.

In the shadowy depths of the Ark, the Torah Scrolls glistened in their silver mantels.

Suddenly the cold hard knot inside his chest loosened, and his eyes filled with tears. "Please G-d, give me wisdom! Open my mind and let me understand Your Holy Torah, so that my father can be proud of me! Please teach me your Torah", he whispered.

One by one he kissed the glowing scrolls, and carefully closed the doors of the Ark.

Then, as a feeling of peace flowed over him, he recited the Shma, curled up on a bench, and went to sleep.

Without going into detail, Maimonides then went on, to reach the yeshiva of his father's teacher Rabbi Yosef Ibn Migash. When this Tzadik accepted Rambam and kissed him on his forehead, Maimonides was known to have declared, that at that moment the wells of Torah wisdom were revealed within him.

From there, Rambam became one of the greatest Sages that the Jewish People have ever known, mastering Torah, Philosophy, Astronomy, Medicine and much more!!

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos to all!

Bo ↑ Bo · Contents · By date בא

PERSONAL FREEDOM

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 January 2026 · Shabbos 24 Jan 2026 · ו׳ שבט תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shlemah for Yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Brian and Sharon on their 50th Wedding Anniversary! What an amazing and beautiful achievement! Kol Hakavod to you both, and wishing you many more happy and healthy years together BEH.

We wish Avi long life for the Yohrtzeit of his dear father Reb Yisrael Meir ah, coming up next week. His Neshamah should have an Aliyah, and I am sure that he is very proud of all the amazing efforts being performed by all of his Family BH.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on the Pidyan Haben of Ariel Rachamim Alexander BH!

The current Sedras are describing the breaking of the power of Pharoah's grip on the Jewish People, resulting in our subsequent Exodus and Freedom from Egypt.

Connected to this, today's Hayom Yom explains how this relates to our own personal lives, which I would like to share:

The Hebrew word for Egypt is Mitzrayim.

The root of this word, metzar, means constriction or limitation.

In ourselves, spiritually, this reflects our animal soul severely restricting our G-dly soul, to the degree that it becomes diminished and hidden.

Our exodus from Mitzrayim is the removal of these constrictions and boundaries.

This comes about when the intellect in the brain is freed, to illuminate what is going on in the heart, bringing about fine character traits, translated into actual practice.

Gut Shabbos to all

בשלח

Beshalach

Shemos 13:17 · parsha 4 of 11 in Shemos · 16 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — SPLITTING WATER 404
2017 / 5777 — SINGING AND DANCING BIRDS 407
2018 / 5778 — LETTERS WITH A STORY - APPROPRIATE ACTION 409
2019 / 5779 — FLOWERS WITH EARS 412
2020 / 5780 — TRANSFORMING BITTERNESS TO SWEET 414
2021 / 5781 — OUR ENEMY AMALEK 416
2022 / 5782 — SONG 419
2023 / 5783 — UNCLE MORRIS AND REB YISROEL MEIR LINKED TO YUD SHVAT 422
2024 / 5784 — HIDDEN TREASURES 424
2025 / 5785 — SELFLESSNESS 426
2026 / 5786 — ACACIA WOOD 429

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

SPLITTING WATER

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 January 2016 · Shabbos 23 Jan 2016 · י"ג שבט תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty for her birthday tonight. Wishing you a year of much success and happiness.

The main event of the past week in relation to the Family, was Penina and Avi engagement in New York.

BH lots of members of the Family flew in, and it was a most memorable pre Shabbos, Shabbos and post Shabbos few days.

We met many members of Avi's Family ie his parents Rabbi and Mrs Vogel, Savta, and brothers Aaron, Binyomin (Ben), Yossi, Yechezkel (Chezi) - who surprised everyone by flying in from LA, and David.

Look forward to meeting the rest of the Family IYrH.

And then from Boston, Chanan, Talya and Ariele, Reuven and Chana Lieba.

And of course Rivky and Hirshy from LA and Pesach and Zalmy from London.

Hope I have not missed anyone out.

Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi.

It was all really beautiful.

This weeks Dvar Torah is connected to your engagement, and besides all good wishes to you, we wish all those who still need shidduchim brochos for this to happen.

In this weeks Sedra Beshallach, one of the themes is Krias Yam Suf (THE SPLITTING OF THE RED SEA)

This is very much connected to the theme of SHIDDUCHIM and to the events of this last week.

And so we came across, this week an Essay and Video in relation to:

1. SHIDUCHIM

2. Interface of Science and Torah
<http://www.inner.org/parshah/exodus/beshalach/mathematical-scientific-paral lels-splitting-waters.php> http://www.inner.org/parshah/exodus/beshalach/mathematical-scientific-parall els-splitting-waters.php

I am attaching this very interesting 10 minute video in relation to the Science interface for anyone who is interested , and am summarising below the essay which we saw from R. Simon Jacobson on SHIDDUCHIM entitled 'Marriage: Destiny or Chance' as follows:

'How is MARRIAGE connected to KRIAS YAM SUF?

There is a discussion in Midrash about the mystery of matching couples, and it comes up here that, for G-d's role in the making of a Shidduch 'IT IS AS DIFFICULT AS THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA'.

The Talmud echoes this belief by stating that before a person is born G-d designates his or her mate: 'A heavenly voice calls out - this woman to this man.'

On the other hand the Talmud also states 'that a man and a woman are paired to each other based on their merits.'

It is therefore also indeed as difficult as Krias Yam Suf for the couple to find each other.

As far as the future is concerned, Rabbi Jacobson concludes as follows:

'Today we do not need to be reminded how difficult it is to create and maintain healthy marriages.

SOME FEEL IT IS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THAN THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA!

Yet we have in the marriage of Yaakov Avinu, a formidable lesson in overcoming the challenge of building lasting relationships

Despite Yaakovs harsh challenges of dealing with his cheating, corrupt and cruel uncle and father in law for 20 years!! LABOURING DAY AND NIGHT THROUGH HEAT AND COLD WITH LITTLE SLEEP, Yaakov managed to build the best Family that ever existed ie the 12 Shevatim (Tribes), which would give birth to the Jewish Nation, and which is forever changing History till this very day!

Yaakov's journey inspires and empowers us, each in our own journey to find our soul mate, especially when we know that Hashem is also primarily involved in 'MAKING SHIDDUCHIM' which He continues to busy himself with today, and is therefore by our side.

But Hashems efforts require our partnership.

Through our virtue and prayer, by being better people, we engage Hashem in the mysterious - and arduous (KRIAS YAM SUF) - process, of joining souls together, in one beautiful dance that ripples through the cosmos, and transforms the world and all those around us.'

Gut Shabbos to all.

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

SINGING AND DANCING BIRDS

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 February 2017 · Shabbos 11 Feb 2017 · ט"ו שבט תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa for her upcoming birthday I think on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of new happiness and success.

This weeks Sedra is Beshalach, and this coming Shabbos is called Shabbos Shira (Song)

This is because the sedra speaks about us crossing the Red Sea, and then Moshe singing praise to Hashem with the men and Miriam singing and playing musical instruments with the women.

THERE IS ALSO A MINHAG (CUSTOM) TO FEED BIRDS THIS SHABBOS.

Where does this originate?

The Frierdike Rebbe discusses this in Sefer Hasichos, and brings down that this was established by the Maharal of Prague a few centuries ago, on Shabbos Shira, as follows:

The Maharal instructed all the teachers of children to tell their pupils the story of how when Bnei Yisrael were crossing the Sea on dry land and singing praises to Hashem, there was also a miracle occurring in that fruit trees were sprouting on the sea floor, and the children were picking fruit from these trees and feeding them to the birds. AND THE BIRDS WERE SINGING AND DANCING TOGETHER WITH THEM. (Midrash)

He also instructed the teachers to then give the children, and also the adults, kasha to feed the birds on Shabbos, AND THE MAHARAL HIMSELF

ALSO DID THIS HIMSELF IN HIS SHUL and thereafter gave blessings to the children and their parents.

Besides the Custom itself the Frierdike Rebbe points out the greatness of a Minhag and the greatness of educating young children.

The Maharal came down from all his lofty works and levels, and took time out, and on Shabbos, the holiest day of the week, for the sake of Custom and the Children

Ie he was the greatest Iluy of his time, a Gaon ha Gaonim in Nigleh, Nistar, and investigating the exact nature of everything (Chakira). He was a Master of music, and familiar with all the Sciences and Philosophies. And he was a Master of good Middos (kind etc)

Yet he placed above all this, the Custom to gather children and their parents, explain a story and feed the birds, on Shabbos.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

LETTERS WITH A STORY - APPROPRIATE ACTION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 26 January 2018 · Shabbos 27 Jan 2018 · י"א שבט תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday next week. And wishing you and the Family success in your new accommodation in North Shore. It should be a year of much success and happiness with nachas from all your children, and good parnassa. Also we remember that you and Shmueli got engaged today on Yud Shvat. So triple mazal tov!

There is another engagement today, and that is Mendel Sarfati got engaged to Devorah Leah's sister Rivka. So it is a kind of double simcha for us all, because we are related to both sides of the families. BH! Mazal Tov to all, and it should be that each simcha will open the gates for more such simchos for all of us.

Tonight is Yud Shvat, the day of passing of the Frierdike Rebbe in 1950, and exactly a year later to the day The Rebbe accepted to take the place of the Frierdike Rebbe.

As a continuation of what we spoke last week regarding the beams of the Mishkan being made of cedar wood (atzei shittim), the Frierdike Rebbe (in his maamer Basi Legani) continued to talk about the letters constituting the word for the beams ie KESHER – קשר

These letters can also form the word שקר which means falsity.

This was looked at in comparison to the letters גדה

Shapes of the Hebrew letters reflect an interesting story, and show the difference between Holiness and the opposite of Holiness

The letters גדה represent Holiness, and ק and ר refer to the opposite, as follows. (look at the shapes and meanings of the letters)

Both the words dalet, and resh mean a poor person in Hebrew.

The shapes of the dalet and resh are almost identical except the dalet has a small extra extension in the shape of a small yud on its top right side. This extra yud adds a dimension of humility to the dalet putting it onto the side of holiness (yud is the smallest of the letters and also represents Hashem)

This is missing from the resh which places it on the side of evil.

Similarly the heh and kuf look very similar to each other. The difference is in the left leg where the heh is short and at the same level as the right leg, whereas the left leg of the kuf is much longer, extending downwards.

the 3 parts of the heh and kuf represent the 3 garments of the soul thought, speech and action – action being represented by the left leg of each letter.

So the heh is a dalet with a short left leg (holiness), and the kuf is a resh with a long left leg (opposite of holiness)

When one trains oneself to have holy thoughts, holy speech and holy actions, then even one's mundane actions will tend to be APPROPRIATE – like the letter heh, where the leg representing action is level and stable.

If ones thoughts, and speech are of an unholy nature, this will result in INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS like the letter kuf where the leg representing action is heading in a downward direction.

For example someone who is training in holiness, even when he goes out to business will try to set up his work in a way of honesty, or when he eats and drinks he will try and see that these actions are for necessity to maintain health, and not just for impulsive desire. – represented by letter heh.

Whereas the resh represents unholy thoughts and speech like idle talk, gossip and slander etc, which leads to inappropriate actions like indulgence in eating etc, which sets one off onto a downhill descent, represented by the long leg of the letter kuf. Kuf in Hebrew also means monkey.

The purpose of the Mishkan was to convert darkness into light, and in this case the beams (Keresh) should convert our unholy and inappropriate bad habits (sheker), into Holy and appropriate ones.

Wishing everyone a happy and Holy Shabbos

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

FLOWERS WITH EARS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 January 2019 · Shabbos 19 Jan 2019 · י"ג שבט תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Baty on your birthday tomorrow. May you have a year of much growth, with happiness and good health, and nachas from all your children!

You know, each week I look out for interesting items to share with the Family, and I see what comes my way.

But this week I was really 'bowled over' with, especially one item which came to my attention.

And I am going to have to announce that we have a quiet and amazing niece/cousin in our Family. And having said that I am sure we have many more quiet and amazing members of our Family and extended Family on our email and beyond, and we would like to hear more from everyone!

I am a follower of Sefaria, which is an extensive and impressive online library of Torah works which is freely available to everyone.

And so I opened an email from Sefaria this week, and the subject was TU BISHVAT, which is fast approaching next week. (Tu Bishvat is the New Year for Trees, and we have a custom to celebrate by eating many different fruits etc)

And what do you think I saw? No one will guess!

<https://sefaria.nationbuilder.com/r?u=n1Mvbxqtf8VBMJt9MUGaTpGvU-paH9C8kraKN HLCaqOuGs6aBL-GsHmFqFbn-JPBh&e=bcf2b69d2ad7a19629eca1fc2f32a445&utm_source=sefaria&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tu_b_shvat_011619&n=9>

How Do Jewish Sources Connect to Modern Environmentalism? by Danielle Davidoff.

This is an amazing and interesting article connected to Tu Bishvat, with so many beautiful and diverse references.

So I hand over Dani's original!!

<https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/56285?lang=en>
https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/56285?lang=en>

Well done Dani. So impressed! Keep up the good work!

And then another interesting article came my way on Research by Israeli scientists at Tel Aviv University who say that they have found a flower that HEARS THE APPROACH OF POLLINATING BEES AND HAWK-MOTHS.

They found that the sound of a flying bee, as well as synthetic sound signals of a similar frequency, induced the flower(the Evening Primrose) to produce sweeter nectar within 3 minutes.

The plant's ear is simply the petals themselves, which vibrate with the bee's sound frequency, stimulating the flower to produce the sweeter nectar, to attract the bee, which then pollinates the flower. - Article was seen in The Times of Israel

'How great are Your works O G-d, Your Thoughts are very deep' - Tehillim 92

And 'How vast are Your works O G-d, You have made them all with wisdom. The earth is full of Your creations.' - Tehillim 104

Gut Shabbos and a Gut Tu Beav to all.

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

TRANSFORMING BITTERNESS TO SWEET

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 February 2020 · Shabbos 8 Feb 2020 · י"ג שבט תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Sarah (ne Davidoff) Glick and Aron, on the birth of a boy! And Mazal Tov to our new Bobba and Zeidy, Chana Lieba (Annette) and Reuven! Wishing you ongoing simchos and much nachas.

And then Alisa also has a birthday next week. Mazal Tov Alisa. Wishing you a happy year, especially in preparation for your wedding.

Mazal Tov to Baty on your birthday tonight ie Friday. For you it is already Friday in Australia Baty, and so this is a very current happy birthday wish. You should have a wonderful year with much new opportunity for you and your Family.

We wish our beloved Yeshayah a refuah shleimah, and with the quick removal of his plaster cast. Such a brave boy BH

In this week's Sedra Beshalach it says 'They (Bnei Yisrael) came to Marah, but they could not drink the water from Marah for THEY were bitter..'

The simple meaning of the verse is that the waters of Marah were bitter, but the literal translation of the verse is that 'THEY COULD NOT DRINK FROM THE WATERS OF MARAH BECAUSE THEY WERE BITTER.'

This means that the people rather than the waters, were bitter.

When we are bitter, everything tastes bitter.

Only when we are sweetened with the positive attitude of Divine consciousness, can the water, as well as everything else in life, taste sweet.

As was mentioned in the maamar 'Basi Legani' this week:

'For example eating and sleeping are fixed and regular activities.

Business may become pressing and may take up time, but generally it will not affect eating and sleeping. The time one eats and sleeps will remain fixed.

In contrast the times for Torah Study and Prayer are not at all fixed, and by some ignored completely, to the point of forgetting their importance.

When a person makes a personal account of this phenomena.....

That is why the beams of the Sanctuary were made of cedar wood -shittim- demonstrating how shtus - the folly- of animal behavior, can be transformed into - the folly - of Holiness (eliciting a transcendental light into the darkness).'

This maamer of the Frierdike Rebbe explains in much more detail, and it is also available in English

Gut Shabbos to all.

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

OUR ENEMY AMALEK

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 January 2021 · Shabbos 30 Jan 2021 · י״ז שבט תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well and enjoying Tu BiShvat today - the New Year for Trees.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah for the engagement of her brother Sruli. Wishing you and the Family many simchos!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his success in finding his first hospital position. Wishing you much success in your new vocation Hirshy, and in all areas!

I saw an interesting dvar Torah this week, from the Rebbe's father, about Amalek from our Sedra, Beshalach.

Amalek is one of the prime enemies of Bnei Yisrael.

But Amalek also has spiritual significance for ourselves as follows:

A person can meditate upon the greatness of Hashem and His love, and truly reach a deep understanding and appreciation of the idea. This is reached through our intellectual faculties of chochma (wisdom) and bina (understanding)

Our other intelectual faculty of Daas (knowing) brings this understanding which we know to be true, down into our own emotions, and allows us to intimately connect with this feeling.

Amalek then comes along and attempts to sever this connection and oppose daas.

The word Amalek is connected to the Hebrew word malak which means to sever off the head from the neck.

Daas is also located at the neck in the human body ie it connects the head to the heart (and the rest of the body)

And Amalek wants to prevent us from feeling that which we know to be true.

In fact Amalek is described in the phrase 'One who knows his Master, and willfully rebels against Him'.

We have a mitzva to continually fight against this force.

Interestingly the Rebbe's father shows, using a system of counting (miluyi) and adding (osius) to show that the numerical value of Amalek and Daas are both equal to 474. (See calculation attached)

He also shows how Amalek is also connected to Agag and Haman

The fight against Amalek is an inner battle that we must fight for all generations until the coming of Mashiach, who will eventually eradicate him, and also our own inner one.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Attached to this letter

The gematria chart: Amalek = Daas = 474

When using a system of *Gematria* known as counting "מִילּוּי"[8] and adding "אוֹתִיּוֹת"[9] the word *Amalek* equals 474. (See chart below.) The word *Da'as* also equals 474.

עמלק	
130	ע = ע (70) + י (10) + ן (50)
80	מ = מ (40) + ם (40)
74	ל = ל (30) + מ (40) + ד (4)
186	ק = ק (100) + ו (6) + ף (80)
Plus one for each letter of the word:	
4	ע (1) + מ (1) + ל (1) + ק (1)
474	130+80+74+186+4

דעת	
474	ד (4) + ע (70) + ת (400)

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

SONG

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 January 2022 · Shabbos 15 Jan 2022 · י"ג שבט תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish long life to Avi on the sudden loss of his father this week. Wishing you and all your Family to be comforted by Hashem, and know only simchos in the future.

Mazal Tov to Baty on your birthday now tonight. Wishing you a year of many great happenings and achievements in joy and good health.

The main event this week was Yud Shvat.

Yud Shvat is the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe who passed on in 1950, and exactly one year letter, also on Yud Shvat, the Rebbe (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson) took over the leadership of the Lubavitch movement.

As such it is one on the main days in the Chassidic calendar.

On Yud Shvat this year, was also the levayeh in Yerushalayim, of Avi's father Reb Yisrael Meir ah.

He was niftar a day or two before, and Avi and the Family flew him to be buried in Yerushalayim.

It has therefore been a difficult and heart rending week for all of us, and we wish all of the Vogel Family - Hamakom yenachem eschem besoch shear avalei Tzion biYerushalayim.

Two points from the life of Reb Yisrael Meir ah stand out for me.

I remember at Avi's engagement to Penina in New York. We already knew that Avi's father was extremely unwell, and that he was coming in to meet us.

We arranged to meet at a restaurant in Crown Heights for lunch, and I remember sitting in the restaurant looking out for him to arrive, expecting to see an elderly sick man.

Then this young looking, vibrant and happy man entered with some family, and I carried on looking out.

But then the next thing was, to my amazement, that he was hugging all the Vogel Family, and I was shocked to find out that this was actually Rabbi Vogel ah.

And his level of energy and joyous dancing at the wedding impressed me even more.

Despite all the gloomy predictions of the doctors, and the extreme pain and suffering that he endured, he fought on, through even further medical complications, for another 10 years

Reb Yisrael Meir ah was also extremely dedicated to a Torah life and he was a teacher who lived with moderate means.

And from this focused and humble life emerged a large Family with so many varied natures and talents, establishing itself in so many areas, and with such strength BH.

I can certainly take encouragement from this spirit!

May he 'Speak for our defence' in Shamayim

In this week's Sedra Beshalach we learn about the SONG that Moshe and Bnei Yisrael sang after the crossing of the sea.

Torah uses the expression 'Az yashir' -Then Moshe and Bnei Yisrael will sing.' Surely it should have said that they sang, in the past tense?! Why does it use future tense?

And part of Rashi's answer from the Medrash, is that Torah is alluding to the fact that there will be tchiyas hameisim - revival of the dead (with the coming of Mashiach)

Ie In the future Moshe and the Children of Israel will sing!

The whole lives of the Frierdke Rebbe and the Rebbe were given over to easing of the pain of Klal Yisrael in the exile, and to bring Mashiach.

May it be soon in our day when we will all be together again, in SONG, with our departed loved ones.

Gut Shabbos to all

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

UNCLE MORRIS AND REB YISROEL MEIR LINKED TO YUD SHVAT

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 February 2023 · Shabbos 4 Feb 2023 · י"ג שבט תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Avi and Family long life, on the first yohrtzeit of his father. Wishing you only joyous occasions in the future (and see below)

Mazal Tov again to Baty on her birthday which is now the Hebrew date!

The main event of this week was the celebration of Yud Shvat, which marks the day in 1950 when the Frierdike Rebbe passed on, and on the same day, 1 year later, The Lubavitcher Rebbe, with trepidation, accepted to continue the leadership of his predecessor, for the Lubavitch movement.

But 2 other events that occurred, ie the yohrtzeit of Avi's father, Reb Yisrael Meir Vogel ah, and the anniversary of Uncle Morris Davidoff's Barmitzvah, were very much connected.

And then there is a link also to this week's Sedra Beshalach.

I am going to start with the story of Uncle Morris Davidoff, my father's brother ah.

The story has been written by Kevin Marks in 2009, and as was mentioned a few weeks ago, we welcomed Kevin to our Group after the passing of his father. I am also copying in Kevins mother (and my cousin), Zelda. We wish you all again long life, and only happy occasions in the future.

Uncle Morris's story for me, is the revelation of the heart of a Jew.

The whole story revealed a life of his, which I had no knowledge of at all.

His story is attached, but in summary, his early years were linked to a religious life. He recalls having been horrified to see 2 men walk out of shul smoking, on Shabbat. And he had a fight with 2 other boys who he saw holding money on Shabbat.

Due to surroundings and circumstances, he became less religious, and joined a communist youth group.

I only knew Uncle Morris as a 'secular' Jew, and I remember that he used to play with us saying that he was an atheist. I even remember the twinkle in his eyes. Therefore unbeknown to me, and I suspect to most of the Family, I now understand, that behind the external 'mask', there remained a man with a heart burning with the love of Judaism and Hashem.

HE WENT TO SHUL EVERY YEAR ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BARMITZVAH (SHABBAT SHIRA - SEDRA BESHALACH), AND HE TOOK HIS GRANDSON KEVIN, WITH HIM!

This Shabbos is therefore the Anniversary of his Barmitzvah!

And how much more is unknown?

It is this HEART of every Jew, that the Frierdike Rebbe and the Lubavitcher Rebbe were so tuned into, and encouraged us to search out, and reach out, to.

And Reb Yisroel Meir Vogel ah, Avi's father, openly dedicated his life fully, to learning and teaching Torah!

Along the same lines, we see the quality of FAITH, so strongly demonstrated in this week's Sedra, by Miriam, the sister of Aharon, and the other righteous women.

They took tambourines with them when they left Egypt, because they were sure that Hashem would do miracles for them, and they would need these to celebrate! (Rashi 15:20)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

HIDDEN TREASURES

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 January 2024 · Shabbos 27 Jan 2024 · י"ז שבט תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again to Zalmy and Nechama on their engagement in NY this past Sunday. It was so nice to be together with so many members of the Family BH. Wishing the wedding to be at a good and auspicious time, and with much success BEH!

Today we celebrate Tu BeShvat, (15th of Shvat) which is the New Year for trees.

Traditionally we try and recognize the multitude variety of Hashems creations by tasting from at least 15 fruits, and principally from the 7 species of Eretz Yisrael.

I believe that in EY they also plant trees.

Related, I saw a beautiful vort in today's Mashiach Day by Day, as follows:

Just as the greatest scientists will never discover the full potential of the resources that G-d placed into the earth, so too no one can fathom the great treasures that lie in the Jewish people.

The Torah compares us, the Jews, to a rich parcel of land capable of producing luscious gardens, and being full of HIDDEN TREASURES, like gold and diamonds.

Average land can produce staples like wheat and corn.

Delicacies like sweet fruit, fine wine, and the luscious honey of date palms, comes from finer soil and more tropical climates.

Moshiach will reveal the sweet secrets of the Torah, and uncover the divine gems hidden within each of us and in the entire world.

He will not only satisfy all of our physical and spiritual needs, but he will also bring us to a state of luxury, where we can experience the G-dly beauty of life.

It is not enough that we spiritually sustain ourselves and others, but we must enjoy it and make it sweet.

Gut Shabbos to all, and with many delicacies!

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

SELFLESSNESS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 February 2025 · Shabbos 8 Feb 2025 · י׳ שבט תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Baty for her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Baty with success in all the activities that you are involved with, and much new development BEH.

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much success and continued growth for you and your Family Alisa.

The 10th of Shvat is this Shabbos, and it marks the yohrtzeit of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson in 1950

It also marks the day when our Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (son-in-law of the Previous Rebbe), took over the leadership of the Lubavitch movement, one year later.

There is much to discuss about these 2 giant leaders, but in Likkutei Sichos Vol 18 Parshas Chukas Balak, the Rebbe, in speaking about the Previous Rebbe, focuses on his famous character trait of mesiras nefesh.

Mesiras nefesh literally means sacrificing one's life , but it also applies to living our lives selflessly, directing our energies towards the Will of Hashem .

Some examples of the Previous Rebbe's mesiras nefesh are as follows:

- In Soviet Russia he spread Torah despite terrible hardships. He was arrested for these activities, imprisoned and beaten. Undettered he continued, and also sent others to spread Torah in the same way.
- After being forced to leave Russia he arrived in Poland. Here it was not the government who challenged him, but the other Jewish leaders at that time.

They wanted energies focused on Torah education in the large cities, whereas the Previous Rebbe wanted to focus on the distant, small towns, where Jews were more neglected.

- He endured Nazi bombing of Poland and due to the War he came to America. Here he was confronted with a very different problem. Many Jews who came to USA from Europe, thought that it would be a better idea to hide their Torah lifestyle. They said "America is different. Here we should look like everyone else." The first thing that the Previous Rebbe said when he arrived in USA was, "America is not different." With tremendous mesiras nefesh he persuaded Jews to keep the Torah and its Mitzvos openly and proudly. This paved the way for America to become a land where Jews keep the Torah and it's Mitzvos with joy and pride.

After all the suffering he went through in his life under the dictators of Stalin, Hitler, yimach shmam, the holocaust, and an ailing body etc, the last Chassidic Discourse that he published before his passing, was based on the theme that The world is a beautiful Garden!! -Basi Legani.

Leadership passed from him to Rabbi Menachem Schneerson , and I think that one picture will give us an idea of some of the work that he did, following the instruction of his father - in -law, the Previous Rebbe.

See below a view of this years Kinus HaShluchim in NY, a yearly gathering of some of the Shluchim (Representatives) of the Rebbe, from all over the world, fulfilling Hashem's wishes to spread Torah and Mitzvos with joy and pride.

https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/6687701/jewish/Shluchim-Group-Photo-5785.htm

And todays Hayom Yom:

"Particularly in these times, when thanks to G-d's kindness, we stand at the threshold of the Redemption, we must make every effort to strengthen all

matters of our faith, including the conscientious observance of every Mitzvah, and of all our customs, without the slightest compromise..."

Gut Shabbos to all!

Beshalach ↑ Beshalach · Contents · By date בשלח

ACACIA WOOD

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 January 2026 · Shabbos 31 Jan 2026 · י"ג שבט תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Yechezkiel ben Ester a refuah shleimah

Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday which is tonight. Wishing you a wonderful and blessed year Baty, with achievements in both the material and spiritual, all in good health and much happiness!

This week on the 10th of Shvat, was the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe, and we have been learning the last Maamar that he composed called Basi Legani.

It is a very powerful Maamer and explains how every aspect of the Mini Temple (the Mishkan) and the Temple, its construction and its Services, all relate to our own personal selves.

This being to refining our material natures, and materiality in general, which brings about elevation of Man and the world, and transforming darkness to light.

I thought to share just one element of the Maamar as an example.

The Mini Temple was made of ACACIA WOOD (shittim in Hebrew)

The root of this word is shitah which means to deviate (from the middle path)

The same root also implies shtus which means foolishness, for foolishness is a deviation from knowledge and wisdom (representing the middle path)

This deviation could be:

- Towards materiality (the folly of unholiness) - bearing in mind that there is nothing wrong

with materiality if used properly

Too much materiality can cover over and obscure the revelation of Divine light.

And it is this darkness which allows a Jew to sin.

Because the very nature of a Jew is that he neither wants to , nor can he consciously separate himself from G-d.

This spirit of folly deadens a persons spiritual sensitivity, and he no longer feels the pleasantness, sweetness, good, and value of fulfilling the Mitzvos.

But deep down the G-dly soul is yearning for G-dliness and searching to create channels for G-dliness, to escape from the grip of the animal soul.

- Towards greater spirituality (the 'folly' of holiness) - it is still a deviation from the middle

Path, and goes beyond logic

This has the capability to correct the folly of unholiness, and can be put into action by any Jew. It basically involves doing acts of holiness (as prescribed by Torah) against ones regular habitual ways. For example within one's busy day, and enjoyments, to establish fixed times for Torah study

Because the Divine Service of the Mini Temple (and Temple) was to transform darkness into light, therefore it was made of acacia wood (atzei shitim)

The implication is that it embodied the transformation of folly that is lower than reason, to the extent that it becomes 'folly' that transcends reason.

Then, in the same way that G-ds presence dwelt in the Temple, it will also dwell within each and every individual Jew, through his or her own self-refinement, transcending logic.

Gut Shabbos to all!

יתרו

Yisro

Shemos 18:1 · parsha 5 of 11 in Shemos · 17 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — 5 MINUTES PER WEEK. 433
2017 / 5777 — A BEAUTIFUL HOME 437
2018 / 5778 — GRATITUDE 439
2019 / 5779 — THE CURE FOR ENVY 441
2020 / 5780 — HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS HASHEM 442
2021 / 5781 — PEACE 445
2022 / 5782 — BURIED TREASURE 448
2023 / 5783 — PRACTICAL FREEDOM 450
2024 / 5784 — POWER OF SPEECH 453
2025 / 5785 — WHO NOURISHES ALL 455
2026 / 5786 — SOME GIANTS OF OUR PEOPLE 459

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

5 MINUTES PER WEEK.

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 January 2016 · Shabbos 30 Jan 2016 · כ׳ שבט תשע״ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

It is with great joy, in the Parsha of Yisro where we received the Torah on Har Sinai, that I would like to start to share with the Family my project on Rambam which I have been working on since 23/12/03.

This was the date that I sat down with Hirshy and Zalmy to learn 1 Chap. per day from Rambams Mishneh Torah.

It was at this stage that I also decided to summarise the Mishneh Torah.

The first version was very short and I realised that it was ok for me, but it would not be very useful for someone else trying to understand, and as the years went on the project developed into a multi level summary, because I saw that each level would have its own advantages in different ways for different people..

The project is now in 'the cloud' and is being checked and edited by a number of people mainly to make sure it is accurate, and at the same time I am refining it further there.

However for the purpose of practicality, I believe it can start to be used.

I am sure that everyone recognises the beauty of Torah in some way or another. Or the Intellect and amazing accuracy and depth, Or the Communal aspect, Or the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly patterns and framework of Shabbos and Yom tov etc, Or the beauty of close-knit families where there is kindness and peace, or the vast Infinity etc, etc.

But the question is how do we connect with all this beauty and comfortably feel a part of it?

So I saw in this weeks Sedra as follows: Hashem says ' And now if you will listen diligently to My Voice, and preserve My covenant, you shall be My special treasure among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine.'

And Hashem through Torah then lays out for us PHYSICAL ACTS for us to perform, which is within the capability of all human beings, to enable us to link to this beauty and infinity.

So we received:

1. The Ten Commandments direct from Hashem at Har Sinai - a historical fact

2. The Written Torah from Moshe Rabeinu ie 5 Books of Moses

3. The Oral Torah - the vast volumes of discussions of the Law by the Sages ie Gemorra/ Talmud.

4. The Neviim - Prophets, The Trei assar - Twelve Prophets, The Ksuvim including Psalms, and The 5 Megillos.

Yet at the stage all we had was highly coded information which we could only understand on a very superficial level, and vast volumes of backward and forward arguments among the Sages, also heavily coded.

And so it was still very difficult for us to understand the Halacha ie 'What is it that we have to do?!'

AND THEN CAME THE RAMBAM, (1135-1204) AND IN A MOST MAGNIFICENT WAY, IN HIS WORK THE MISHNEH TORAH, HE CRYSTALISED THE VAST SEA OF TORAH INTO PRACTICAL HALACHA. IE WE NOW HAD A GOOD IDEA WHAT WE NEED TO DO.

He did this by first working out how to derive the 613 SCRIPTURAL MITZVOT.

He then organised ALL of The Oral Law, in Halacha form, around the 613 Mitzvot and categorised this all into 14 Seforim in a most remarkable organised logic and format.

In truth his work is beyond description!

The Rebbe very much encouraged us to learn Mishneh Torah on a daily basis. (I think this was in the 90's)

If one learns 1 Chap a day this takes 3 years to complete.

3 Chaps a day takes 1 year to complete.

And he suggested that children could learn the Book where the Mitzvos are just listed (sefer Hamitzvos) in the same order as the 3 Chap a day Group.

And today 1000's of people are learning Rambam together, the same Chaps, every day.

So at this stage I have chosen to share with our Family my Short Summary of Rambam.

It is very brief, but it has the following advantages:

1. It will show the very ordered logical drift and progression of Rambam.

2. The Mitzvos are bold and underlined and we can slowly learn all 613. We can also see how they form the framework of his Work, and give us an idea of what we need to do.

3. IT WILL ONLY TAKE 5 MINUTES PER WEEK TO SEE THE SUMMARY OF 7 CHAPS, AND I CAN REFER YOU THERE EACH WEEK BN.

4. This means we will be moving with the stream of people doing 1 Chap per week worldwide.

5. We will get a small sprinkling of halachos in addition to all the Mitzvos.

6. We will get a sense of the breadth of subject matter covered by Torah.

I will follow up this email with a link in to my Short Summaries. On Google Drive.

This last weeks 7 Chaps are in Book 7, the Laws of Maaser Sheni (Second Tithe) Chaps 1-7, p 10 and 11.

If anyone would be interested to probe deeper into the Full Summaries, I would be happy to link in further.

Below is a copy of the Key / Legend

Key

Bold Underline1 - Mitzva -Scriptural Law

Italic - Hebrew - Transliteration

Red - Numerics

Green - Derabanan / Rabbinic Law

Blue - Mipi Hashmua / Moshe Misinai

- Reminders, inter-linking different parts of Rambam, usually through tables

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and happy exploration of our Torah

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

A BEAUTIFUL HOME

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 February 2017 · Shabbos 18 Feb 2017 · כ"ב שבט תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Seems like the theme for this week is the HOME.

Mazal Tov to Rivky, Shmuel and Family with their new home in LA. Hope you are all settling in well. And Mazal Tov for Dovi putting on Tefillin at the end of this month in preparation for his Barmitzvah BEH.

This week we also visited Miriam in her new cosy flat and we watched the video of Penina and Avi's wedding there, which we received this week. Thanks for the beautiful spread you prepared Miriam and thanks for the video Penina and Avi!

There is a Book called Moshiach Day by Day, and the discussion on 17th Shvat, 2 days ago, was A BEAUTIFUL HOME, and this is the main Dvar Torah from the Rebbe which I would like to share below.

And then there is also a link to this weeks Sedra - Yisro.

It went as follows:

Women exist to bring beauty to the world (Taanis 31A)

Three things open a person's mind - a beautiful house, a beautiful wife, and beautiful possessions (Berachos 57B)

A home must serve certain basic functions.

Beyond that however, one's home should be beautiful.

A beautiful home not only serves one's needs, but it also raises a person to a higher state of being, a state where one feels open and free to be one's true self.

Similarly Spiritually, Hashem has given women a special spiritual beauty, which also allows Hashems Essence to be open and revealed there.

In relation to this weeks Sedra, where we received the Torah in dread from Hashem, and we promised to keep it, I once saw a letter from the Rebbe to a newly married couple where he emphasised the FOUNDATIONS OF A HOME.

The foundations are mostly invisible and taken for granted, but they have to be strong a stable to support the BEAUTIFUL HOME which everyone can see.

In the same way when the foundation of our home is based on Torah and Mitzvos, this will provide us with stability, and allow Hashem to dwell there.

Wishing everyone a Good and Beautiful Shabbos.

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

GRATITUDE

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 February 2018 · Shabbos 3 Feb 2018 · י"ח שבט תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov for Hirshy's acceptance into Nursing School where there was much competition. Amazing effort! And good luck for the year which starts this month Hirshy. - Exciting BH.

A Rashi caught my attention at the end of last week's Parsha, Beshalach.

It was talking about the battle with Amalek, and Amalek's destruction is connected to Purim, and it already feels like Purim is in the air with people starting to talk about, and trying on costumes, and the seasons starting to change!

And so I thought it would be nice to share an interesting Rashi about Amalek., which went as follows:

It says that Amalek came to make war with Israel in Refidim. And the very verse before this says 'Is Hashem amongst us or not?'

So Rashi states that the reason these 2 verses are adjacent to each other is to convey the message, 'I (G-d) am always amongst you and ready to fulfil all your needs, and yet you say, 'is Hashem amongst us or not?' I will therefore set the dog (Amalek) to bite you, and you will cry out to me, and then you will know where I am.'

He then explains this with a parable of a father carrying his son on his shoulders, and they go out on a journey. Whenever the son saw a desirable object he would request it from his father, and the father would give it. This repeated itself many times.

After a while, another person passed them by on the way, and the son said to this person 'Have you seen my father?'

Whereupon the father said to the son ' Do you not know where I am?!!'

And the father took him down from his shoulders, and a dog came and bit the son.

The message for us is to realise with GRATITUDE how close Hashem is to us, providing all of our needs, and even if there is a need chas veshalom, for Hashem to put us down from his shoulders, this is not a punishment, because, as a loving Father, the parsha ends off 'ki machoh emcheh es Zecher Amalek mitachas hashamayim.' - 'for I (Hashem) will totally obliterate the memory of Amalek from under the Heavens.'

This should be speedily in our days even before Purim.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

THE CURE FOR ENVY

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 January 2019 · Shabbos 26 Jan 2019 · כ' שבט תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Just a short vort this week that I saw from the Rebbe on one of the 10 Commandments, which we have in this week's Sedra Yisro. (Hisvaaduyot 5742, Vol 3 p1661)

The Command was 'Lo sachmod bes reecha....' (you must not desire the house of your fellow...etc)

Hashem provides each one of us with all the resources we will need to fulfil our own unique mission in life. (possessions, talents, strengths etc)

We each achieve our fulfilment by dedicating these resources to our Divine mission.

Any resources which Hashem has not provided us with, at any given moment, are thus not necessary for fulfilling our mission.

Not only are they not necessary, but if we desire and pursue them, this will side-track us, and prevent us from reaching our own full potential.

Reflecting on this truth will cure us of any envy.

Gut Shabbos to all

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS HASHEM

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 February 2020 · Shabbos 15 Feb 2020 · כ' שבט תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

The 15th of Av this week was The New Year for Trees and we celebrate it by tasting from the many varieties of Hashems fruits.

And so I thought that it may be interesting to hear some amazing facts from Hashems foods, which I saw in 'The book of Amazing Facts and Feats'

- Since the days of Adam, the most common basic food in the world is bread

Chazal taught that eating bread (with salt), and drinking water in the morning, is extremely healthy.

Bread is the food that gives man wisdom. It is said that the moment that a child begins to eat bread, he gains wisdom.

- Water is the most basic drink
- Grapes and wine.

Luxemburg drinks the most wine per capita in the world - 20 gals per year per person

Egypt has the lowest - 2 teaspoons per year per person!

- Sometimes birds eat too many grapes and become drunk. This is because grapes contain some yeast which naturally ferments in the birds stomach. They then cannot fly straight.
- The most intoxicating fruit is from the African Marula tree, and it is approximately the size of an apricot. The fruit ripens at height of summer (Feb) and gives off a very strong scent which attracts animals from far away. The elephants drive all the other animals away, butt the trees with their heads to knock the fruit down, and then guard the fruit for 3 weeks while it is fermenting. This occurs in March (AROUND PURIM TIME!) and the elephants now eat the fruit. They then get drunk and start bumping in to one another and can fall down. And then other animals come to join the party!
- The largest edible fruit is the jackfruit. It weighs between 22-55 lbs. The larger ones can weigh as much as 132 lbs! it is very prevalent in India.
- Tomatoes are the most popular produce in the world - 60 million tons per year. Then bananas (44 million tons). Then apples (36 million tons). Then oranges (34 million ton). And watermelon (22 million ton)
- Israel eats the highest no. of apples in the world per capita (2 million per day)
- There are 7500 different types of apples!!
- The Hazera Genetics co. in Israel has developed a strand of yellow cherry tomatoes called Summer Sun. this has become a hit in Europe where their seeds sell for $160,000 per pound. The Summer Sun contains 3x the sugar content of ordinary tomatoes, making it as sweet as honey, and is sold at about $12 per lb. An experienced farmer can grow 44 lbs of produce from a single seed.
- Moshe Wallach orchard in Kibbutz Ein Shemer, has the largest collection of useful plants in the world. He grows more than 300 different types of

fruits. None of the trees are results of mixing. Rather , every tree and plant is precisely the way Hashem created it.

- The world's most favourite flavour is chocolate, which comes from cocoa beans. In 1828 a Dutch chemist Conrad Van Houten discovered the process of transforming cocoa into something resembling chocolate. The Swiss are the largest chocolate consumers in the world
- Honey lasts longer than any other food, in Egypt a jar of honey was found from more than 3000 years ago, and was still in edible condition

Etc, etc, etc.

Ma rabu maasecha Hashem - How manifold are your works Hashem!

Gut Shabbos to all

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

PEACE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 February 2021 · Shabbos 6 Feb 2021 · כ"ד שבט תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

We wish Shmuel Levy and Family long life on the passing of Grandma Levy. We were all very fond of her and she was so much part of all our simchos, even in London! Wishing the Family only simchos in the future.

Mazal Tov to Perry (Pesach Shlomo) on his engagement to Mikayla Koval. Such exciting news! Wishing the wedding to be in a good and auspicious time!

Mazal Tov to Freida who passed her exams to be a new US citizen. Well done Freida!

In the Rambam learning of this week we finished the Third Book called Sefer Zemanim, and the last chapter was to do with Chanukah, and it always leaves an impression on me.

I would like to share it in the form of a quiz, the answers for which is the halachah as prescribed by Torah.

A similar concept also comes up in this weeks Sedra Yisro.

1. If a person has no money for food, (except what he receives from charity), and he also has to purchase oil and lamps for Chanukah, which takes preference?
2. If a person has only one pruta (pennies) and he has the choice on whether to spend this on wine to sanctify Shabbos, or to purchase oil for the Chanukah lamps, which takes preference?
3. If a person has the opportunity to fulfil either the Sabbath candles or make

kiddush, which takes preference?
4. If a person has the opportunity to fulfil either the Sabbath candles or lighting the Chanukah lamps, which takes preference?

Answers:

1. Chanukah candles take preference over buying food. He needs to pawn his clothes to buy Chanukah candles. Because Chanukah lamps are very dear and we need to be very careful in its observance, to publicise the miracle, and thus increase our praise of Hashem and demonstrate our gratitude.
2. Again Chanukah takes preference over kiddush.
3. Between Shabbos candles and kiddush, Shabbos candles take presence.
4. And this is the surprise - between Shabbos candles and Chanukah candles, SHABBOS TAKES PREFERENCE!?

Why?

BECAUSE SHABBOS CANDLES GENERATE PEACE WITHIN THE HOME BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

And Rambam ends the Book saying, 'Peace is great and the entire Torah was given to bring about peace within the world. As it says in Mishle (Shlomo Hamelech) 3:17 'Its ways are pleasant and all its paths are peace.'

And we see the theme of peace also in this week's Sedra, where it says that Yisro was the Priest of Midian.

Midian means contention and strife.

And Yisro was master of all the different idolatrous worships which all promote selfishness and strife.

Whereas serving Hashem promotes selflessness, which enables us to get along with others.

When Yisro accepted the Torah, his name changed from Yeser to Yisro - a vav was added to his name. Which means reaching beyond one' intellect and bringing it down into reality. Because human intellect is limited, and cannot

reach the Divine awareness which nullifies the ego - Sefer Maamarim 5647 p72 and Sefer Maamarum Melukat V3 p59

Gut Shabbos to all as we start heading into Adar!

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

BURIED TREASURE

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 January 2022 · Shabbos 22 Jan 2022 · כ' שבט תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Wishing Chanie a speedy recovery from her operation.

This week we celebrated Tu BeShvat, (15th of Shvat) the New Year for trees, where we enjoy the wonderful variety of fruits from trees, arising from the earth.

We have a custom to taste 15 different fruits.

In relation to this I saw an interesting associated Dvar Torah in Mashiach Day by Day for the 15th of Shvat, from The Rebbe.

The Baal Shem Tov taught: It is written in Malachi 3:12 "For the Children of Israel shall be a land of desire, says the Lord of Hosts."

Just as the greatest scientists will never discover the full potential of the resources that G-d placed into the earth, so too, no one can fathom the great treasures that lie in the Jewish People....."

The Torah compares us, the Jews, to a rich parcel of land, capable of producing luscious gardens, and full of hidden treasures, like gold and diamonds.

Average land can produce staples like wheat and corn, delicacies like sweet fruit, and then fine wine and the luscious honey of date palms coming from finer soil and more tropical climates.

Mashiach will reveal the sweet secrets of the Torah, and uncover the Divine gems hidden in each of us, and the entire world.

Mashiach will not only satisfy all of our physical and spiritual needs, but He will also bring us to a state of luxury where we can experience the G-dly beauty of life.

It is not enough that we spiritually sustain ourselves and others.

We must enjoy it and make it sweet

Gut Shabbos, and love to all - Enjoy!

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

PRACTICAL FREEDOM

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 February 2023 · Shabbos 11 Feb 2023 · כ' שבט תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I would like to wish Brian a refuah shleimah. This should be very soon Brian!

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Alisa!

Pesach is visiting London, and he brought me a very nice book, which I have been reading, about the legendary Reb Mendel Futerfas, entitled 'My Gulag Life'.

I met Reb Mendel when he used to pass through London visiting his Family in Stamford Hill.

He was imprisoned in the Gulag for 8 years, and was separated from his Family for 17 years, as punishment for spreading and teaching Judaism!

He was eventually FREED and released from the Soviet Union in 1963.

As this week's Parsha is Yisro, and speaks about our FREEDOM from Egypt, and the receiving of our Torah, I thought it would be nice to share a few items from the book which caught my attention.

Without going into details, Reb Mendel went through a life of difficulties beyond what we could imagine, the Gulag period being only an aspect of his life.

But even here, he prefaces the book as follows:

'The truth is, that I cannot repeat most of the things I saw in the Gulag, because you wouldn't believe me. And if you did believe me, you wouldn't be able to sleep at night.'

AND YET REB MENDEL WAS ALWAYS HAPPY.

And therefore he was never really in prison!

He was famous for his 'farbrenging' (Chassidic get-togethers) where he would enthrall his listeners with his experiences, deep lessons of life, and beautiful song, all in a spirit of joy and love of his fellows.

A story:

"Once a few inmates asked me why I was always so happy. I turned the tables and asked why they were so unhappy. Each told a sombre story - one had been a famous engineer, another a respected lawyer, and a third, a former general in the Red Army. All had been reduced to worthless prisoners.

They asked again, 'now tell us why you are happy.'

I explained to them that their lives had centered on their professions and status. So their self worth disappeared as soon as their careers were taken from them.

My life is about much more than that, I said. It is true that I was a successful businessman, but that was not the purpose of my life.

I was a Chasid, and here too I am still a Chasid."

Another story:

"Throughout all my years of imprisonment, I felt spiritually uplifted, and mostly in good spirits. How, you might ask, was it possible to feel any happiness while separated from my beloved Family?

It may be hard to understand, but when you know that a certain course of action will not be helpful, you just do not dwell on those painful thoughts. You use the power to forget, and you stop thinking about what could be, what should be, or what you want to be."

And there are so many more, and not only in this little book!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

POWER OF SPEECH

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 February 2024 · Shabbos 3 Feb 2024 · כ"ד שבט תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well. Wishing Brian a speedy recovery after his shoulder operation.

We wish Talya Bassin a successful year for her study program in Eretz Yisrael, where she has now arrived. Enjoy this wonderful opportunity Talya!

Mazal Tov to Mendel Gollub and the Levy Family, on his wedding this week. The couple should build an everlasting Jewish home. Only continued simchos!

SPEECH came up a few times this week in our current Sedra, Yisro, and with the Hebrew Word of the Week from Rabbi Kalmenson.

DIBBUR (Hebrew word for SPEECH)

Everyone has experienced the power of words in one way or another - A kind word that soothes a broken heart, an authentic compliment that inspires confidence and motivates success, or a disparaging word that crushes the spirit, potentially leaving life-long scars.

Words can harm or heal, but not just because of the thoughts they trigger.

Judaism teaches that a spoken word holds tremendous power. According to the Torah, the world itself was "spoken" into being by G-d (Genesis 3:1)

This is reflected in the Hebrew word for speech being dibbur with the same root as the Hebrew word davar, meaning an item. Ie once a word has been articulated, it becomes a reality, with a life of it's own, and ripples out further into the world.

Sedra

In V 19:3 it says "So shall you SAY (tomar) to the House of Jacob, and TELL (taged) to the Children of Israel.

And Rashi explains that the House of Jacob refers to the women (home refers to a woman's role). Here the terminology used is tomar, which is gentle speech. Ie we should speak gently to women.

The Children of Israel (Sons) refers to the men. Here the terminology used is tagged , which refers to hard, tough talk (giddim are sinews). They should be told what are the Mitzvos and what are the punishments

And then in V 20:1 and further we have the Ten Commandments (aseres HADIBROT)

Wishing everyone a Good and Happy Shabbos

WHO NOURISHES ALL

2025 / 5785

Happy TuBeShvat and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 12 February 2025 · Shabbos 15 Feb 2025 · י״ז שבט תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

Because there is some artwork in this week's email, I have put it in pdf format.

So please see attached above and open.

Enjoy, and wishing all a happy TuBeShvat, and a Gut Shabbos!!

Attached to this letter

The letter itself, sent as a PDF ("Tu BeShvat 2.pdf", 2 pages with the family's artwork)

This week's letter was sent as an attached PDF; its text is transcribed here exactly as written (it says "Tu BeAv" where Tu BiShvat is meant), followed by the two PDF pages.

B"H

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Tonight is Tu BeAv, (15th of Av), the New Year of trees.

It is customary to eat a lot of fruit, recognising the extreme abundance and generosity of Hashem.

And of course to say the appropriate blessings!

Some have the custom to eat 15 different fruits.

And so with this theme in mind I gathered some interesting facts about trees and fruits:

- There are 7500 different types of apples
- The largest edible fruit in the world is the jackfruit. They weigh on average 22-55 lbs, but the larger ones can weigh upto 130 lbs
- The Black Sapote fruit is also known as the chocolate pudding fruit found in Columbia. It is extremely sweet. It can be spread on bread or eaten as a chocolate pudding.
- While forests all over the world are rapidly being cut down, Israel is the only country in the world where its trees are increasing in number. More than 200 m trees have been planted by JNF since 1950
- The largest variety of fruit trees in an orchard in the world, is found in Israel at Kibbutz Ein Shemer. There are more than 300 different types of fruit trees growing together, exotic ones alongside Israeli, subtropical, spice plants, medicinal etc from all over the world. It also contains the 'miracle berry', which after being eaten, makes everything else eaten in the next 4 hours, taste sweet!
- The 7 fruits from Torah relating to the Land of Israel are wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates, in a Land "Flowing with Milk and Honey"

And some works of art from our talented Family done this week (I am sure there was much more which I did not hear about)

Happy Tu Bishvat and Gut Shabbos to all!

B''H
Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Tonight is Tu BeAv, (15th of Av), the New Year of trees.
It is customary to eat a lot of fruit, recognising the extreme abundance and generosity of Hashem.
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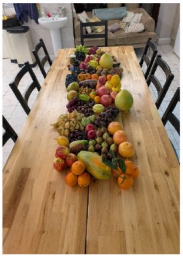
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And some works of art from our talented Family done this week (I am sure there was much more which I did not hear about)













Happy Tu Bishvat and Gut Shabbos to all!

Page 2 of the PDF (artwork)

Yisro ↑ Yisro · Contents · By date יתרו

SOME GIANTS OF OUR PEOPLE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 February 2026 · Shabbos 7 Feb 2026 · כ׳ שבט תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

This week highlighted some aspects of the lives of some of the greatest people in our history, which I wanted to share.

In this week's Sedra, Yisro, we learn how MOSHEH RABEINU was sitting and judging the people the whole day (ie people were coming to him to be taught Torah, settle disputes, seeking instruction and advice etc)

When his father-in-law Yisro saw this, he advised Mosheh that this job is too difficult for one person, and advised him to prophetically select a hierarchy of G-d fearing men of integrity to do the job, and only bring the more complex matters to Mosheh.

And Mosheh, after checking with Hashem, heeded his father-in-laws advice.

Now the Rebbe asks an obvious question:

Mosheh Rabeinu couldn't think about this solution himself? He needed Yisro to come and advise him to do this?

The Rebbe explained that there is a 2-track approach to this problem.

Mosheh, being a great leader, a Nasi, knew that he had the capacity to relate to every Jew individually, to make them more G-dly and to lift them up to his level.

When there is more G-dliness there will automatically be less dispute.

But the people had to hang in there to reach these levels.

And Moshe was fully prepared to do this huge work, and take this approach.

Yisro understood this, but his point of view was that we live in a real world, and one has to set up a hierarchy of systems to deal with the problems, in addition to Mosheh's input.

This gives one a better idea of what is the quality of a Nasi, and we have been very fortunate, in our generation, to see these qualities in THE REBBE.

What also came into focus this week was RAMBAM (MAIMONIDES) and his Magnum Opus work, Mishneh Torah!

This is an absolutely amazing work, bringing the whole of Torah into a highly organised, practical format, to be within the reach of every Jew, man, woman and child (Sefer HaMitzvot)

In 1984 the Rebbe made a Project of learning the whole of Mishneh Torah for men, women and children. There are 3 streams:

- Learning 3 chapters a day to finish in 1 year
- Learning 1 chapter a day to finish in 3 years
- Learning Sefer Hamitzvosi ie just the Mitzvos which relate to 3 chapters per day, and can be done by even children

This week both the streams of 3 chapters per day and 1 chapter per day, finished learning Mishneh Torah together, and we all started learning Rambam again from the beginning

I want to thank Batsheva for making the new Study Schedules for us which can be found on our Rambam website at https://rambampress.com/daily-study/. Many thanks Batsheva!!

And to end with a story, still connected to the above theme:

The grandson of Rambam, David HaNagid, wrote in Baal Seder Hadorot, that when Rambam finished writing Mishneh Torah, his father who had long passed on, came to him in a vision. Together with his father in the vision, was

a very venerable looking man. Awed, Rambam asked his father who is this person? His father told him that this is Mosheh Rabeinu, and that he heard about your work and he has come to look at your book. Mosheh Rabeinu then said to the Rambam: I have inspected your work. Yasher Koach! (a great compliment)

Gut Shabbos to all

משפטים

Mishpatim

Shemos 21:1 · parsha 6 of 11 in Shemos · 18 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — AN ESSAY RECEIVED FROM CHAVA 463
2017 / 5777 — JOY IN DARKNESS 468
2018 / 5778 — THE WAY OUT 470
2019 / 5779 — THE GREATNESS OF WOMEN 472
2020 / 5780 — WORK SLAVERY AND FREEDOM 475
2021 / 5781 — A STORY 477
2022 / 5782 — ASPECTS OF JOY 480
2023 / 5783 — LAWS 482
2024 / 5784 — VICTORY OF JOY 484
2025 / 5785 — GUARDIANS OF OUR SOULS 486
2026 / 5786 — GIVING 488

AN ESSAY RECEIVED FROM CHAVA

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 February 2016 · Shabbos 6 Feb 2016 · כ"ז שבט תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Zalmy for getting good results for your Essays in your Business Studies.

THE MAIN DVAR TORAH FOR THIS WEEK IS THE ESSAY WRITTEN BY CHAVA AT HER SEMINARY IN ISRAEL, MACHON BINA, WHICH I SAW THIS WEEK.

BEAUTIFUL CHAVA.

YOU SHOULD GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

SEE ATTACHED.

It is very much connected to this weeks Sedra Mishpatim, where Torah discusses many Laws that we need to practice.

As an addendum to last weeks email about Rambam Mishneh Torah, I wanted to mention that one can download onto one's mobile phone the Google Drive App.

One would then be able to access the Rambam summary while one is on the go.

This weeks 7 Perakim Summary is in Book 7, PAGE 11, Hilchos Maaser Sheni Chaps 8,9,10, and 11, and Hilchos Bikkurim Chaps 1,2 and 3. - Remember, it only takes 5 minutes.

I also thought it would be useful, while we are talking about summarising, to see how The Rebbe requested a Campaign focusing on 10 plus one aspects of Judaism, to guide people on how to prioritise.

They are as follows:

1. Lighting Shabbos candles Friday night.

2. Kashrus of food.

3. Tefillin.

4. Jewish education for children (and adults)

5. Mezuzos on doors.

6. Purity of family for married couples (and for everyone, to wash hands with a vessel first thing in morning on wakening, to remove the impurity of sleep)

7. Tzedoka.

8. House full of Jewish Books.

9. Love of a Fellow Jew.

10. Learning Torah

11. Knowing more about Moshiach (this was added on later)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Attached to this letter

Chava's essay "Guard your Sacred Torah" (Word document)

> Guard your Sacred Torah
>
> "You shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughter to his son and you shall not take his daughter for your son, for he will cause your child to turn away from after me and they will worship the G-d of others" (Deuteronomy 7:3-4)

This is a nice verse and clearly says I cannot intermarry yet why is the Torah even significant- significant enough for me to abide by it.

Here is a little background on the Torah and its content. The Torah has been around for thousands of years, passed down from generation to generation, through wars, pogroms, inquisitions. Anti- Semitism, destruction, eradication, yet us Jews preserved it, guarded it and internalized it. We didn't let our enemies rip it away from our hearts; we didn't let them tear us away. Why? Because Torah is truth and truth is everlasting.

Moreover, the Torah was the ultimate first book, spelling out thousands of morals, to teach us the proper way us humans should behave. If you are living anywhere in the western culture, all your civil laws actually stem from Torah; the first book of morals. Any humane moral has its primary source- The Torah! Making peace treaties between countries, freeing slaves, not stealing, not killing, all find its origin in the first book of morals- The Torah!

The Torah isn't a book to restrict our lives and pin us down to its words, it is a book of beauty and truth- to rather enhance our lives with its pearls of wisdom. The Torah commands us Jews to keep the Shabbos day holy. Someone could view this Mitzvah with a veil over its beauty and focus on the many restrictions and rules it comes with. Yet if we remove this peel and look at the value and advantage Shabbat brings, we can appreciate its magnificence. It brings families together, leaving behind all worldly distractions that distance ourselves from family and friends during the week. It is a warm and pure day to bond and share with the people that matter in our lives. No work. No technology. Just our pure selves. This is what the Torah values. How can we disregard such a sacred book full of wisdom and opportunity!

In the past Doctors would consult with the Rabbi's regarding bio- ethics due to their vast knowledge in Torah and wisdom in which it feeds us. The Torah doesn't just give laws and commandments, it also gives guidance on how to approach complicated situations- tools for life {in this twisted world}. A lot of science being discovered now is- you guessed it- found in this over 3000 year old book! It is life's turning wheels in every respect. How can we not admire and cherish this gift given to us and guard its holy contents?

Ezra Hasofer was one of the priests, and later on became a high priest, of the Jewish people. There is an account in the Torah about Ezra. Upon hearing that the Jewish nation was mingling with the other nations and interpreting, he reacted very extremely. He tore his garments and robe, he ripped his hair and beard off and sat bewildered until the evening. (Ezra 9:2) Ezra was devastated on account of the situation to the extent of inflicting pain to himself and tearing his clothes. This may seem quite extreme yet doesn't fail to relay the importance of this commandment.

There is a verse that states, "The children of an intermarried couple will not follow the path of Torah and will be distant from it." (Paraphrased- Malachi, 2:12) A person may think "I'm a Jewish women; my kids will be Jewish. What is the issue? Albeit the children will be Jewish, very quickly her future family's Jewish identity will vanish due to lack of Jewish practice and insensitivity to the issue of intermarriage. Continuous intermarriage, repeatedly, will soon cut off all ties with Jewish identities in this well expanded family!

To add emphasis on the crisis at stake, the Jewish civil law does not allow intermarriage. we are not talking about a religious prime minister implementing such a law, the prime minister of Israel is secular, yet feels the detrimental effect this situation has. This law is so strongly regarded, that a government-approved orthodox rabbi, to ensure there is no intermarriage going on, must conduct every wedding taking place in Israel.

There are also blessings that come along with it; it does have a positive side! G-d says that one who follows his laws will not be delayed in receiving a repayment. He will bless you and multiply you. "He will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your soil, your grain your wine and your oil" He will protect you just like you are protecting his laws! (Deuteronomy 7:3/10-13)

The Torah isn't just an old book that doesn't apply to our lives now. It is actually a very present book with a lot of relevance nowadays. The Torah spells out many prophesies been given to sacred prophets thousands of years ago. These prophesies were not G-d forbid empty words, but rather many of these foretellings are actually occurring now in our days. Where do you find this but in Torah?

No Jew was placed by accident in this holy nation; we were chosen- hand-picked by the almighty G-d, and for good reason! We are all product of by-gone generations- the Jews. We are the decedents of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. We as a nation were subsequently constituted at the mountain of Sinai- the Torah being the wedding contract with G-d. We profusely pro-claimed, "We will do and we will listen" as one man with one heart. We are the chosen nation and have good reason to take pride from it!

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

JOY IN DARKNESS

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 February 2017 · Shabbos 25 Feb 2017 · כ"ט שבט תשע"ז

Dear Family.

I hope everyone is well.

We wish long life to Mommy for the upcoming Yohrtzeit of Pepe next week.

Similarly to Renee, we wish you long life for Aunty Lottie's Yohrtzeit.

We remember them both fondly, and their neshamos should have an Aliyah.

I read two interesting areas this week which were connected to each other.

The one was Tanya Chap 27, and the other was an essay by Rabbi Y Jacobson.

Tanya has been focusing on sadness and joy, and in the above chapter, The Alte Rebbe has been focussing on the sadness and disappointment we feel about ourselves when we are overcome by desires, evil thoughts, wrong actions etc

The Alte Rebbe points out that the cause of this sadness is because we do not recognise our true position ie the reason we are disappointed with ourselves is because we think we are a tzadik and should not have acted in that low way, or had those low thoughts.

But really we are not a tzadik (actually very far away from a tzadik)

Our position is a benoni, and all the negativities that we face, are there on purpose, and are an opportunity for us to battle against, by using all our faculties to succeed.

And with every thrusting away of the negative forces (sitra achra) by ourselves, this also has an effect on the universal sitra achra, and this brings about a great satisfaction before Hashem - Zohar 135b.

Therefore, says the Alte Rebbe, no person should feel depressed, nor should his heart be troubled, even though he be engaged all his days in this conflict, constantly trying to subjugate the sitra achra, because perhaps this is what he was created for.

And then in R Jacobson essay he was saying this very idea in a different way as follows:

'It is a lost art today. We do not appreciate our minor victories.

Either I am a world hero or a loser.

BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE!

If you refine an emotion in your heart, or curtail a negative instinct, or you break a bad habit, or you subdue your ego, or you do a favour to another person, or you stay away from a promiscuous relationship, or you say a blessing, or recite a Psalm with mindfulness.

These are the stuff of Divine service that capture the dignity and purpose of human existence.'

AND BRINGS ABOUT JOY IN THE DARKNESS.

So as we now move out of the dark winter, we are approaching the month of Adar, about which it is said, when we enter Adar we greatly increase in JOY.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

THE WAY OUT

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 February 2018 · Shabbos 10 Feb 2018 · כ"ה שבט תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on the engagement of his brother Levi. Wishing you many more simchos in your Family and extended families.

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Alisa.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on finding a new flat (and also literally new!) right in the middle of Stamford Hill almost next door to the surgery BH! It should be with much new mazal for good.

Mazal Tov to Pesach who has found a new office, also near to Stamford Hill. This should also be with success in your parnassa, and much growth of your business Pesach. BH

This coming Shabbos is Shabbos mevorechim Adar, and Chazal say 'mishenichnas Adar, marbim besimcha.' - When Adar arrives, we should increase in joy.

The feeling of joy is a light head and happy heart.

But what happens when occasionally we find that our heads are not so light and happy, and on the contrary we may feel heavy, weary and down?

THERE IS A WAY OUT OF THIS.

It is written in Mishlei (Shlomo Hamelech) regarding worries in a person's heart: 'daageh belev ish yashchena' - this literally means 'the worry in a man's heart, he should suppress it.'

Rav Ami interpret the word yashchena as yesichena, from root of hesiach, which means 'he should remove it from his mind, - push it out.'

Rav Asi interprets the word yeshichena as yesichena, from root of talking, which means 'that he should share his worry with a friend.'

Again we see how the Hebrew language is so rich with meaning and guidance for us, each interpretation giving optional solutions, all contained within the root meaning of the word.

The Rebbe explains in a sicha in Adar 1992, that this simcha of Adar should start with learning of Torah (which gladdens the heart), and this then blossoms into action through the performance of mitzvos. This will lead us to experience genuine SIMCHA.

Wishing everyone a Gut Chodesh starting with a Happy Shabbos.

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

THE GREATNESS OF WOMEN

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 1 February 2019 · Shabbos 2 Feb 2019 · כ"ז שבט תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Renee long life for the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week. And in the week when our theme is about women, anyone who knew Aunty Lottie, would know what a good and kind neshamah she was AH. And this was constant throughout her life. Her neshamah should have a light Gan Eden.

BH I am so grateful and happy to be writing this week's email, having just emerged from an operation today for gall bladder removal.

I could not help but marvel at:

1. The great support we get from Torah and Hashem, especially needed in times of difficulty BH, but in truth, every day of our lives.
2. The ingenuity of man, in this case Medicine, - how far things have advanced - I came into an environment of a clean, comfortable and well equipped facility, early this morning, had a general anaesthetic with microsurgery, and was back home this evening, feeling BH, comfortable. How did people cope with all this in the past?

AND SITTING AT MY BEDSIDE THE WHOLE DAY WAS MY FAITHFUL WIFE.

AN BEFORE THE OPERATION WERE THE GOOD THOUGHTS, GOOD WISHES AND PRAYERS OF FAMILY MEMBERS etc which was a great source of support (before and after) - Thank you!

This morning one aspect of the support of Torah which diverted my mind into a positive direction was saying Tehillim (Psalms)

Interestingly, yesterday's Hayom Yom said as follows 'The Tzemach Tzedek said, that if one only knew how great is the power of Tehillim and their effect in the highest Heavens, one would recite them constantly. Know, that the chapters of Tehillim shatter all barriers, ascend higher and higher with no interference, prostrate themselves in supplication before the Master of all worlds, and they effect and accomplish with kindness and compassion.'

This week has also been the yohrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the wife of the Rebbe, and daughter of the Previous Rebbe.

It is the week when thousands of Lubavitch women gather in New York once a year for a week of inspiration, and banqueting etc

And in relation to all the above, I heard a beautiful thought about the GREATNESS OF WOMEN

'Women usher in the Shabbos with the lighting of their candles, long before men proclaim the holiness of the day with kiddush. This light immediately shines through the entire home, filling it with a holy beauty and grace.

The Zohar teaches that the numeric value of ner (candle) is 250.

This equals the 248 positive mitzvos, plus 2.

2 stands for the love and fear that inspire our deeds.

WOMEN HAVE THIS SPECIAL POWER TO BRING LOVE AND AWE INTO EVERYTHING THAT THEY DO, TRANSFORMING THEIR ACTIONS INTO CANDLES THAT SPREAD LIGHT AND WARMTH. - 'Mashiach Day by Day.'

In Mishlei it explains that while the apparent attribute of women appears to be recipient, her true status will be revealed in the future, which is that of transcendence, higher than the highest attributes of intellect. - ' A valorous women (eshes chayil) is her husband's crown.'

And the role Torah ascribes to women, reflects this greatness in a subtle way.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

WORK SLAVERY AND FREEDOM

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 February 2020 · Shabbos 22 Feb 2020 · כ"ז שבט תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I would like to mention that Renee had a car accident last week and had to be hospitalized. Her name is Rivkah bas Sarah Zlatah if anyone would like to say Tehillim, and we all wish her a refuah shleimah!

It is also the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week, and we wish Renee, Brian and Sidney long life. Aunty Lottie was a dear soul, of whom we were all very fond. Wishing the whole Family many simchos in the future.

There is a new worldwide initiative that started this year of learning the Rebbe's Sichos together.

Everyone learns the same Sicha, but at one's own level. The shortest level is a 3 minute audio summary in English, which is very easy to follow.

The web site is at <https://projectlikkuteisichos.org/> https://projectlikkuteisichos.org/, and then you click on one of the boxes to 'View learning Resources.

The 3-minute summary for this week's Sicha in Parshas Mishpatim, had a beautiful message which I would like to share.

One of the many Mitzvos discussed in this week's Sedra was the law about a Jewish slave.

A Jew can become a slave either through his own extreme poverty, whereby he has to sell himself to a master, or because he was a thief.

Basically he then had to serve the master for 6 years and was set free in the 7th, but if he wanted to stay longer, he would have to go through the humili-

ating procedure of having his earlobe pierced at the door-post of the house. This is to remind him that the ear which heard Hashem at Har Sinai, saying that he wants us to serve Him, should not be a slave to anyone else.

And so how does this relate to ourselves?

In relation to WORK AND SHABBOS, a person can have 2 mind sets

1. He is going to do the work, but he is clear and confident that Hashem is going to look after him, and provide his needs, and that he is now more free to serve Hashem
2. Person forgets (or is not fully confident) that Hashem will provide for him, and then becomes a slave to his work ie the work becomes his master.

When Shabbos comes along, it is very difficult for the latter person to swing out of his slavery into Shabbos, as he carries on with all his thoughts and worries to some degree.

But the one who has spent the week trusting in Hashem and serving Him, is now, in addition to his acquired freedom, also free of the physical aspect of his work, AND CAN NOW HAVE A REAL SUBLIME SHABBOS

Here is the original 3 minute audio -
<https://player.captivate.fm/f4ec6e16-f59d-4755-88c4-430170e1f0ea> https://player.captivate.fm/f4ec6e16-f59d-4755-88c4-430170e1f0ea

Wishing everyone a beautiful Shabbos with no slavery!

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

A STORY

2021 / 5781

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 February 2021 · Shabbos 13 Feb 2021 · א' אדר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope you are all well.

We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of Pepe next week.

We wish Renée, Sid and Brian long life on the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week.

It is also the yohrtzeit of a good friend of our family Reb Shimon Pilsner.

You should all have only happy occasions in the future, and all the neshamos should have an aliyah!

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday today. Wishing you a great year Alisa.

I came across an interesting story relating to the reading of the Megillah, and wanted to share this, as we are now entering the month of Adar. I found it even more interesting because there was a connection to our family, as it was about a Rabbi Shlomo Schwartz ah, fondly known as Schwartzie. Shmuel Levy's sister is married into that family, and we know them well, and I am sure that many people in the Los Angeles area and beyond also know them well, as he was a very well known Chassid.

It was Purim in the early 1980s and Schwartzie was working as a college campus Rabbi at the University of California, and he was pushing for students to hear the Megillah, but no one agreed. Finally one Jewish professor agreed because he imagined that it would take one or two minutes (not knowing what the Megillah was). So Schwartzie opened up the Megillah and the professor

asked how long it would take, and was told about 20 minutes. The professor then declined saying that he had to hurry home to Irvine.

In a flash Schwartzie said that he also had to get to Irvine and requested a ride (really Schwartzie lived in LA about an hour's drive away!)

Once in the car, and as they were driving, Schwartzie said to the professor, 'We have a long drive ahead, and it is a pity to do nothing. I suggest that I can read the Megillah to you?' The professor agreed.

When they reached Irvine the professor asked Schwartzie where he needed to go and Schwartzie answered to the bus station. The professor then realised that Schwartzie had taken the ride just to read the Megillah for the professor, and was now going to take a bus back to LA

Part Two

It is now 30 years later and Schwartzie ah has already passed away, and the brother of the narrator, Rabbi Mayshe Schwartz was in New York, where he meets, and was chatting to, a young chossid there. When the chossid heard his name he asked if he is the son of Rabbi Shlomo Schwartz?

On hearing the affirmative, he related the following amazing story!

'I grew up in an assimilated family and at one point I decided to make teshuvah and I wanted to go to a yeshiva. My parents got frightened because their dream was that I should go to college, and yeshiva seemed like a nightmare for them. A fierce conflict developed between me and my parents, and my parents suggested that we also invite our grandparents to discuss the crisis. The grandfather was a respectable professor and my parents were sure that he would support their view.

My grandfather asked me which yeshiva I wanted to go to, and I replied 'To a Chassidic Yeshiva.'

To everyone's surprise grandfather said 'That is good. Go there!'

The parents were shocked but then grandpa told over his story about how Rabbi Shlomo Schwartz had read over the Megillah to him on a car journey some 30 years earlier.

'If this yeshiva educates values of such devotion to other people, to the point of dedicating hours, for someone else to have a mitzvah, I am happy that my grandson will go to study at a place like this!'

Wishing everyone a very happy Adar, a gut Chodesh and a gut Shabbos!

ASPECTS OF JOY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 27 January 2022 · Shabbos 29 Jan 2022 · כ"ז שבט תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This Shabbos is Shabbos mevorchim Adar 1.

And because this year is a leap year, we have 2 Adars

And it is well known that when Adar arrives, we should increase in simcha - JOY

JOY has many facets, and this week it came up in a few places.

Sedra - Mishpatim

In 23:14 it says : "Three times a year you shall celebrate Festivals for Me." Ie Pesach, Shavuos and Sukkos

So it is a Mitzvah to celebrate the 3 Festivals, and there is an additional Mitzvah to be joyous on the Festivals.

Gemorra Shabbos

Just today I was learning p30b and it was discussing joy, laughter, sadnesss etc:

"The praise of JOY mentioned here is to teach you that that the Divine Presence rests upon an individual, neither from an atmosphere of sadness, nor from an atmosphere of laziness, nor from an atmosphere of laughter, nor from an atmosphere of frivolity, nor from an atmosphere of idle conversation, nor from an atmosphere of idle chatter. But rather from an atmosphere

imbued with the JOY OF A MITZVAH.....Rava said: And so too, one should be joyful before going to sleep, in order to have a good dream."

Other aspects of halachah from this same page:

Rambam Hilchos Sukkah 8:15 talking about the joy on Sukkos, simchas beis hashoevah - It is a great mitzvah to maximise joy at these celebrations with music, singing, whistling, fire

displays, hand clapping etc.

Anyone who exerts himself to be happy at these celebrations is performing a great service.

Whoever holds himself proud and holds back, is a sinner and a fool.

Even David Hamelech humbled himself in front of the crowds and was dancing wildly and whistling before Hashem saying, 'There is no greatness and honour, except to rejoice before

Hashem'

Talk from the Rebbe

The Rebbe mentioned that in a year when we have 2 Adar, there are 60 days to express JOY.

In the same way as there is a halacha concept that a negative item will get lost in a solution measure of 1 in 60, so we have the opportunity in double Adar to eliminate negative aspects of our own natures in 60 days of JOY.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh with joy!

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

LAWS

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 February 2023 · Shabbos 18 Feb 2023 · כ"ז שבט תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and wishing Brian a continued recovery.

I would like to welcome my cousin Zelda Marks to our Family email group. Zelda is the daughter of Uncle Morris Davidoff ah, who we featured 2 weeks ago, and the mother of Kevin, who wrote that article about Uncle Morris, and is also on this Group. Zelda recently lost her husband Stan ah, and we wish her whole Family long life. She lives in Sydney Australia and is in touch with Baty there. Welcome Zelda! So nice to be in touch again after so many years, and wishing you only happy occasions in the future.

I was thinking that it would be nice if we could make a Family Tree of the members in this Group, so that everyone can know who is who.

Batsheva is good at this. Would you be able to do this Batsheva?

This week's Chumash Sedra is Mishpatim, and mishpatim means Laws.

There are many laws listed out one after the other, in fact 53 Mitzvos are listed out.

In relation to this I saw 2 nice connected vorts (aphorisms) in this week's 'Hayom Yom' (- Compiled and arranged by the Rebbe from talks and letters of the Frierdike Rebbe.)

First:

There are 2 kinds of laws

1. Laws that generate life
2. Laws that result from life

Man-made laws result from life. That is why they differ in every country, each according to it's local circumstances.

G-d's Torah is the Divine Law that generates life. It is 'the Torah of Truth' - the same in all places and at all times. The Torah is eternal.

Second:

Studying a passage of Chumash every day with the commentary of Rashi (reading the first aliyah of the upcoming Shabbos, on Sunday, the second on Monday and so on).. must be carefully observed.

Doing so impacts the individual, his children, and his grandchildren.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos!

Mishpatim ↑ Mishpatim · Contents · By date משפטים

VICTORY OF JOY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 8 February 2024 · Shabbos 10 Feb 2024 · א' אדר א' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week. I hope that you and the new baby are well. Wishing you all a wonderful year with much nachas from your whole Family!

It is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week. We wish long life to all her Family - Sid, Brian, Roy, Jody, Sheli, Gavin, Adam, and all of your Families. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah, and you should only have simchos in the future.

Tonight is Rosh Chodesh Adar aleph, and our Sages teach us that when we enter the month of Adar we must ADD IN JOY AND HAPPINESS.

Joy motivates and inspires us to progress in our goals, and also to overcome challenges when they come along, regardless of how difficult they are.

This is explained by the Alte Rebbe in this week's Tanya (Chap 26) as follows:

"If 2 people were wrestling with each other, each trying to topple the other, if one of them is lazy and sluggish, he will easily be defeated, even if he is stronger than the other.

Similarly with the conquest of one's evil nature.

It is impossible to conquer the evil nature with laziness, which stems from sadness and dullness of heart.

Rather, it can be conquered with alacrity, which derives from joy and an open heart, unblemished by any trace of worry and sadness from the world." (Because he knows, that difficulties, if they arise, are really blessings from Hashem in disguise, to help him on his particular spiritual journey)

Wishing everyone a Good Shabbos and Good Chodesh, with much happiness.

GUARDIANS OF OUR SOULS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 February 2025 · Shabbos 22 Feb 2025 · כ"ד שבט תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

I have no recorded simchos for this week, but I had some nice news of Family getting together:

Reuven and Chana Lieba visited us in London, and we spent a lovely few days together including Shabbos.

And I got word that Janine Milner and Selma Penn bumped in to each other in Johannesburg, and have made an arrangement to meet again!

To many more warm connections between all Family members!

In this week's Sedra Mishpatim, we start learning lots of Laws. In fact the Sedra contains 53 Mitzvot.

I heard from Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon's shiur this week, an interesting Dvar Torah based on the Laws of Employer - Employee relations, which I would like to share. He mentioned that this point was based on a source in Chassidus.

Within employment there are 4 types of watchmen as follows: (relating to movable items)

- Shomer chinam (a guardian who does this for free). If something happens to the guarded article, this category of people have the least responsibility if article gets lost or damaged etc. Eg. He is not held liable, but would have to take an oath about what happened
- Shoel (a borrower). The borrower doesn't pay anything, and therefore if article is lost or damaged etc, he has the highest level of responsibility of

the 4 categories. Ie he is always liable (has to pay for damages) unless there is very exceptional circumstance.

- Nosei Sachar (a paid worker). Has intermediate level of responsibility if things go wrong. (because he works and gets paid). He has to pay for damages unless damage was beyond his control
- Socher (a renter). Similarly, he has an intermediate level of responsibility if things go wrong. Ie he has to pay for damages unless the damage was beyond his control

In the same way, we are custodians or guardians of the soul which Hashem has entrusted within us to care for, and here we also have 4 categories of people analogous to the above:

- Shomer chinam - This is the person who serves Hashem with love and joy and does not look for any remuneration. As a result , he has the most rights. He is not liable if there is loss or damage.
- Shoel - This person, as a borrower, has the attitude of "I am taking your soul as if it is mine, and I owe you nothing. I am just going to enjoy myself." This category has the least rights, and almost always has to pay if there is loss or damage.
- Nosei Sachar - As a paid worker, he says "I will do your work, but I expect payment, as I have lots of needs." He has to pay when there are damages, unless circumstances were beyond his control
- Socher - He says, as a renter, "I am going to use your soul, and pay you." He has to pay when there are damages, unless circumstances were beyond his control.

Man (or woman) have free choice, and we can decide where we want to be at any stage in our lives. It is in our own hands.

Gut Shabbos to all!

GIVING

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 February 2026 · Shabbos 14 Feb 2026 · כ"ז שבט תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazel Tov to Alisa on her birthday. Wishing you a wonderful year Alisa with continued growth and achievement, and lots of nachas from your Family!

Mazal Tov to Rivka Emunah on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you a happy year Rivkah, and to continue giving much nachas to your Family

Wishing long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next Thursday. I always have such good memories when I think of her. Her Neshama should have an Aliyah.

This Shabbos is Shabbos Mevorchim Adar, and we also read, besides the Sedra, the portion about the Half Shekel.

It is also said that when we enter Adar, we should increase in JOY

Adar, the month which contains Purim, is therefore a month of GIVING and JOY

GIVING

- The half shekel (a donation given equally by every Jew to the Temple)
- Giving charity to the poor on Purim (Matanos laevyonim)
- Giving gifts to friends and Family on Purim (Shlach Manos)

In the words of the Rebbe: (1991)

The month of Adar stresses CHARITY.

Every individual must therefore add in charity.

This applies in the physical sense, through giving money, food and drink.

It also applies in the spiritual sense, through helping another person, giving advice, learning with them, etc

JOY

We try to increase in our joy throughout the month of Adar and especially on Purim.

Gut Shabbos to all.

תרומה

Terumah

Shemos 25:1 · parsha 7 of 11 in Shemos · 19 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — DONKEY 491
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF THE PRESENT 493
2018 / 5778 — BEARDS 496
2019 / 5779 — PROACTIVE HAPPINESS 497
2020 / 5780 — JOY OF ADAR 499
2021 / 5781 — JOY 501
2022 / 5782 — FURTHER ASPECTS OF JOY 502
2023 / 5783 — STRIVING FOR TRUTH 504
2024 / 5784 — 60 DAYS OF JOY 507
2025 / 5785 — AMAZING STORY FROM THE WAR 509
2026 / 5786 — DEVELOPING THE EMOTION OF LOVE 512

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

DONKEY

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 February 2016 · Shabbos 13 Feb 2016 · ד׳ אדר א׳ תשע״ו

Dear Family.

Hope everyone is well.

Welcome to our home Avi, on your way to Eretz Yisrael. It is so nice of you to have stopped by for Shabbos. Enjoy! And enjoy London. Of course we are missing Penina being with you.

Happy birthday to Alisa on her birthday today!

And we wish Renee long life for the Yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie AH.

We also wish Hirshy good luck with his marathon and fund raising for Hatzola of LA. It is not too late to sponsor his beautiful Mitzva. I also heard that you and Mariasha had many guests for Shabbos last week. Tizkeh lemitzvos!

RAMBAM 5 MINUTES PER WEEK -7 CHAPTERS - SEFER ZEROIM, HILCHOS BIKURIM CHAPS 4,5,6,7,8,9,10. SEE ATTACHMENT BELOW. P 12

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13BSSFKAX8Sy47ZRWnb48R9ci2Gbla0Ch-C21hWds1 2dQ/edit

I saw a nice Dvar Torah in this weeks Hayom Yom. (28th Shvat)

I love the Teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, and this is one of them.

It is based on a Posuk from last weeks Sedra (Mishpatim) which says:

'When you see the CHAMOR (DONKEY) of your enemy (I presume this means a Jewish 'enemy') struggling under its burden, and you may feel that you do not want to help him, (nevertheless) you should make every effort to help him (to unload his donkey)'

So The Baal Shem Tov explains the verse as follows:

When you see the CHAMOR - (Chamor has 2 meanings ie either donkey or materiality) So 'When you carefully examine your Chamor ie YOUR MATERIALITY to do with your body, you will see..

Your enemy 'ie your chomer may hate your Divine Soul that longs for G-dliness and the Spiritual, and furthermore you will see that it is..

Lying under its burden 'ie the body understands that it has a big job to do regarding Torah and Mitzvos, but it is lazy to fulfil them (because it seems a burden to him). It may therefore occur to you...

To refrain from helping (the body) ' ie it may occur to you to be hard with the body, and to break its materiality through afflicting it with ascetic practices. Or just ignoring its burden. HOWEVER THE BAAL SHEM TOV WARNS US THAT THIS IS NOT THE CORRECT PATH TO FOLLOW. Rather.....

You must aid it 'purify the body, refine it, but do not break it by mortification. SO THAT THE 'ENEMY' SHOULD BE TRANSFORMED INTO AN ALLY, (ie a vehicle for the Soul to attain great heights which it would not be able to attain without the body and the physical world), by doing the physical acts down here as prescribed by Torah'

Gut Shabbos to all.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

JOY OF THE PRESENT

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 March 2017 · Shabbos 4 Mar 2017 · ו׳ אדר תשע״ז

Sent as a forward of his own email (he had emailed it to himself first); added to the book 1 Nov 2026.

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you many more, and much success Dani.

Mazal Tov Sarita in Australia far away. But you are still close to our hearts. Love from all of us Sarita.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah and Family on the wedding of her brother Mendel, taking place tonight.

In continuation with the theme of increasing our JOY in the month of Adar, what was uppermost in my mind this week was the fresh joy of the PRESENT.

This was the theme of a talk by Rabbi Y Jacobson, which I heard this week, which was very powerful, and which I will try and share below.

And very close to this theme, out of the blue in the middle of the week Zalmy came up with this quote while we had been chatting ‘In life one either wins or learns’, which unbeknown to him, was so spot on to what was running through the the week.

R Jacobson’s talk was based around quite a strange story from The Jerusalem Talmud (Peah), but I believe it gives us an important lesson in Joy.

'Two of the greatest Tanaim of that time, around about 300 CE, Reb Yochanan and Reish Lakish, were on their way to bathe in the hot springs of Tiberias (which I believe are extremely hot).

When they reached there they found a beggar who asked them for a donation.

They replied that they will give him when they have finished bathing, and they proceeded to the springs.

When they had finished and were on their way out, they found the beggar dead!

Now, lets put ourselves in their position, and try and understand how we would have felt?

Shock, guilt, fear, confusion, panic, run to find help, run away, guilt for the rest of our lives etc, or some combination?

Their response was 'We did not merit to help this man while he was alive. Let us now merit to help him in his death.' And they proceeded to prepare him for burial.

As it is known, burial is a great kindness and mitzva for the deceased, (because those performing the kindness know that they will not receive anything in return), and it consists of a number of stages.

As they were working their way through the stages, they found on his body a hidden bag of gold coins.

It is a hard story to understand, but R Jacobson explained that these Sages straight away homed in to the PRESENT, the opportunity that presented NOW, and got to work.

They did not start criticising themselves and getting depressed or getting involved and paralysed with a host of other negative emotions. These would not help the poor beggar,

who now had new needs.

As a practical lesson, he pointed out how easy it is for ourselves to either 'live' in the past or 'live' in the future when we relate to others or events.

To try and focus in to the present is really getting very close to where the Truth lies, and can bring us to a GREAT AND FRESH JOY

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

BEARDS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 16 February 2018 · Shabbos 17 Feb 2018 · ב' אדר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Wishing long life to Mommy for the yohrtzeit of Pepe a'h

Wishing long life to Renee for the yohrtzeit of Auntie Lottie a'h.

Both are remembered with fond memories. Their neshamos should have an aliyah.

And we should all know only simchos.

This week the subject of BEARDS came up and it reminded me of a funny article I saw in the BBC about this subject.

Generally there is a view that beards are unhygienic, but in a study published in the 'Journal of Hospital Infection', there were some interesting findings.

So I am attaching this article, which is interesting, AND ALSO FUN FOR ADAR.

Enjoy. Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos to all.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35350886>
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35350886

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

PROACTIVE HAPPINESS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 February 2019 · Shabbos 9 Feb 2019 · ד' אדר א' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa on your birthday next week. Wishing you a happy and productive year Alisa.

We have now entered the month of Adar, and this year it is a leap year and so we have 2 Adars.

And Adar means that we should now be extra HAPPY - mishenichnas Adar marbim BESIMCHA - 'when Adar enters we should increase in joy'.

And how should we be happy?

I saw an interesting vort this week on how to be happy, which is explained by the root of the word.

But the root of the English word and the root of the Hebrew word give very different instructions!

The root of 'happy' is hap which means fortune or luck.

Ie it is saying that when things go well, you will be happy, and if not , you will be unhappy (Not a very happy situation!)

The Hebrew word for happiness is BESIMCHA and if you rearrange these letters it spells out MACHSHAVA

Machshava means THOUGHT.

And the instruction to us is that happiness depends on our thoughts IE IT IS OUR CHOICE, AND IT IS IN OUR HANDS, IF WE WANT TO BE HAPPY

3 areas were mentioned where we can exert this choice:

1. Look at what we have, rather than what we are missing. Count all the blessings Hashem has given us as an individual.
2. Hashem does not owe us anything. Therefore see everything that we have, as a gift. And when we get gifts, this makes us happy.
3. When we indulge ourselves, we will be partially happy, and only for a short time. When we help others, this will bring happiness to our whole being, and will have a long lasting effect.

And then I saw another interesting point from the Rebbe, about the fact that the 2 months of Adar add up to 60 days.

In halacha there is a concept that 1 part of a forbidden substance will get lost if it is mixed in with 60 parts of an allowed substance.

Translated to Adar this means, that if we make an effort, to be happy on all the 60 days of Adar, this should eliminate any negativity or difficulty, that we may have within ourselves. Ie the 60 days of happiness (allowed substance), will dissolve our negativities (forbidden substance) 60:1

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and 60 days of Adar happiness.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

JOY OF ADAR

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 February 2020 · Shabbos 29 Feb 2020 · ד' אדר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday next week. I hope all is going well with you in every way Dani, and wishing you a wonderful year

Tonight is Pepe's Yohrtzeit, and we wish Mommy long life. All our Family have fond memories of Pepe from Tunisia, and when he spent the last years of his life in our home. We should have Mashiach now, when we can all be together again with all departed loved ones.

I saw a dvar Torah from Rabbi Ginsburgh, from Sefer Yetzirah, about Adar.

According to Sefer Yetzirah, each Jewish month has a corresponding zodiac sign, colour, letter of the Hebrew alphabet, one of the 12 Tribes, a sense, and a controlling organ or limb of the body.

When Adar enters we increase with SIMCHAH - JOY

- The mazal (zodiac) of Adar is Pisces - the Fish. The Hebrew word for fish is dag, and the Hebrew word for worry is daag. The fish of the joy of Purim, convert all the worry in the head of man to the ultimate joy of redemption, with the new birth of self from the 'unknowable head'. (Fish in Kabbalah are a symbol of 'concealed reality')
- Adar is the 12th and last month of the year
- Adar is related to the word adir, which means strength. Our Sages say that the mazal of Adar is strong ie Adar is a month of good fortune
- The festival of Purim marks the high point in Joy for the entire year.

- The Jewish Year begins with the joy of the redemption of Pesach, and ends with the joy of the redemption of Purim
- Joy breaks through all barriers
- The Hebrew word for Leap Year is ibur, which means 'pregnant'. It is the joy of Adar which makes Adar the 'pregnant' month of the year (ie 7 years of the 19 year Jewish Cycle, are leap years, where we then have Adar 1 and Adar 2)
- When we have a leap year, Purim is always in the second Adar. Again, in order to link the redemption of Purim to the redemption of Pesach. There is a saying that 'the end is wedged in the beginning.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Happy Adar!

Terumah · Purim ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

JOY

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Purim · sent Thursday, 18 February 2021 · Shabbos 20 Feb 2021 · ח' אדר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Adar.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha who has a birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much new development and achievement for the whole Family, and with joy, Mariasha!

Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb who has a birthday on Taanis Esther next week. Wishing you many more happy and healthy ones Roy!

Mazal Tov to Sarita in Sydney for your birthday next week. Wishing you to do very well in all your studies Sarita, and have a happy year!

Mazal Tov to Simi Sarfati on her engagement this past week.

Wishing the whole Family and extended Family many simchos.

This week is just to link into the fun and joy of Adar and Purim, with a video and music!

Enjoy!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Purim to all.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

FURTHER ASPECTS OF JOY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 February 2022 · Shabbos 5 Feb 2022 · ד' אדר א' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish long life to Renee, Sid and Brian on the Yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie today (I believe that it is Adar Aleph). Aunty Lottie was loved by everyone, and I personally, have only warm and fond memories of her. Her neshamah should have an aliyah!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Moshe Vogel on his first birthday next week. Wishing him a happy year with much nachas for parents Avi and Penina!

The above demonstrates how our lives are constantly exposed to different moods and challenges, and it is interesting that this is being discussed in yesterday's and today's portion of Tanya learning, which I would like to share.

The Alte Rebbe is discussing ways of overcoming obstacles in the path of one's service to Hashem.

Currently he shows how one may overcome sadness and dullness of heart whereby the heart becomes insensitive to feelings of love and fear of Hashem.

"The Alte Rebbe uses a parable of 2 people wrestling with each other, each trying to fell the other.

If one of them is lazy and sluggish he will easily be defeated and fall, even if he is stronger than the other, because his laziness prevents him from revealing his strength.

Similarly in each of us, there is an inner battle going on, and it would be impossible to conquer our negative nature with laziness which stems from sadness.

Our negative side can however be conquered if there is alacrity WHICH DERIVES FROM JOY, and an open, ie responsive, heart, that is unblemished by any traces of worry and sadness in the world."

"Sound advice has been offered by our Sages on cleansing one's heart of all sadness and any trace of worry about mundane matters.

This is contained in the well known saying of our Sages that 'Just as one recites a blessing for his good fortune, so must he recite a blessing for one's misfortune (Gemorra Brochos Chap 9 - funnily enough this is the vey Gemorra that we are learning this week in Amud Yomi!). Because it too is for good, (ie the misfortune) except that it is not apparent and visible to mortal eyes... For one's joy in affliction stems from the fact that being near to G-d is dearer to him than anything of the life of this world..."

There is much more detail about this in Chap 26 if one wants to enlarge.

In the meantime we can continue with the work of being JOYOUS in Adar!

Gut Shabbos, and love to all.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

STRIVING FOR TRUTH

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and a Joyous Adar · sent Thursday, 23 February 2023 · Shabbos 25 Feb 2023 · ד׳ אדר תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful, happy year with much achievement, and keep giving your parents much nachas!

We have 3 yohrtzeits this week:

Today is Aunty Lottie's ah yohrtzeit, and we wish Sid and Brian and their Families, long life. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. We were all very fond of Aunty Lottie.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Pepe ah, Mommy's father. Our whole Family got to know Pepe when he lived in our home the last few years of his life. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and we wish long life to Mommy, Meyer and Dina and their Families

Also tonight is the yohrtzeit of Shimon Pilsner ah, a friend of ours for many years. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Welcome home Mommy from your Australian trip!

In this week's Sedra Trumah, the construction of the Mini Temple (Mishkan) is discussed, and I would like to share what I learned about the kerashim (the wooden beams) used for its construction, and the related Hayom Yom for today.

The verse in the Sedra says (26:15) 'You shall make the BOARDS of the Mishkan of Cedar wood, positioned UPRIGHT.

The Hebrew word for boards is KERESH, and it has the same letters as the Hebrew word for FALSEHOOD ie SHEKER.

The Frierdike Rebbe describes in great detail (Maamar Basi Legani), how the service in the Mishkan and in the permanent equivalent, the Temple, consisted of transforming darkness to light.

In relation to the Boards, which hint to falsehood as mentioned above, one aspect of their refinement, is that they were made to stand UPRIGHT (as mentioned in the above verse).

Another aspect of the word sheker, is that all its 3 letters on the lower side are one legged or pointy, implying instability.

Whereas in contrast to falsehood we have TRUTH, where the Hebrew word for Truth is EMES. Here each of the 3 letters is either 2-legged or a platform, implying stability.

Another interesting aspect of the word EMES is that the first letter is aleph (which is also the first letter of the alphabet). The last letter is tav (the last letter of the alphabet). And the middle letter is mem (which is exactly in the middle of the alphabet) - implying that if something is really true, it is true from beginning to end! (a tall order)

And in todays Hayom Yom, interestingly, the Rebbe brings a reference from the Alter Rebbe, on HOW TO STRIVE FOR THE TRUTH!

See attached.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a month of GREAT JOY, the special joy of Adar!

Attached to this letter

Hayom Yom, Thursday 2 Adar 5783 ("Hayom Yom - Truth.pdf")

Hayom Yom
Thursday, 2 Adar 5783

Rabeinu Haggadol[1] the Alter Rebbe, set forth a program for Chassidim of striving *(avoda)* with the mind and seeking truth, to critically examine one's every move to be certain it conforms strictly with truth[2] and comes through *avoda*, effort.
This *avoda* does not imply - as some think, altogether erroneously - that one must pulverize mountains and shatter boulders, turn the world upside down. The absolute truth is that any *avoda*, any act, whatever it may be, is perfectly satisfactory when performed with true *kavana*, intent:
A *b'racha* pronounced with *kavana*; a word of *davening* as it should be, with a prepared heart and an awareness of "before Whom you stand"; a passage in Chumash said with an awareness that it is the word of G-d; a verse of Tehillim; a beneficent trait of character expressed in befriending another with affection and love.
The truth of the matter is, that to achieve this calls for great and intense effort, meaning simply to study a great deal of Torah and to comprehend it - each according to his ability - and then G-d will help him be what truth demands.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

60 DAYS OF JOY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 February 2024 · Shabbos 17 Feb 2024 · ח' אדר א' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his third birthday tonight (or is it Adar Sheini?). Wishing you a wonderful year, with a new haircut, new tzitzis and a new kappel Shlomo!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Davidoff who turns two this coming week. Wishing you a happy year Shlomo with much nachas for your parents!

Mazal Tov to Sarita who has a birthday next week (again not sure if this is Adar Sheini?) Wishing you a year of much growth and achievement Sarita, and with happiness!

Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his birthday at the end of the week (again not sure if this is Adar Sheini). Wishing you a year of good health and happiness Roy!

This year is a Leap Year in the Jewish calendar and as a result there are 2 Adars. (Therefore apologies if I have got birthdays wrong this month!)

There is therefore 60 days of Adar, which means 60 DAYS OF JOY!

Connected to this, in the Rambam from this week, we have been learning about forbidden foods.

In Chap 15 we came across the concept of bittul beshishim - nullification with 60.

One of the questions here, is, if a forbidden food or substance falls into a pot of permitted food (of the same substance), does the permitted food become forbidden?

The answer is, if the ratio of the forbidden food is 1 in 60 or less, then the permitted food remains permitted. Ie the forbidden food becomes nullified, and may be eaten! (This is the Rabbinic concept of 'nullification in 60')

The Rebbe explained (Rosh Chodesh Adar 1 in 1992) that this concept also applies with the 60 days of Adar in a leap year.

Our efforts to be joyful in these 60 days, especially with the doing of Mitzvos, has the power to not only NULLIFY ALL NEGATIVITY, but it can also transform negativity into POSITIVITY (in the same way as prohibited food becomes, not only nullified in 60 measures of permitted food, but it can also be eaten)

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and many opportunities to express joy.

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

AMAZING STORY FROM THE WAR

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 February 2025 · Shabbos 1 Mar 2025 · א' אדר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniella Jacobs (nee Davidoff) on her English birthday next week. Wishing you much continued achievement Dani in both gashmius and ruchnius, with much joy!

Wishing Rahel long life for her father, whose yohrtzeit is next week, and who was fondly known as Pepe ah by all. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Wishing long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Auntie Lottie ah, next week. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. We were all so fond of Aunty Lottie and of course also thinking of Renee ah whom we miss very much.

I would also like to remember a friend of our Family, Shimon Pilsner ah, whose yohrtzeit is on the same day as Pepe. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

This coming Shabbos marks the start of a new cycle of learning of Rambam's (Maimonides) famous Mishneh Torah

In relation to this, I saw an amazing story from the war in Eretz Yisrael which I wanted to share.

Besides being extremely emotional, I feel that the story brings out many deep life-lessons.

- see link below.

The Rebbe started the campaign to learn Rambam in 1984.

The Mishneh Torah covers the whole breadth and probably also the whole depth of Torah Law.

The Rebbe set out this Project so that everyone, even children, could be learning the whole of Torah, and doing this learning together, bringing about a deep unity with Jews all over the world.

For the learned, there is the 3 chapters a day schedule to cover the 1000 chapters of Mishneh Torah in just under 1 year.

For those with less time there is a cycle learning 1 chapter a day, over a 3 year period.

And for those with even less time and capability, they could learn just the Mitzvos that are linked to the 1 year cycle.

Batsheva has made a brilliant time table schedule for the daily learning for each of these 3 groups on my Rambam website - https://rambampress.com/daily-study/

And I am attaching a summary which I made, which will allow everyone to learn with Group 3 above , in English, and should take literally 5 minutes a day or less. As follows:

Use the Schedule called "New 'Studying Rambam' - 3 Chapters a Day. 1st March 25 - 2nd Feb 26" in the link above.

Start from Wednesday March 5th on p22 of the attached Concise Summary, and do the first 3 chapters in the Book of Knowledge as per schedule.

A hard copy of the Concise Summary is available on Amazon if needed and I would be happy to help anyone who is interested to join the learning.

Enjoy the attached Story and Rambam learning!

Copy and paste the link below to your browser

https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/6391872/jewish/My-Husband-Died-in-Gaza-With-This-Book-at-His-Side.htm

Wishing all a Happy Adar and a Gut Shabbos!

Terumah ↑ Terumah · Contents · By date תרומה

DEVELOPING THE EMOTION OF LOVE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 February 2026 · Shabbos 21 Feb 2026 · ד׳ אדר תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you to have a year of much achievement and happiness Shlomo, and to continue giving your parents much nachas!

There are a number of yohrtzeits this week:

We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her father, Pepe. He saw his wealth as his children and grandchildren, and I am sure that he is getting much joy to see how everyone is developing BH. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Towards the end of the week is the yohrtzeit of Dov Hyman. Thinking of you Leslie and wishing you long life. I have fond memories of Dov and his Family, and wishing his neshamah to have an Aliyah.

Tonight is also the yohrtzeit of a dear friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner, who spent many Shabbosim with us. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

In Chapter 2 (2:1,2) of Rambam's Mishneh Torah (Foundations of Torah in the Book of Knowledge), which we learnt this week, are the 2 Mitzvos, To love Hashem, and To fear Hashem.

This brings up the obvious question of how can one be commanded to love, which is an emotion (and similarly with fear)? Either one loves someone or something, or one does not. It does not seem to be within our control?

And the Rambam answers this as follows:

"What is the Path to attain Love and Fear of Hashem?

When a person will CONTEMPLATE on His great and wonderous deeds and His amazing Creation, and appreciate His Infinite Wisdom that surpasses all comparison, he will immediately love, praise and glorify Him.

And there will be a yearning with tremendous desire, to know "Mi sheamar vehaya haolam" - "He who spoke, and brought the world into being."

And when one continues to reflect on these matters, he will immediately recoil in awe and fear, to see how he is just a tiny, lowly and dark creature, standing with a flimsy and limited mind, in front of He who is of Perfect Knowledge."

(Rambam then goes on to explain important principles regarding the deeds of Hashem which will help us develop a better understanding when we contemplate, in trying to develop our love. The above is just the introduction)

This is not the Rambam's words, but it follows that this technique will also work to develop, or cultivate, a love for ones fellow, through contemplation!

Wishing everyone a Good and Happy Shabbos in the Happy month of Adar.

תצוה

Tetzaveh

Shemos 27:20 · parsha 8 of 11 in Shemos · 20 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5776 — THE JOY OF HOLY MUSIC 515
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS' 518
2018 / 5778 — JOY 520
2019 / 5779 — JOY - MUSIC OF THE TEMPLE - THE HARP OF DAVID HAMELECH 522
2020 / 5780 — THE MONKEY 525
2021 / 5781 — LECHAIM 527
2022 / 5782 — A JOYOUS FAST DAY 528
2024 / 5784 — EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE 532
2025 / 5785 — LESSONS FROM PURIM 534
2026 / 5786 — DRESSING UP 536

Tetzaveh ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

THE JOY OF HOLY MUSIC

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 February 2016 · Shabbos 20 Feb 2016 · י"א אדר א' תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope you are all well.

Mazal Tov to Sarita on your birthday in far off Australia. You are still close to our heart though Sarita! Have a wonderful day tomorrow.

Mariasha I think your birthday is Adar Beis. Correct me if I am wrong.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy for completing the Marathon. Amazing. This is not an easy thing to do and it takes a lot of hard work and training. Well done Hirshy.

So we are now more than a week into Adar, and this year there are 2 Adars because it is a Leap Year..

The Rebbe has mentioned that 2 Adar gives us the opportunity to have 60 days of SIMCHA (JOY) instead of the normal 30!

There are now 5 weeks left before Purim and I thought it may be nice to look at 5 aspects of Simcha, one on each week.

And I thought to do this in the following order:

1. The Joy of Holy Music

2. The Joy of Bar Mitzva

3. The Joy of Chassana

4. The Joy of Muscle

5. The Joy of the Sublime and the Ridiculous

6. PURIM!

So this week is the JOY OF HOLY MUSIC, and in honour of our new Choson Avi, who loves PIANO music, I am attaching some Lubavitch Nigunim, by the pianistYaron Gershovsky.

I couldn't open particular full niggunim, and could only find this medley.

It should give one a little taste.

ENJOY.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nt5lptvrlg

This weeks 5 MINUTES OF RAMBAM are on P 13. The 7 Chaps are in Sefer Zeroim Book 7), Hilchos Bikkurim Chaps 11 and 12, and then Hilchos Shmita and Yovel Chaps 1,2,3,4 and 5.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13BSSFKAX8Sy47ZRWnb48R9ci2Gbla0Ch-C21hWds1 2dQ/edit

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B2duYKmTWxFkX1dUNmhIdHJIS28

And if you still have time, here is an interesting point from this weeks Sedra, Tetzave..

Moshe Rabeinu was born this month on 7th Adar, and he passed away on the same day.

However in this weeks Parsha, which is in the same week as these 2 events, Moshe's name is not even mentioned once!? (Moshes name is mentioned in every single Parsha from his birth in Parsha Shemos, all the way through to his monologue in the Book of Devarim, EXCEPT THIS PARSHA!

In this Parsha he is only referred to in the second or third person.

Why?

It could be said that the reason for this is that it was from this point that Moshe was no longer with us.

But it is much deeper than this.

The Rebbe explains that it says in Zohar that a Tzadik who has passed away, is MORE PRESENT, even in this world, than he was before his passing.

The Tzadik's Soul is no longer restricted by the Physical Body.

He can no longer be seen, but his influence is far greater for those who want to draw Spiritual Life and Inspiration.

That is why his name is not in the Parsha direct, but one knows he is there because he is referred to in the second and third person.

The influence of Moshe Rabeinu is still with us day by day through the Centuries, and we can connect with him through Torah Study.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and HAPPINESS IN EVERY DAY OF ADAR AND BEYOND.

JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS'

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos and Gut Purim · sent Thursday, 9 March 2017 · Shabbos 11 Mar 2017 · י"ג אדר תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a year of many simchos.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha who has a birthday coming up tonight. Enjoy!

I also want to welcome my cousin Brian to our weekly email.

It is so interesting how life develops. We used to be such good friends in SA playing football together, and then we landed up on different sides of the world without seeing each other for many years. And now Brian is neighbours to Penina and Avi in The Valley bringing about our reconnection BH! So happy to be in touch again and similarly with Renee and Roy.

There is a kind of paradox running through Purim.

On the one hand it reflects our ongoing battle with Amalek, and on the other hand we celebrate with much open joy to the point of even dressing up in what appears to be 'ridiculous'.

These must surely be connected.

I am learning a Maamer from the Alte Rebbe on Purim which discussed our ongoing battle with Amalek.

There was an interesting point of an explanation of Rashi on the posuk 'He said (Moshe)- The hand is on G-d's throne. Hashem will be at war with Amalek for all generations.' (Last posuk in Beshalach - Sefer Shmos)

Rashi notices in the posuk that the alef is missing from the word kisei (Throne), and that the name of Hashem is also only written with 2 of its 4 letters!

Rashi therefore comments that Hashem swore that His Name will not be whole, and nor will his Throne be whole until the name of Amalek is totally obliterated.

This should be speedily in our days

I am attaching some music videos to contribute to the celebrations!

<http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=44560&hl=purim+music> http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=44560&hl=purim+music

<http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=35343&hl=music+video> http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=35343&hl=music+video

Gut Shabbos and a a Happy 'Ridiculous' Purim to all.

JOY

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Purim · sent Thursday, 22 February 2018 · Shabbos 24 Feb 2018 · ט' אדר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Mariasha on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you a happy year.

Mazal Tov Sarita on your upcoming birthday. We miss you, but see that you are growing up into such a nice girl! You should go michayil el chayil.

Mazal Tov Roy on your upcoming birthday. I believe it is also next week. Have a wonderful year.

Adar is a month of JOY and especially PURIM.

So I am attaching 2 music videos below, which I hope you will enjoy.

And I saw a short dvar Torah on JOY from Talmud Taanis as follows:

Rav Broka was walking around the marketplace and he asked Eliyahu Hanavi if there was anyone there who was deserving of Olam haba? To which Eliyahu answered no.

Soon 2 brothers appeared, and Eliyahu said 'These men will merit Olam haba', and went on his way.

So Rav Broka approached these men and curiously asked them 'What do you do?'

Their answer was simple 'We are just a couple of lively guys who cheer up folks who are sad. And if we see people arguing angrily, we joke around with them until they give up quarrelling.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaGysJAn26E> Rogers Park - Harninu [OFFICIAL VIDEO]

https://youtu.be/wQOieYTlXYk.

Gut Shabbos and Happy Purim

Tetzaveh ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

JOY - MUSIC OF THE TEMPLE - THE HARP OF DAVID HAMELECH

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 February 2019 · Shabbos 16 Feb 2019 · י"א אדר א' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Sarita on her birthday tomorrow. Love you Sarita, and hope you are doing well in Australia!

Mazal Tov to Roy (Cobb) who also has a birthday next week. Wishing you a year of good health and nachas from all your Family.

And some other news from the Cobb Family, I would like to welcome Adam Frankel to our weekly Family email. Adam is the grandson of Renee and Roy, and he lives with his Family in Far Rockaway NY. He has joined us at a few of the Family weddings, and so some of us may have already met him. Welcome Adam!

I would like to continue with the theme of the JOY OF ADAR, and am going to keep the words minimal.

In Chumash (this week's parsha is Tetzaveh) we are learning all about the Mishkan (the mini, mobile Temple constructed by Mosheh), and for those learning one chapter a day of Rambam, we are learning all the Laws of the Bet Hamikdash (permanent Temple)

We recently learnt in chap 3 of Hilchot Klei Hamikdash (the Vessels of the Mikdash), about the MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS THAT WERE USED IN THE BET HAMIKDASH, and I found some beautiful videos, showing and explaining these BH!

This week we can look at the harp, which in Hebrew is a נבל.

If you move these letters around you get לב (heart) נ (50), which Rabbi David Louis explains beautifully below.

This will also be very interesting for those interested in music, because at the end he explains all the chords.

Enjoy!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcTGsmnjwv8> Music & the Mikdash, with Rabbi David Louis: The Harp of King David

And along the same lines, for some more entertainment and JOY!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEqE9C8R5QU> IM ESHKACHECH Nehama REUBEN Harp Hebraic אִם אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ PSALM 137

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiA86HI-GLU> King David's Lyre; Echoes of Ancient Israel

I hope to look at some more of the musical instruments in the coming weeks

Attached is part of my summary of Mishneh Torah showing the instruments that were used in the Bet Hamikdash, for those who may be interested.

Gut Shabbos and a happy Adar to all.

Attached to this letter

His summary "Musical Instruments in Bet Hamikdash" (Word document)

> Musicians
>
> This was not a specific function of Levites. Priests and distinguished Israelites could also play.
>
> Instruments used
>
> Nevalim (lyres) 2-6
>
> Chalalim (flutes) 2-12 made from reeds and sounded on 12 days per year –

Korban Pesach

Pesach 1st day

Pesach sheni

Shavuot

8 days of Sukot

Kinorot (harps) 9 or more

Chatzotzrot (trumpets) 2-120 Silver

Sounded on

All the days of the Festivals

Every Rosh Chodesh

Priests would sound trumpets and Leviim would sing while sacrifices were being offered.

Tziltzal (cymbal) 1

Tetzaveh ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

THE MONKEY

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 March 2020 · Shabbos 7 Mar 2020 · י״א אדר תש״פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on your birthday next week. Wishing you a successful year with much joy Mazal Tov Roy on your upcoming birthday. Also wishing Renee well. Wishing you a wonderful year together. Mazal Tov Kerry Lee on your birthday next week. Wishing you a great year with much joy Mazal Tov Chana Lieba in Sharon, on your birthday. It should be a year of continued simchos. And last but not least, Mazal Tov to our sweet Sarita in Sydney on your birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a wonderful year! It was great having Pesach and Gavriel with us this week!

In continuation from last week, where we were discussing elements of the month from Sefer Yetzirah, the month of Adar is connected with THE HEBREW LETTER KUF.

Kuf symbolises:

1. A monkey
2. Masquerade
3. The eye of a needle.

The monkey refers to laughter

Masquerade is an accepted custom on Purim where we hide our true identity Similarly Hashem hides his identity in the Megillah, where His Name does not even appear once. But by hiding ones identity, and pretending to be someone else, the innermost essence of one's true self becomes revealed at a very high level.

Our Sages teach us, that even in our most irrational of dreams, we would not see an 'elephant passing through the eye of a needle'. But on Purim one can experience this great wonder!

Mr Bean is a famous English comedian.
So as an introduction to Purim, see if you can get used to his humour - a real nutter!!

https://r5---sn-aigzrn7z.googlevideo.com/videoplayback?expire=1583465952&ei=gHFhXsiULZCL7QSayJGIDw&ip=81.22.47.14&id=o-AFhCm1PNjsogGT7tMeK2EwNDuiZIpTg-uP51hd1qOAFO&itag=22&source=youtube&requiressl=yes&vprv=1&mime=video%2Fmp4&ratebypass=yes&dur=903.767&lmt=1575831062401673&fvip=5&fexp=23842630&c=WEB&txp=5535432&sparams=expire%2Cei%2Cip%2Cid%2Citag%2Csource%2Crequiressl%2Cvprv%2Cmime%2Cratebypass%2Cdur%2Clmt&sig=ADKhkGMwRQIgDH66ue7JrS2GhR_FbNEl2AM4EzyE1m9jg03GIv-s_ACIQCOYVgc_mQTqEZ5-cZr0DhtBlAYSNGOM2sm-QCHB2Dnw%3D%3D&rm=sn-5gol676&req_id=352ec9b704c9a3ee&ipbypass=yes&redirect_counter=2&cm2rm=sn-u5a3u5a3-ajtk76&cms_redirect=yes&mip=92.0.196.105&mm=29&mn=sn-aigzrn7z&ms=rdu&mt=1583444254&mv=m&mvi=4&pl=22&lsparams=ipbypass,mip,mm,mn,ms,mv,mvi,pl&lsig=ABSNjpQwRAIgXgXkSIYH-oTUWLZytxj5eninYr-0FegN1brqv94lrt0CIFsVAaMGIA-a3-lxaBj7xz-dL3suW1p0ea6j5p81XkvR

Gut Shabbos and a HAPPY PURIM TO ALL

LECHAIM

2021 / 5781

Gut Purim and Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 26 February 2021 · Shabbos 27 Feb 2021 · ט"ו אדר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on the upcoming bris on Purim! Beshaah tovah umatzlachas! We will be thinking about you all on Shabbos in London!

Happy birthday to Daniella for her birthday next week. I hope you are fdoing well Daniella, and wishing you a wonderful year.

Wishing long life to Mendel and the Kehaty Family on the yohrtzeit of Nadav ah next week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Wishing long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit also of Simchah next week. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

At this busy time, of Purim on erev Shabbos, it just remains to wish everyone a very joyous Purim and Shabbos!

LECHAIM!

Love to all.

Tetzaveh ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

A JOYOUS FAST DAY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 February 2022 · Shabbos 12 Feb 2022 · י"א אדר א' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Avi and all the Vogel Family again, long life on the Shloshim of the passing of their dear father, and our dear friend Reb Yisroel Meir ben Yechezkel. His neshamah should have an aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday next week. Wishing you until 120 Roy, in good health and happiness!

Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday this coming week. Wishing you a great year with your growing Family Alisa!

Mazal Tov to Sarita whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a wonderful year Sarita, with much achievement and happiness in all areas!

We learnt an interesting sicha from the Rebbe this week on Parshas Tetzaveh.

The Rebbe's sichos are very deep and intricate, and I will try and keep it as summarised as possible.

It shows an interesting connection between the Sedra, Mosheh Rabeinu, 7th of Adar, Purim, Pesach, Leap Year and Fast Day

The Sedra

Through the whole story of Moshe Rabeinu, Moshe's name appears in every single Sedra except this one. In this week's Sedra we only get a hint of Mosheh with the word atah (you) ie Veatah Tetzaveh es Bnei Yisrael

So why is Mosheh's name missing in this Sedra?

Some say this is alluding to the passing of Mosheh.

But on the other hand the whole Sedra is talking about Mosheh in a hidden way through the link to the word ata. So really Mosheh is highly present rather than missing!

Mosheh Rabeinu

This week on the 7th of Adar, is both Mosheh's yohrtzeit and birthday on the same day!

And the 7th of Adar falls out on most years in close proximity to this weeks parsha, as it does this year.

Which makes the above question even stronger as to why Mosheh's name is left out particularly in Parshas Tetzaveh!?

7th of Adar

This day was declared as a fast day in Shulchan Aruch due to the passing of Mosheh.

But on the other hand because Mosheh's birthday was also on the 7th of Adar, it was also a day of great rejoicing. - Tosfos Nazir 14a

Purim

Gemarra Megillah - When Haman was plotting to destroy the Jewish People, the lot fell on Adar, and he rejoiced greatly, thinking that it was a month that he would succeed, because that was the month that Mosheh passed away.

But Haman did not know that it was also the month that Mosheh was born! And this caused his decree to be annulled, and sparked the miracle of Purim!

The Gemarra implies that Mosheh's birth outweighs Mosheh's passing.

And we see that Mosheh's birth was the cause of Purim, a day of celebration for all time.

And Rashi indicates there that the day ie 7th Adar, is clearly a day for only rejoicing.

And Gemorra Taanis indicates that "When Adar begins we increase in joy" ie The whole of Adar is filled with joy from day 1.

Pesach

Gemorra Taanis - Rashi comments (on the phrase "When Adar begins we increase in joy") - "These were the days of miracles for Israel - Purim and Pesach.

This implies that we increase in joy right from the beginning of Adar, all the way through.

And the 7th of Adar, through the birth of Mosheh, was also the cause of our liberation from Egypt on Pesach.

Leap Year

If Rashi is linking the joy of Adar to both the miracles of Purim and Pesach, does this mean that it only applies to the Second Adar?

The Magen Avraham rules that a fast day is observed on 7th Adar Rishon.

It therefore emerges that WE MUST ALSO INCREASE IN JOY FROM THE BEGINNING OF ADAR RISHON.

Clearly however, the degree of joy of Adar Rishon is not comparable to the joy of Adar Sheini, when the actual day of Purim falls.

Fast Day

We know that the nature of the fast day of 7th of Adar is a happy one.

In fact this day is so auspicious that it brought about the entire miracle of Purim and it colours the entire month with joy.

Therefore we see that the reason that we fast is not because of some flaw in the day, but rather to set us on a path of Teshuvah. And the fact that Mosheh was born on this day, contributes to us doing a loftier and more effective teshuva ie WE FAST OUT OF JOY - JUST AS ALL MITZVOS MUST BE PROPELLED BY JOY.

Some Answers

So why does Shulchan Aruch only mention the7th of Adar as a fast day and gives no mention to celebrate Mosheh's birth?

The question itself alludes to the answer - The auspicious aspect of the day is so sublime that it cannot be channelled into revealed joy in this lower world. Rather it remains hidden and exerts influence as a causal force acting in a detached way (Or HaTorah Yisro etc)

And on this basis we can appreciate why Mosheh's name does not appear openly in our Parsha, because in a revealed sense, the 7th of Adar is a fast day, a day of demise.

But on a deeper level, it is because his ESSENCE is present, and it is beyond representation.

This is the inner dimension of the 7th of Adar.

On this day very Jew can connect with this level, the ultimate perfection of Mosheh's birth, a level beyond any name or revelation with a sublime joy.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and continued joy through both the months of Adar!

Tetzaveh ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 February 2024 · Shabbos 24 Feb 2024 · ט"ו אדר א' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah in the editorial of Chayenu magazine this week, relating to PURIM KATAN (the SMALL PURIM) which we celebrate tonight and tomorrow, as follows:

The Rebbe explains that even though it is a small Purim it has importance, because it comes before the MAIN PURIM, and this importance is that it prepares us for proper celebration. (Purim Katan 1986).

Even although we could anyway prepare for Purim a month in advance, we see that there is a distinct advantage when the motivation to prepare, is clothed in a Purim format on Purim Katan.

One of the messages of Purim is Venahapoch Hu (Megilah 9:1) - the whole situation changed over (for the Jews from massive danger to victory and joy).

This means that on Purm Katan, our situation and Divine Service could be transformed into a new paradigm, A LIMITLESS AND JOYOUS ONE.

If it felt impossible yesterday, know that today everything is possible.

And connected to this week's Sedra Tetzaveh.

Tetzaveh means command, but it also means CONNECTION.

So today is the day to develop our connection with Hashem through more dedication to fulfilling His Will, through Torah study and Mitzvos, and especially with JOY.

I am attaching some videos for Purim Katan

Gut Shabbos and continued joy for all, and our soldiers, hostages, and the whole of Klal Yisrael!

Tetzaveh · Purim ↑ Tetzaveh · Contents · By date תצוה

LESSONS FROM PURIM

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 March 2025 · Shabbos 8 Mar 2025 · ח' אדר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Claude (Comaroff) is struggling with health issues and his Hebrew name is Yechezkiel ben Ester.

We should also remember the health of Dov Hyman.

Wishing them a refuah shleimah, and soon!

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba for her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much achievement. Especially keep travelling and visiting London!

Mazal Tov Mariasha on your birthday next week. And on the same day this year, is the birthday of Shlomo Tuvia. Mazal Tov again! Wishing your whole Family much happiness and growth and looking forward to seeing you all for Pesach BEH!

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday next week. I hope all is going well with you all in SA. Wishing you a great year Kerry Lee!

Mazal Tov to Mikayla on her birthday, same day as Kerry Lee. Wishing you a year of much joy and development!

Mazal Tov to Sarita for her birthday next week. This is your real Batmitzvah day. Wishing you a happy year with many Mitzvos!

And last but far from least, Mazal Tov to Shlomo Moshe Vogel on his birthday tomorrow, on the same day that Moshe Rabeinu was born BH. Wishing you a very happy year Shlomo, and to give your parents lots of nachas!

I saw an interesting letter from the Rebbe about PURIM which I would like to share.

Below is a summary, and I have attached the full text for those who have more time:

Not to bow down.. (Mordechai)

" One of the most inspiring lessons of Purim is the extraordinary courage of Mordechai HaYehudi, who would not kneel or bow down (to Haman)...despite us being a minority among an overwhelming majority among the nations....This resulted in 'light, joy, gladness and honour for the Jews' and an awesome respect!

Purim teaches us that the strength of our Jewish People, and similarly of every individual Jew, is in our G-d given capacity of not kneeling or bowing down to any force that is contrary to our Jewish Essence, which is rooted in the Torah and Mitzvot...

This true Jewish Spirit should not remain in the abstract, but should be translated into action, and this is especially relevant to young Jewish people, and especially young couples starting out to establish a home on the foundations of Torah and Mitzvot

The Jewish woman.. (Esther)

The main foundation of the home is the Jewish woman who is called the akeret hababayit (the foundation of the home), where Hashem has entrusted her with the major responsibilities of the character and conduct of the home such as Kashrut, Shabbat, Laws of Family Purity, raising the children etc

The importance of the role of women can be seen, in the name Megilat Esther. Even although the whole story was a combined effort between Mordechai and Esther, the Megilah was named Megilat Esther!

Gut Shabbos to all and a continued Happy Adar heading for Purim next Friday BEH

DRESSING UP

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos and Happy Purim · sent Thursday, 26 February 2026 · Shabbos 28 Feb 2026 · י"א אדר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday next week. I hope you are doing well Roy and wishing you many more healthy and happy years BEH!

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of continued achievements in both the material and spiritual Mariasha, all with much joy and nachas from your Family!

This year Mariasha and son Shlomo have their birthdays on the same day. Mazal Tov Shlomo! Have a happy day and a happy year!

Mazal Tov to Sarita on her birthday tonight (morning in Australia). Wishing you a wonderful year with much new achievement Sarita. And you should give your mother and the whole Family much nachas!

This coming week is Purim, and part of Purim's celebration is dressing up and fun.

So this week I am posting a video of Batsheva doing an amazing special effects make -up for Purim on Pesach. Try and work that one out! - Thank you Batsheva!

And also some pictures of the Family from previous Purims.

It would be great if people could post new pictures from this upcoming Purim as a follow up!

ENJOY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlDytBeMs9M>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlDytBeMs9M

Gut Shabbos and wishing everyone a Happy Purim

כי תשא

Ki Sisa

Shemos 30:11 · parsha 9 of 11 in Shemos · 21 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED 539
2017 / 5777 — JOY OF APPRECIATION 540
2018 / 5778 — COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE 542
2019 / 5779 — HIDDENESS 543
2020 / 5780 — JOY CONTINUED 548
2021 / 5781 — CONSTRUCTIVE FIRE 550
2022 / 5782 — COUNTERING NEGATIVE FORCES 552
2023 / 5783 — A STORY "IT TOOK YEARS, AND I AM FINALLY PROUD TO BE JEWISH" 554
2024 / 5784 — JOY IN BATTLE 556
2025 / 5785 — PURIM 557
2026 / 5786 — JOY CONTINUED 559

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

JOY CONTINUED

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 February 2016 · Shabbos 27 Feb 2016 · י"ח אדר א' תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

So to continue being joyous every day of Adar, I found another type of MUSIC.

This was composed for a BARMITZVA boy.

Enjoy the fun music, Israeli style!

PS. If I remember correctly, the musicians at Shmuly and Devorah Leah wedding were from the Piamena Family.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qk804wPnTtU -Mendi and Avi Piamenta - Bar Mitzva - Flute

Then Rambam 5 minutes per week is on PAGE 14 - Sefer Zeroim, Hilchos Shmita and Yovel, Chaps 6,7,8,9,10,11 and 12

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13BSSFKAX8Sy47ZRWnb48R9ci2Gbla0Ch-C21hWds1 2dQ/edit

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and MUCH JOY EVERY DAY OF ADAR.

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

JOY OF APPRECIATION

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 March 2017 · Shabbos 18 Mar 2017 · כ' אדר תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanan on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you a happy and successful year Chanan

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on your Anniversary next week. You should have many with much achievement together.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on your First Anniversary! Wow a whole year has flown by. You should have much happiness from each other and together.

Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Simcha AH next week.

We are supposed to increase in JOY for the whole of Adar, and this applies even after Purim.

I hope everyone had a very happy Purim. The pictures I saw were hilarious!

For many weeks now Tanya has been discussing all different aspects of joy.

This morning I was learning a maamer, also from the Alte Rebbe, and I saw a connection between this and Chap 34 in Tanya, which we learnt on Purim.

The maamer was discussing how vast is the Universe, and yet for Hashem this is as small as, for comparison, a single word emerging from the vast thoughts of a human being ie THE VASTNESS OF HASHEM.

Tanya was showing the different levels of our connection to Hashem

1. Our Patriarchs - were very closely connected and automatically carried out Hashems Will as a 'chariot'.
2. Moshe Rabeinu was the greatest of the Prophets - 'The Shechina spoke out

of his throat'. - Zohar
3. Then there were the rest of the Prophets, each according to the level of the comprehension that they reached
4. Israelites themselves experienced something of this union at Har Sinai, but could not bear it - 'At each utterance their souls took flight...' Gemora Shabbos
5. Therefore Hashem commanded that the Sanctuary should be constructed wherein His Shechinah could dwell contained, in the Holy of Holies.
6. Since the Temple has now been destroyed,' Hashems habitation is in the 4 cubits of halachah' - Gemora Brochos - which is His blessed Will and wisdom embodied in the laws which have been set out for us.

Tanya goes on to say that ' After we contemplate deeply on how small we are in relation to all the above levels..and that my intelligence and soul are too limited.... And that we do not have even an iota of apprehension as the Patriarchs and Prophets...yet I can still be a 'Sactuary' for Hashem by setting aside time twice a day as my time permits to engage in the study of Torah.....

In this way his heart will be gladdened and he will REJOICE WITH A HAPPY HEART THAT HE HAS MERITED TO ACT AS A HOST TO HASHEM twice daily to the limit of his available time.

And if Hashem will lavish on him generously, 'he who has clean hands' will make a further dwelling for Him, even while he is engaged in commerce, through the giving of tzedakah which is one of the Divine qualities. - as He is compassionate...'

Gut Shabbos to all.

Ki Sisa · Purim ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Purim · sent Thursday, 1 March 2018 · Shabbos 3 Mar 2018 · ט"ז אדר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday. Was so nice talking to you this week. Wishing you a year of much success, both materially and spiritually Daniella.

Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Simcha ah this coming week.

Hope everyone is having a wonderful Purim.

Attached is a COMEDY for Purim English style.

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Culture/WATCH-Rabbi-Sacks-and-comedian-Ash ley-Blaker-debate-the-point-of-Purim-543753> http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Culture/WATCH-Rabbi-Sacks-and-comedian-Ashl ey-Blaker-debate-the-point-of-Purim-543753

LECHAIM and Gut Shabbos to all.

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

HIDDENESS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 February 2019 · Shabbos 23 Feb 2019 · י"ח אדר א' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Mendel Kehaty long life on the yohrtzeit of Nadiv. Only simchos in the future Mendel!

And we should one day, all, be able to see the HIDDEN GOOD in difficulties.

Adar is a month of contrasts.

It is the month when Haman plotted to destroy the whole of klal Yisrael, but it is also the month when we received great salvation.

The word Adar means strength, and can be broken up into aleph and dar, which means Hashem dwells in this month (with more intensity)

And yet Hashems name does not appear even once in the Megillah. IT IS HIDDEN.

And we get dressed up and DISGUISE ourselves.

According to Sefer Yetzirah, each month is associated with a letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

And the letter for Adar is kuf.

KUF also means a monkey in Hebrew, and is a symbol for LAUGHTER and MASQUERADE, again linked to disguise.

By initially hiding one's true identity, pretending to be someone else, the innermost essence of one's true self becomes revealed.

On Purim one can reach this very high level of ad delo yada... until we do not know....

And it symbolises the infinite essence of Hashems transcendent light entering into the finite context of physical reality, and revealing itself in full to the Jewish soul. - Sefer Yetzirah.

And, connected, we can see the hidden hand of Hashem in this week's sedra Ki Sissa. – to do with the counting of Bnei Yisrael.

Gemara Megila – 'It was known to Hashem that Haman would weigh shekalim to purchase Bnei Yisrael and do with them as he wished. Hashem thus pre-empted him by giving Bnei Yisrael the mitzvah to give shekalim.' (which would be an antidote to Haman's plans)

As follows:

Tosfos writes that the10,000 kikar of silver that Haman offered Achashveirosh, equals the amount of half shekels which would be given by the counted, 600,000 Bnei Yisrael in our sedra!!

For those interested in the calculation, see attached with the compliments of Mommy!

And to end with some Purim music entertainment - Another instrument that was played in the Bet Hamikdash, was the kinor.

We don't know exactly what this instrument was but it is thought to have been what we know today as the OUD.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9kxIAX2FFU> Taqsim Oud - Moshe Habusha - - משה חבושה'סים עוד צ'תק - בא (Israel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83tjxYstdZk&list=PLWDuaLbjXlhFh2uaQeKhKY8qWPLbxq0pR> spiritual jewish traditional music. Ki Eshmera - Tslilim

And other interesting string music:

נדב בכר - מנגינה על טבעית <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1rRiqxN8Ys> על מינור טבעי - Super Natural Melody -Nadav bachar

נצח הוד יסוד - אורן <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYm_QoOzWQQ> צור ונדב בכר Nadav Bachar & Oren Tsor

Gut Shabbos, and a Happy Adar to all.

Attached to this letter

The half-shekel calculation (2 scans)

PURIM MATH

"*Machatzis hashekel b'shekel hakodesh*" (Shmos 13,3)

The Gemara Megiloh 13b says in the name of Reish Lokish, "It was known to the One Who created the world that Haman would weigh "sh'kolim" to purchase the bnei Yisroel and do with them as he wishes. Thus, **Hashem preempted him by giving the bnei Yisroel the mitzvah of giving "sh'kolim."**

Tosfos (Gemara Megiloh 16a d.h. "v'dochi") writes that he heard that the 10,000 "kikar" weights of silver that Haman offered Achashveirosh (Megilas Esther 3:9) equals the amount of "sh'kolim" that the 600,000 b'nei Yisroel who left Egypt gave in the form of half-"sh'kolim." Tosfos ends by saying that if you calculate it you will find that it is accurate.

How does Haman's 10,000 "kikar" weights of silver equal the amount of half-sh'kolim that 600,000 bnei Yisroel would give?

The *Chizkuni* on the above verse gives us a calculation. On average people live seventy years. The responsibility to give a half-shekel begins at the age of twenty (this is contested by some, see Torah T'mimah). On average people give a half-shekel for fifty years. The type of half-shekel given is in the "shekel hakodesh" coin system, which has double the value of non-kodesh "sh'kolim," hence 25 shiklei kodesh given in a lifetime equal 50 standard sh'kolim. Fifty "sh'kolim" equal 100 zuzim, given on average by each person. Sixty people would give 6,000 "zuzim," equal to 60 "monoh," the weight of a "kikar" of silver. Ten-thousand times this amount was given by 600,000 people. Thus a total of 10,000 "kikar kesef," was given by these 600,000 people, and Haman offered an equal amount.

70 years – 20 years = 50 years

50 standard shkolim = 100 zuzim (given in a lifetime)

100 zuzim = 1 maneh
60 maneh = kikar kesef

600,000 (people) X 100 = 60,000,000 zuzim = 600,000 maneh = 10,000 silver kikar

Alternatively, the intention of *Tosfos* can be explained with the words of the *Rabbeinu Chanan'eil* (Sotoh 5a Tosfos d.h. "Odom"). He says that the weight of a "rviis halug" of blood, the minimal amount required to be in a person's circulatory system to stay alive, is that of 25 "sh'kolim." As mentioned earlier, Tosfos said that Haman wanted to give their COMPLETE redemption. The *R'vid Hazohov* says that this likely means "shkolim" for the complete weight of their blood, 25 "sh'kolim" (or 50 standard sh'kolim) per person. We thus arrive at exactly at the same 10,000 "kikar kesef."

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING TABLE

גרה	דינר	שקל	סלע	מנה	ככר	כמה? HOW MUCH?
30,000				60	1	ככר
	100			1		מנה
		2	1		1/1500	סלע (שקל הקדוש)
		1				שקל
	1	½				דינר(זוז)
1			1/20			גרה

ANSWER SHEET

Currency

כמה?	ככר	מנה	סלע	שקל	דינר	גרה
ככר	1	60	1500	3000	6000	30000
מנה	1/60	1	25	50	100	500
סלע (שקל הקדוש)	1/1500	1/25	1	2	4	20
שקל	1/3000	1/50	½	1	2	10
דינר(זוז)	1/6000	1/100	¼	½	1	5
גרה	1/30000	1/500	1/20	1/10	1/5	1

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

JOY CONTINUED

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 March 2020 · Shabbos 14 Mar 2020 · י"ח אדר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and that Purim was a joyous one.

The costumes we saw were amazing BH!

Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on your upcoming Anniversary. You should continue achieving in all areas, michayil el chayil, with much joy and nachas

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina who also have an Anniversary next week. You should both continue your beautiful work with continued joy and nachas.

Mazal Tov to my brother Chanan on his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Chanan with many simchos!

We wish long life to Mendel and the Kehaty Family on the Yohrtzeit of Nadiv.

And we wish Mommy long life on the Yohrtzeit of Simcha.

Only simchos for everyone in the future.

The Baal Shem Tov taught:

"Worry and sadness are the source of all impurity.

One cannot serve hashem properly without simchah.

One's evil inclination (yetzer hara), tries to persuade a person to be sad for having failed in one way or the other, telling him that he (or she) has committed a serious transgression.

The Jew has to answer him very clear and straight - 'This is just a trick of yours to disturb my service of Hashem! For even if I have truly committed a

transgression, it is now more important to Hashem that I serve Him with SIMCHA - JOY.'"

Gut Shabbos to all

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

CONSTRUCTIVE FIRE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 March 2021 · Shabbos 6 Mar 2021 · כ"ב אדר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their wedding Anniversary tonight. Wishing you to keep progressing together from strength to strength and with much joy, and nachas from your Family.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their wedding Anniversary next week. One simchah should keep leading to another, and with much achievement.

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday next week. I hope all is going well with you and your Family Kerry Lee, and wishing you a wonderful year.

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah in todays Hayom Yom about the FIRE OF THE MIZBEACH (Altar), and of course this week's Sedra Ki Tissa, also speaks about a 'coin of fire', which is another interesting subject.

In the Hayom Yom, The Rebbe explains what the Magid of Mezeritch taught The Alte Rebbe in Yechidus on the pasuk "Esh tamid tukad al haMizbeach. Lo tichbeh" - A constant fire shall burn on the Altar. It should not be extinguished.

The simple meaning of "lo tichbeh" is that it (the fire) should not be extinguished.

But the Magid looks deeper, and explains it as "the LO (the NO - lo also means no in Hebrew)" should be extinguished ie Lo, (comma) tichbeh, should be extinguished.

All the procedures in the Bet HaMikdash, also reflect what goes on inside of us as individuals.

With the FIRE of the Mizbeach, a miracle occurred initially where Hashem sent down a FIRE to consume the Sacrifice.

And then there is a Mitzvah on our side to light the fire from below, and keep the FIRE continually burning with wood etc.

The Zohar explains that a spirit from below, draws down a Spirit from Above, and draws down a spirit from the highest realms.

Ie the way we act here below on earth, causes an equivalent reaction to us from Above.

The FIRE represents continual enthusiasm and positivity, against the negativity towards G-dliness (against the inner voice which says lo ie no to spirituality)

So the above verse can be understood in a new light "A constant FIRE shall burn on the Altar. It should extinguish the NO"

Gut Shabbos to all.

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

COUNTERING NEGATIVE FORCES

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 18 February 2022 · Shabbos 19 Feb 2022 · י"ח אדר א' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the birth of a baby boy BH! Such wonderful news! The bris should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas and you should have much nachas from him, and from all your children.

Wishing long life to Mendel on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv, who we were fortunate to meet. His neshamah should have an Aliyah!

Apologies for the delayed email this week but I have been travelling around to a few places.

Many thanks to all for the wonderful hosting and care! Much appreciated.

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah in this week's Parshah Ki Sissa, from the Rebbe's father R Levi Yitzchok, based on the ingredients of the ketores -Incence Offering, which we learn about this week (30: 34-35)

"The Talmud extrapolates from the above verse that there were 11 components to the mixture.

Four of these are spelt out clearly in Torah and seven are inferred from the text = Eleven.

In Parshas Vayishlach, Torah enumerates the 7 Kings of Edom, and they represent impurity.

In Kabbalistic terminology they are referred to as the Kings of Tohu. Tohu is chaos, and in this world it is expressed as negativity and impurity, where there is a lack of light ie the opposite of Holiness.

In listing these Kings, Torah puts the father's name with four of them.

This means that there were seven Kings and four fathers, making a total of eleven.

The Arizal explains that the spiritual purpose of the Incence Offering was to serve as a shield from the eleven unwanted forces of negativity and impurity! Ie the Arizal is pointing out that the number eleven relates to the number of negative forces.

And R Levi Yitzchak points out the fascinating detail of how the 4's and 7's align up so precisely in Torah."

And what can we do practically?

As I was leaving the Ohel yesterday, I heard the Rebbe saying on a video "To increase in Tzedaka with JOY AND GLADNESS OF HEART."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and to continue with joy through Adar

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

A STORY "IT TOOK YEARS, AND I AM FINALLY PROUD TO BE JEWISH"

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 March 2023 · Shabbos 11 Mar 2023 · י"ח אדר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

There are 2 yohrtzeits this week:

We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister Simcha ah. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah, and there should be only simchos in the future.

We wish Mendel Kehaty long life on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadav ah. His neshamah should have an Aliyah, and only simchos for you and your Family , Mendel, in the future.

Then, this week, we celebrated the addition of 2 new American Citizens in our Family BH:

Mazal Tov to Pesach on achieving US citizenship! Michayil el Chayil!

Mazal Tov to Penina on receiving US citizenship! Wishing you many more successes BEH.

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba whose birthday bordered 2 weeks. So no harm to wish again for a wonderful, happy and healthy Year.

We need to be happy the whole month of Adar, and so, even although Purim has gone by, I thought it would be entertaining to post some photos of the Family activities which came my way - see attached. (apologies for not including everyone, but everyone should feel free to share any other Purim scenes with the group)

Secondly I saw a beautiful and touching story, which I am attaching, and which I understood to be linked to an aspect of this week's Sedra Ki Tissa.

The verse in the Sedra (34:6 and 7) is where Hashem states "I am the Eternal, all-powerful, merciful and kind, slow to anger...preserving (remembering) any kindnesses done before Me until 2000 GENERATIONS...."!

And the attached story shows how one Jewish Family retained it's Jewish link to ITS NEXT GENERATION with 4 words! (And probably with the above help from Hashem)

Gut Shabbos to all!

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

JOY IN BATTLE

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 February 2024 · Shabbos 2 Mar 2024 · כ"ב אדר א' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and having a happy Adar 1!

Mazal Tov to Daniella whose Hebrew birthday is this week. Wishing you an amazing year Daniella in both secular and spiritual together with Ariel whose birthday is 2 days later! It was so nice to be with you both in New York.

So Mazal Tov also, Ariel on your birthday. Wishing you both many celebrations together! And with much success and happiness.

Continuing with the theme of JOY IN ADAR, I saw this short vort from Derher magazine:

A Jewish soldier was speaking to the Tzemach Tzedek (the third Lubavitch Rebbe, 1789 - 1866), and said,

"A war cannot be won with tears.

A war is taken on while singing a march!"

The Tzemach Tzedek then exclaimed:

"THIS IS A TRUE SOLDIER!"

(And implied is that we can all be true soldiers in our own personal battles of life)

Wishing everyone a Good and Happy Shabbos

Ki Sisa · Purim ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

PURIM

2025 / 5785

Happy Purim and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 March 2025 · Shabbos 15 Mar 2025 · ט"ו אדר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his birthday tomorrow. I hope all is well with you Roy. Thinking about you and wishing you a year of good health, happiness and lots of nachas from all your Family. So happy to be in touch with more of your Family now.

Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a year of many simchos Chanan! And in good health BEH.

Mazal Tov to Kevin (Marks) who also has a birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a great year Kevin and we cannot thank you enough for the Family Tree that you made for us all!

So nice to have heard about the beautiful get together of Brian, Ashley, and many members of our Family in California BH

We wish again long life to Leslie and the Hyman Family on the passing of Dov ah.

We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of Dani her sister next week. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah!

We wish long life to Mendel Kehaty and all his Family on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv Dovber which is next week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah!

As we can see, this week is bitter – sweet, having a combination of joys and sadnesses. As is life.

But Torah instructs us, that despite all of this, we need to increase in Joy throughout the month of Adar, and especially on Purim, which we celebrate this Friday.

And so, in this spirit, I am posting a few video clips, in preparation for Purim.

Apologies if there are ads. Please skip them

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7fr0WMNW2k
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7fr0WMNW2k&ab_channel=Oorah>
&ab_channel=Oorah

https://collive.com/8th-day-clip-will-have-you-dance/

The Maccabeats Purim Song
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=af3-
FR8B3XfE&ab_channel=%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D
7%90%D7%9C%D7%93%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%A0%D7%95>

Zusha 'Mishenichnas Adar' || זושא משנכנס אדר
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uP35iBYjVes>

Happy Purim and Gut Shabbos to all

Ki Sisa ↑ Ki Sisa · Contents · By date כי תשא

JOY CONTINUED

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 March 2026 · Shabbos 7 Mar 2026 · י"ח אדר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and have had a Happy Purim!

Wishing refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

MAZAL TOV TO DOVI AND RIKKI ON THEIR UPCOMING CHASSANAH NEXT WEEK BEH! It should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas and you should build a beautiful binyan adei ad together, giving your parents and Hashem much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their Anniversary. BH another Levy celebration next week! Wishing you many more simchos and much nachas from all your Family Shmuel and Rivky and much happiness together BEH!

And it is also Zalmy and Nechama Dina's Anniversary next week. Mazal Tov! Wishing you many more happy and healthy years together BEH!

Then we have birthdays:

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba (Annette Davidoff) on her birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Chana Lieba with much happiness, and continued nachas from all your Family BEH

Mazal Tov to Kevin Marks whose birthday was on Taanis Esther. Wishing you a great year Kevin, and thank you for all the work you do on our Family Tree!

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee whose birthday is on Shabbos. Wishing you a wonderful year Kerry Lee. It was so nice that you got together with Pesach in SA recently, and that Families stay in touch BH!

Mazal Tov to Mikayla Davidoff whose birthday is also on Shabbos. Wishing you much nachas from your growing Family, Mikayla, and a happy and successful year BEH!

And Yohrtzeits:

We wish long life to Mendel Kehaty on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv Dovber ah on Shabbos. His neshamah should have an Aliyah and wishing you only simchos in the future Mendel. I only met Nadiv once, but I still have good memories of him.

Wishing Mommy (Rahel) long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister, Simcha ah on Sunday. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. Only simchos for the whole Family BEH.

Purim was very joyous BH. And it is still Adar. And so the JOY continues!

The Megillah says that after the Miracle of Purim the Jewish People were BLESSED WITH JOY (SIMCHAH)

Our Sages understand this to mean that we were now able to celebrate the Yamim Tovim.

The Rebbe explains that although other Nations also have holidays, they celebrate them with drinking and unbridled conduct.

The Jewish People by contrast, even when they rejoice and drink, they come closer to Hashem, and heighten their Yiras Shamayim (Fear of Heaven) and Holiness. - Likutei Sichos Book 3

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a very Happy Week!

ויקהל

Vayakhel

Shemos 35:1 · parsha 10 of 11 in Shemos · 22 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - CHASSANAH AND TRUE LOVE 562
2017 / 5777 — EMUNAH INTRODUCTION 565
2018 / 5778 — JOY CONTINUED 569
2019 / 5779 — THE ZODIAC OF ADAR 571
2020 / 5780 — ADAR IS NOT YET OVER 574
2021 / 5781 — THE FENCE 576
2022 / 5782 — HUMOUR 578
2023 / 5783 — JOYFUL APPROACH 580
2024 / 5784 — JOY OF SHABBOS 582
2025 / 5785 — DAVIDOFF ROOTS? 584
2026 / 5786 — BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY 586

Vayakhel ↑ Vayakhel · Contents · By date ויקהל

JOY CONTINUED - CHASSANAH AND TRUE LOVE

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 March 2016 · Shabbos 5 Mar 2016 · כ"ה אדר א' תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday. I was thinking about you this week Daniella as I watched the big group of C Teens in Time Square on Motzei Shabbos, and was wondering if you were also there. Have a wonderful Year.

So we continue with our theme of SIMCHA in the 60 days of ADAR heading towards Purim, and this week we look at the aspect of THE JOY OF CHASSANA AND TRUE LOVE.

In the attached video we can see the JOY OF DANCING AND MUSIC (in this case I would say, well behaved, controlled Joy).

ENJOY!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGmeAwz4eGg

In relation to MARRIAGE AND TRUE LOVE, I saw an interesting story in a Book called 'A Happy Home' which is extracted advices from The Rebbe for Happiness in Marriage and including Stories. It is an excellent and easy to read book.

The story I saw was of a teenage girl who was having a private audience (yichud) with the Rebbe.

Due to misconceptions about the true meaning of love, she was failing to find a suitable marriage partner, and this together with other reasons, caused her to request this private audience.

And she revealed the contents of the meeting:

'The Rebbe asked me about my courses, my professors and my plans for the future. Then to my great surprise he asked me about my very personal plans about marriage.... The Rebbe smiled broadly and asked my opinion about a specific young man etc..and some other men who she had actually met....I was totally overwhelmed....I just shook my head and blushingly explained why each one was not the right one for me.

Then the Rebbe chuckled lightly and told me that I read too many books. How did he know? But he did know.

Love he explained to me , is not that which is portrayed in romantic novels.

It isn't that overwhelming, blinding emotion that is portrayed in a romance.

These books do not portray real life he said.

It is a fantasy world, a make believe world with made up emotions.

As its name implies it is fiction.

But real life is different.

And then as a father to a daughter he began to explain to me the meaning of REAL LOVE.

Love he told me, is an emotion that increases in strength throughout life.

It is sharing and caring, and respecting one another.

It is building a life together, a unit of Family and Home.

The love you feel as a young bride is only the beginning of real love.

It is through the small everyday acts of living together that love flourishes and grows.

And so the love you feel after 5 years or 10 years is a gradual strengthening of bonds.

As 2 lives unite to form one, with time, one reaches a point where each partner feels a part of the other, where each partner no longer can visualise life without their mate by their side.

Smilingly he told me to put aside my romantic notions developed by my literary involvement, and view love and marriage in a meaningful way.

I walked out of the Rebbe's office with a huge smile on my face.

The Rebbe knew how to communicate with a dreamy young girl.

He knew what to say and how to say it.

His words spoken from the heart, reverberated within my heart.'

It is also so interesting to see how The Rebbe could communicate with the same ease, to a young girl starting out in life, as he could to the greatest leaders of our generation.

RAMBAM

We have started a new Sefer this week ie Sefer Avoda which explains the Laws of the Temple and Services etc.

The Chaps are : End of Sefer Zeroim, Hilchos Shmita Veyovel Chap 13. PAGE 15

And then SeferAvoda, Hilchos Beis Habechira, Chaps 1,2,3,4,5,6. - PAGE 6

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13BSSFKAX8Sy47ZRWnb48R9ci2Gbla0ChC21hWds1 2dQ/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvwb8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjVD3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

A Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayakhel, Pekudei ↑ Vayakhel, Pekudei · Contents · By date ויקהל - פקודי

EMUNAH INTRODUCTION

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 March 2017 · Shabbos 25 Mar 2017 · כ"ז אדר תשע"ז

Dear Family.

I hope everyone is well.

Tonight is the Anniversary of Avi and Penina. Your wedding brings back many happy memories BH! Wishing you many more.

Happy birthday to Ariella whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a year of much success and happiness Ariella.

We are now heading into the month of Nissan and Pesach.

I heard a shiur this week from Rabbi Yossie Jacobson on Emunah (Faith), and this shiur was part of a series of shiurim on this subject (12 shiurim!)

The shiur I heard was the first and seemed to cover the subject of emunah quite fully, and I thought to myself how can there be another 11 shiurim on this subject?

What has emunah got to do with Pesach?

It is said that the matzah we eat on the first night of Pesach feeds our emunah.

And so with that in mind I thought maybe we could explore this subject in the few weeks we have before Pesach, and see what emerges. Right now I have no idea of what we are in for but here we go.

The first shiur tries to define emunah as follows, and I am going to try and keep it very summarised:

Based on on the first line of the daily Amidah prayer where we say 'Baruch atah Hashem, Elokeinu veiElokei avoseinu.' (our G-d and the G-d of our

Fathers) the question is asked are there 2 G-ds? Why does it separate out and say our G-d and then the G-d of our Fathers?

Rabbi Jacobson explained by showing that there exists in Judaism 2 powerful streams of thought regarding this ie

2 opposite sides of a spectrum.

1. The G-d of our Fathers represents the Jews who follow the TRADITION unchanged and unchallenged from generation to generation, observing all the Laws, traditions, customs dress etc - with unwavering faith.
2. Our G-d represents the Jews who are struggling and searching with tremendous efforts in all different ways to discover their own G-d. ie TO KNOW G-D. - to have faith in their own G-d which they discovered with their own efforts

He then examines extensively which gedolim followed which path eg TRADITION - Seifer hachinuch 1200s, the Zhidichover late 1700s, I think Sadia Gaon 900s. And then those who followed the path of TO KNOW were Choveiv levavos in the 1000s, Rambam in the 1100s. Then Moshe and Yisro were arguing about this. interestingly the Vilna Gaon was closer to the path of Knowing as was the Baal Shem Tov.

So in defining emunah, there are those who trust and follow without question the Tradition handed down from Moshe Rabeinu, generation after generation till this day, and there are those who search out G-d with Knowledge.

This is the situation when there are no questions but what happens when questions arise?

These could be of 3 types:

1. Against Tradition it can be asked 'how can you believe in something you cannot see or know?', 'how can you be sure it is true what you are following?' etc
2. Against Knowing it can be asked 'Hashem is too far beyond our under-

standing, and knowledge can only take you a part of the way, and thereafter you will need faith anyway, so why bother about the knowledge?', and 'how can you trust your intellect. It can easily mislead you?' etc
3. Those who say emunah means we don't know, and yes I believe there is a G-d but what is all the fuss about because it is all futile?

In defining emunah Rabbi Jacobson then moves in the following stages:

1. The word emunah means certainty. It does not mean we do not know. This exists in both groups 1 and 2.
2. The last group ie group 3 is therefore dismissed as being lazy and on the wrong route.
3. First prerequisite Is to want the Truth
4. Questioning is very important! Group 1 tends to reject questioning and feel aggravated by these. But why should Truth be afraid of questions. Today's youth are questioning, and have a right to question. If one does not have an answer one can research in to these together. But questions have to be addressed and worked on. Here there is no laziness ie the questioning, the answering, and the researching.
5. The Baal Shem tov says we need both approaches ie the Traditional route may not give a person a feeling of ownership, but it has a solidity, and the Knowing route will give one a fire and enthusiasm of ownership. So take both.
6. BUT THE ALTE REBBE EXPLAINS MORE THAN THIS IE THAT THE SOUL OF A JEW IS LITERALLY A FRAGMENT OF HASHEM HIMSELF. IT IS THERE RIGHT WITHIN EACH ONE OF US AND HAS EYES WHICH SEE HASHEM. IT IS LIKE THE SIXTH SENSE OF THE NESHAMAH AND READY TO EXPRESS ITSELF AT ANY TIME IN THE SIMPLEST OR GREATEST OF JEWS. WE NEED ALSO OUR INTELLECT TO GET TO UNDERSTAND AND KNOW THIS BETTER.

Emunah is therefore a certainty coming from within each one of us, which is beyond Tradition and beyond Intellect, but sees and harmonises both in a continuum of development. It can get covered over with many layers, but it is always there.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Vayakhel, Pekudei ↑ Vayakhel, Pekudei · Contents · By date ויקהל - פקודי

JOY CONTINUED

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 March 2018 · Shabbos 10 Mar 2018 · כ"ג אדר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Shmuel and Rivky on your wedding anniversary tonight. Funnily enough, Chava was listening to some music when I came home tonight and I said to her, that music reminds me of Rivky's chassana, because it was the main music playing with the wedding video. Anyway wishing you both many more happy years together, with much achievement.

And while we are with the Levys, another Mazal Tov to Rivky for qualifying in her accounting! Amazing effort and achievement Rivky after persisting at it for many years. You have proved the point that success comes to those who carry on where most would give up. And I am sure Shmuel played a part with the success!

Mazal Tov also to Avi and Penina on their upcoming anniversary next week. Wishing you also much happiness, success and achievement together.

Mazal tov to Chana Lieba on your upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with many simchos.

Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the wedding on Sunday of your sister Rivka to our nephew Mendel Sarfati in NY. Wishing every one safe flights and a wonderful Simcha.

Mazal Tov again to Pesach, who moved his business to a new site right near Stamford Hill. Chava and I took a walk there this week, and we were really most impressed of what you have achieved Pesach. Michayil el chayil!

BH so many simchos!

And even though Purim has passed, it is still Adar, and so we still have the theme of JOY.

And joy has many facets.

I saw an extract from a sicha of The Rebbe this week (Toras Menachem) which I found interesting, as follows:

A chasid of the Alte Rebbe once complained that he has a lot of foreign thoughts that disturb him.

The Alte Rebbe replied 'They gather in empty space!'

This means that such thoughts come when the mind is not filled with thoughts of Torah and mitzvos.

The Rebbe commented, that the same is true of SIMCHA - if a person does not have JOY IN FULFILLING MITZVOS, then his happiness will be expressed in other things.....

In another extract (also from Toras Menachem) the Rebbe said that one should make a point of being joyful even from mundane matters (if that is what makes him happy in his current state)

Because once a person is in a state of simcha, he will be able to draw himself towards SIMCHA SHEL MITZVA.

But the former simcha does not include holelus (wild frivolity), because even if a person will feel cheerful during that moment, he will regret it later, and this will not bring simcha.....

Wishing everyone a happy Shabbos

Vayakhel ↑ Vayakhel · Contents · By date ויקהל

THE ZODIAC OF ADAR

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 February 2019 · Shabbos 2 Mar 2019 · כ"ה אדר א' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Adar.

Mazal Tov to Daniella Davidoff on her birthday this coming week. Wishing you a year of much success in your Jewish studies, and blessing also in all your physical needs Dani.

Mazal Tov to David and Mel Gickman (ne Milner) - Janine's (ne Stein) daughter, on the birth of a boy in London. We attended their beautiful bris, and the boy's name is Golan Avremi (English name Spencer). Wishing you all much success in London with many simchas together!

I heard another talk about the Mazal (Zodiac) of Adar this week from Sefer Yetzira, as given over by Rabbi Aaron Raskin.

This does give us a better understanding of Adar and Purim as follows:

Name

Adar - connotes JOY (adir)

Adar - connotes strength (again same root)

Adar - aleph dar - Hashem dwells (more intensely in this month)

Position in year

Last month of year -12th (and 13th)

It therefore unites the whole year together

Zodiac

Pisces - Dag - Fish

The word dag connotes multiplying greatly - vayidgu.

Fish do not need shechita. With an animal, the shechita raises them to a higher level (the word shechita means to draw higher). But fish are already at a high level, and don't need this procedure.

The eyes of fish are continually open, and no 'evil eye' can affect them.

They also reflect self nullification. Ayin which means eye, also means nothingness and beyond.

Tribe.

Naftali (and the 13th month refers to Levi)

Both these relate to TORAH STUDY

Attribute.

JOY AND LAUGHTER - related to letter kuf which means a monkey also.

Letter.

Kuf.

Pasuk.

Lashoreikah bni atono - In the territory of Yehudah, WINE WILL FLOW LIKE A FOUNTAIN.....that even a single vine branch will load up a donkey.

Achashverosh made a feast where he was using the vessels taken as booty from the Temple, and he invited also the Jews to participate and get drunk there WITH WINE.

They accepted, and this caused the decree where Haman was going to destroy the entire Jewish People

To annul this decree, Mordechai got together 22000 children to LEARN TORAH - (Naftoli and Levi)

And PRAY and fast - Yehuda has the root of hod - praising G-d.

And we drink lots of WINE with JOY and LAUGHTER to help the correction, and celebrate our teshuvah and salvation.

And to continue with the musical instruments played in the Temple, this week we feature THE FLUTE.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7c6mzCAZSM>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7c6mzCAZSM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=799eVPsODjo> Israeli music - beduin wooden flute

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmpw-oe8VTY>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmpw-oe8VTY

Gut Shabbos and happy Adar to all

Vayakhel, Pekudei ↑ Vayakhel, Pekudei · Contents · By date ויקהל - פקודי

ADAR IS NOT YET OVER

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 March 2020 · Shabbos 21 Mar 2020 · כ"ה אדר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and keeping well, taking all the recommended safety precautions!

In case it will help others, I found that steam inhalation with some added olbas oil, helped my cough tremendously this week (and sinuses)

Mazal Tov Avi and Penina on your upcoming Anniversary next week! (I got in too early last week) Good wishes never get lost, and so we wish you again, a wonderful year together with much joy, nachas and achievement in both gashmius and ruchnius.

At a farbreng The Rebbe once quoted a vort of Reb Shimon of Yerislav, a talmid of the Chozeh of Lublin regarding the posuk which we say in betching 'Az yomru vagoyim, higdil Hashem laasot im eleh.....hayinu semeichim', as follows:

Az - Then - When Moshiach comes

Yomru vagoyim - the Goyim will express their surprise and say

Higdil Hashem laasot im eileh - Why have you merited such great miracles?

And we will answer them:

Hayinu semeichim - WE WERE HAPPY.

The Rebbe concluded that Yidden should rejoice in the TRUST that Hashem will bring Moshiach soon.

This will urge Hashem to do so.

May the current events sweeping through the world be the prelude to Mashiach very speedily in our days

Gut Shabbos to all, and in good health.

THE FENCE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 11 March 2021 · Shabbos 13 Mar 2021 · כ"ט אדר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal tov to Annette (Chana Lieba) on your birthday for yesterday! Wishing you a happy year with many simchos!

Mazal Tov Chanan for your upcoming birthday next week. It should be one with much achievement and in good health!

We are now in the Sedra of Vayakel- Pekudei which continues discussion about the Mini Temple (the Mishkan) which was constructed in the desert after leaving Mitzraim, and I saw an interesting Dvar Torah from the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchak.

There was a FENCE around the Tabernacle and Courtyard made of pillars and net curtain.

There were 100 pillars in the north, 100 in the south, 50 in the west, and 30 in the south - Total 280 pillars.

It is known that Hashem created the world from the holy Hebrew letters.

There are 22 regular letters in the alphabet, and 5 final-letters ie the 22 letters can appear anywhere in a word, but the 5 final-letters can only appear at the end of a word.

The 5 end letters are end-of mem, end-of nun, end-of Tzadik, end-of peh, and end-of chof, (collectively known as mantzepach).

If you take the numerical value of each of these letters, you get 40+50+90+80+20.

And guess what that comes to?

Yes. 280. The same as the number of pillars! The same way that a fence is always at the periphery, so are those 5 letters always at the end of a word.

So what is the connection?

As mentioned before, the construction of the Temple and its services all reflect the condition of man.

The function of the Temple was to be a conduit to bring G-dliness into the world, and there was a fence around the Temple, referring to concealment.

When we go out into the world, we are capable of revealing G-dliness, as in the Temple

But G-dliness in the world is concealed as represented by the fence.

And so we need to reveal G-dliness in this concealed world.

What is amazing is how exact Torah and the Hebrew language are, and how everything therein has a reason and instruction, as revealed to us by our Sages BH!!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all!

Vayakhel ↑ Vayakhel · Contents · By date ויקהל

HUMOUR

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 24 February 2022 · Shabbos 26 Feb 2022 · כ"ה אדר א' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the bris of their new baby, Shlomo Tuvia. Wishing you much nachas from him and from all your wonderful children. It was a beautiful Shabbos and simchah, and I would like to express my appreciation to all the families and individuals, for their hostings and all the care and love which was displayed BH! Thank you.

Wishing everyone only continued simchos!

Despite what is happening in the world this week, it is still Adar, and to continue with the theme of JOY, I saw a humorous but meaningful story:

Reb Simchah Bunim of Pshischa was crossing over a bridge in Danzig, and he saw a man floundering in the waters below.

Seeing no way of saving this Jew, he called out to him, "Send regards to the Livyasan!!" (The Livyasan is a huge fish which is hidden deep in the sea or waters somewhere, and will appear when Mashiach arrives)

At that very moment, Hashem came to the man's aid - he managed to catch onto a plank of wood and save himself.

Reb Simchah Bunim later explained, that due to the man's broken spirit, he could not be helped.

But when I made that humorous comment, he was slightly gladdened, AND WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIMSELF WITH THE POWER OF HIS SIMCHAH. - (Siach Sarfei Kodesh Inyanei Simchah - Part 9)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh with increased joy.

Vayakhel, Pekudei ↑ Vayakhel, Pekudei · Contents · By date ויקהל - פקודי

JOYFUL APPROACH

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 March 2023 · Shabbos 18 Mar 2023 · כ"ה אדר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on your 20th Anniversary. Wow what celebrations! Wishing you many more happy and fulfilling years together with much nachas from your children BEH

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary this coming week. Wishing you a wonderful year with continued happiness together and much nachas from your Family BEH.

Mazal Tov to Daniella and Ariel Jacobs, who both have their Hebrew birthdays this week. You should always be able to celebrate good things together, and wishing you both a wonderful year!

Hot news, just announced, that Esther Sarfati just got engaged in NY - Mazal Tov Esther, Meir and Malky!

I heard an interesting Baal Haturim from this week's Sedra, Vayakhel - Pikudei on the words "kaasher tzivah Hashem es Mosheh" - "..and they did as Hashem commanded Moshe" (in relation to building all the different items for the Mini Temple.) (V 40:21)

He points out that this phrase is mentioned 18 times, and that there is a 19th time with a slightly different format.

He equates this to the number of blessings in the Amidah prayer which originally had 18 blessings and an extra one got added by our Sages.

If you add the letters of these 18 verses which contain the words kaasher tzivah.., there are 113.

Similarly if you add the letters of each of the concluding blessings of the 18 Blessings of the Amidah, you also find 113 letters!

To develop this further, he notes that the word "LEV - HEART" is also found 113 times in the Torah!

And concludes that when one prays, one should do this with ONE'S WHOLE HEART.

I also saw a connected Dvar Torah in this week's "Farbregen" as follows:

The posuk refers to the

- Yetzer hara as an 'OLD king' - because he attempts to dampen our excitement by portraying Mitzvos as old and outdated.
- And the Yetzer tov as a 'poor CHILD', because he makes all the Mitzvos look YOUNG and ALIVE. He is called poor because he is HUMBLE.

By approaching Torah and Mitzvos every day with freshness and humility, one merits pleasure and joy in one's Service to Hashem (Chidushei HaRim)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

Vayakhel ↑ Vayakhel · Contents · By date ויקהל

JOY OF SHABBOS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 7 March 2024 · Shabbos 9 Mar 2024 · כ"ט אדר א' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba (Annette) on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with many simchos, together with Reuven!

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday tomorrow. Hope all going well in SA for you and your Family Kerry Lee and wishing you a fantastic year in both the physical and spiritual!

Mazal Tov to Mikayla Davidoff. Haven't seen you all in a while! Wishing you a wonderful year together with Perry!

We wish long life to Mommy for the yohrtzeit of Pepe next week. Funny, I dreamt about him this last week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah and the whole Family should know only happy occasions.

It is also the yohrtzeit of a friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner, who spent many Shabbosim and Yom Tvim in our home. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

In this week's Sedra Vayakhel, the theme of Shabbos comes up (V35:2), and I saw a short interesting short point from a Dvar Torah from The Rebbe about this, which I think also reflects another dimension of JOY AND HAPPINESS during the months of Adar, as we head into Adar 2.

Regarding Shabbos, the verse states, "6 days of the week, work shall be done.."

The terminology used, implies that the work will get done by itself (In other words it does not say, "6 days of the week you shall do work.", but rather, "work shall be done..")

The lesson that we learn, is that we must try and reduce the huge amount of mental effort that we invest in our businesses during the week.

In this way it will make it easier for us to move away from our business worries on Shabbat.

AND THEREFORE WE WILL BE ABLE TO BETTER APPRECIATE THE SPIRITUAL BEAUTY AND JOY OF THE SHABBOS DAY!

Wishing everyone a very joyous Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh!

Vayakhel ↑ Vayakhel · Contents · By date ויקהל

DAVIDOFF ROOTS?

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 March 2025 · Shabbos 22 Mar 2025 · כ"ב אדר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Wishing Claude a refuah shleimah (Yechezkiel ben Ester)

MAZAL TOV TO PERRY AND MIKAYLA ON THE BIRTH OF A BABY GIRL, SASHA LIV. This is such beautiful news. Wishing you lots of joy and nachas and many simchos! And of course, Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba (Ravin and Annette)!

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their Anniversary tonight. Wishing you many more happy and productive years together BEH!

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you also many more happy and productive years together BEH!

AND SOME PROUD NEWS FROM OUR GRANDCHILDREN: (Just in connection with Rambam Learning because it is so current)

- Today Esther Miriam Davidoff is in New York where her and hundreds of other girls from all over the world are participating in the Rambam Chidon, where all these girls have finished the whole of Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvos, having learnt all 613 Mitzvos of Torah whith their explanations! Mazal Tov Esther! This looks so exciting and we are so proud of you. Wishing you to go michayil el chayil! Let us know how it all was, and encourage us all to do the same!
- We are so proud of Dovi Levy, who makes an audio summary every day of 3 chapters of Rambam's Mishneh Torah, and distributes these to Yeshiva Boys who he is in contact with, to help them understand Rambam better.

This is an amazing accomplishment Dovi! Kol Hakavod and wishing you much success with your new phase of life in NY!

- Esther, Binyamin, Mendel, and Shneur Zalman Davidoff in London and Gavriel Davidoff in LA have all contributed much help to my ongoing Rambam project. Thank you for your amazing work!
- There may be others in the Family working on Rambam learning etc which I have not yet heard about.

I saw an article in Chabad.org this week on Bukharian Jews, which I am attaching. https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/6819530/jewish/13-Facts-You-Should-Know-About-Bukharian-Jews.htm

It caught my attention because people often ask me if the origin of Davidoff is Bukharian. And this is valid question, because the article mentions that they have distinct surnames which invariably end with 'off' or 'ov'!!

So in the light of the Cobb Family's recent visit to Lithuania to explore our roots, I was wondering if anyone has a deeper or more distant knowledge of our roots.

I would love to hear from Roy, Gavin, Kevin Marks, Avraham Pollock (if Tracy could ask him), and others who are interested in genealogy, if we have a connection to Bukharian Jews.

And also their clothing looks so colourful, and I thought that this would be a nice sequel to Purim 😊!

Gut Shabbos to all!

Vayakhel, Pekudei ↑ Vayakhel, Pekudei · Contents · By date ויקהל - פקודי

BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 13 March 2026 · Shabbos 14 Mar 2026 · כ"ה אדר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Dovi and Rikki Levy on their beautiful wedding this week. Wishing you a life of much happiness together based on Torah and Mitzvos BEH

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their wedding anniversary next week. Wishing you many more happy anniversaries together, achieving much good in both gashmius and ruchnius.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on the engagement of her brother BH

There are 3 birthdays for Chanan and Naomi's Family - this varies each year because some birthdays are from the English calendar and some are from the Hebrew one)

Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) for his birthday next week. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Chanan with much achievement and much blessings for you and your Family

Mazal Tov to Ariel Jacobs on his birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Ariel!

Mazal Tov to Daniella Jacobs on her birthday this coming week. Wishing you also a great year Daniella

Mazal Tov to Sasha Davidoff on her birthday on Shabbos. Wishing Perry and Mikayla much nachas from her.

I saw some interesting points from a story that I read this week which were related to joy, and the joy of bride and groom which is relevant to this week.

"Reb Zusha of Anipoli sat in his home immersed in his Torah learning, when sounds from outside caused him to glance out of his open window.

Passing in front of his house was a wedding procession leading bride and groom on their way.

Reb Zushiya immediately stood up and went out into the street, where abandoning restraint, he danced with unbounded joy.

He circled the young couple and the other celebrants for a few minutes with great joy, and then he returned to his home and study.

His family members watched his actions with great interest, and suggested to him that his dancing was not befitting a person of his stature

To their comments he replied: "Let me tell you a story"

..."When I emerged from the mikva I looked at Reb Yitzchak and saw that his face was

so radiant that I was unable to gaze upon it. I asked him where that light came from

and he replied: 'All my life I have carefully observed three things to which the Sage

Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKana attributed his long life: He never sought honor at the

expense of the degradation of his fellow; He never went to sleep without forgiving

anyone who might have offended or injured him that day; He was always generous

with his money. Reb Yitzchak then told me that the very same level which can be

achieved through these things can also be reached through joy.

"And that is why when I saw the wedding procession passing in front of our house,

I ran outside to partake of the festivities and to add to the simcha of the bride and

groom....."

Gut Shabbos to all

פקודי

Pekudei

Shemos 38:21 · parsha 11 of 11 in Shemos · 23 of 54 in the Torah
5 letters

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - THE JOY OF STRENGTH 590
2019 / 5779 — AND SHE LAUGHS AT THE FINAL DAY 593
2022 / 5782 — LESSONS FROM FISH 595
2024 / 5784 — THE JOY OF OUR HERITAGE 597
2025 / 5785 — FRENCH ROOTS 600

2017: read together with Vayakhel, see EMUNAH INTRODUCTION

2018: read together with Vayakhel, see JOY CONTINUED

2020: read together with Vayakhel, see ADAR IS NOT YET OVER

2021: read together with Vayakhel, see THE FENCE

2023: read together with Vayakhel, see JOYFUL APPROACH

2026: read together with Vayakhel, see BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY

Pekudei ↑ Pekudei · Contents · By date פקודי

JOY CONTINUED - THE JOY OF STRENGTH

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 March 2016 · Shabbos 12 Mar 2016 · ב' אדר ב' תשע"ו

Text says "this week's Sedra Vayakhel", but the dvar Torah (Moshe raising the Mishkan) is from Pekudei, the calendar parsha; kept under Pekudei.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Chana Lieba on your birthday today. Wishing you a happy year.

Mazal tov to the Jacobs Family. I heard that Mariasha's brother started putting on Tefillin today.

Welcome back Pesach and Miriam who were away travelling.

I want to thank Shmueli Bassin very warmly for dedicating a set of Rambam to his Shul in memory of my father AH. I was very touched and I am sure Chanan and Reuven will also be.

And last but not least we wish Mommy long life for the Yohrtzeit of Pepe AH. We remember him with fond memories. His neshama should have an aliyah.

We are still in Adar trying to be BESIMCHA each day in preparation for Purim, and the entertainment for this week is THE JOY OF STRENGTH.

The video clip below is about 2 Lubavitch bochurim (French twins) performing in front of the Satmer Rebbe and his Chassidim.

ENJOY!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3ItaaXX1H0

And if you enjoyed Part 1, here is Part 2!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EetmJT90ktU
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EetmJT90ktU&spfreload=1> &spfreload=1

An interesting point about STRENGTH came up in this week's Sedra Vayakhel.

Bnei Yisrael had finished all the work of constructing all the parts of the Mishkan, and they brought it to Moshe.

Why did they bring it to Moshe?

Rashi tells us that no man was able to erect it because of the weight of the beams, for no man had the strength to stand them up.

But Moshe had the STRENGTH, and he raised them up.

Actually even although Moshe was really very powerful he also could not do it, and he said to Hashem, 'How is it possible for a man to erect the Mishkan?'

Hashem then told him ' Busy your hands with the job' (ie even though it looks impossible, go forward and put your hands to it)

And the beams stood up. (and it appeared as if Moshe had lifted them)

How do we know this?

Because the posuk says 'The mishkon was erected' (it does not say Moshe erected it)

The obvious lesson is that strength is not only physical.

Sometimes a task may seem impossible, but if we take the first step to engage, we may find that it actually becomes possible.

RAMBAM 5 minutes per week.

The 7 Chapters for this week are Sefer Avodah, Hilchos Beis Habechira Chaps 7 and 8.

And Hilchos Klei Hamikdash Vehaovdim Bo Chaps 1,2,3,4 and 5. - PAGE

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https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Pekudei ↑ Pekudei · Contents · By date פקודי

AND SHE LAUGHS AT THE FINAL DAY

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 March 2019 · Shabbos 9 Mar 2019 · ב' אדר ב' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his SECOND BARMITZVAH this Shabbos! This means that one counts the years after one's 70th birthday as 'extra years' and Roy has now turned 70 plus 13. Wishing you many more healthy and happy years Roy. Enjoy your big celebration this Shabbos and I hope you still remember your original Barmitzvah Maftir and Haftarah, and I believe you are also repeating your Barmitzvah speech! So nice!

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on your birthday tomorrow. It is so nice having you together with us on the group. Wishing you a very happy and successful year.

Following, next week is Anette Davidoff birthday. Mazal Tov Chana Lieba! Thinking of you all in Boston and wishing you a happy year with many simchos.

Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the baby born to your sister Rivka! This is really a double simcha in the Family because Rivkah is married to Mendel Sarfati, who is Mommy's nephew. (Meyer's son). Only simchas for everyone!

And it feels like Yom Tov here in London with Pesach, Chanie and all their children here with us in London for a visit BH.

In this weeks sedra Pekudei, the construction of the MISHKAN is completed, and the Midrash links this to the pasuk from Mishlei 'Strength and splendour are her clothing, AND SHE LAUGHS AT THE FINAL DAY – oz vehadar levushah, vatischak leyom acharon – we say this in eshes chayil on Friday nights.

And this also fits into the theme of being HAPPY throughout the 60 days of Adar aleph and Adar beis this year.

The explanation is as follows:

ONE WHO WORKS TO IMPROVE HIMSELF DURING HIS YOUTH AND ADULTHOOD CAN ENJOY THE SPIRITUAL REWARDS OF RICH SENIOR YEARS.

Ie The First Bet Hamikdash refers to our young years of spiritual strength – OZ

THE Second Bet Hamikdash, refers to our later years of splendour – HADAR.

These are essential for our ability to enjoy the rich rewards of the Third Bet Hamikdash in the end of days

The completion of The Mishkan, far from being temporary and futile, was indispensable to the eternal Mikdash of Mashiach!

And to continue with entertainment featuring the instruments played in the Bet Hamikdash, this week we have the chatzotzrot ie trumpets (or some such similar wind instrument)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKg4QfGKYCY> Timofei Dokshizer - Kol Nidrei

(interestingly Purim has a connection to Yom Kippur. – Kippur is explained as ke (like) Purim. (We may get to explain this another time)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CRWyLXaj3U> חמש-עשרה - דניאל זמיר

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YooE4McMX-4>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YooE4McMX-4

Enjoy!

Wishing everyone a Gut Chodesh, Gut Shabbos, and a Happy Adar

Pekudei ↑ Pekudei · Contents · By date פקודי

LESSONS FROM FISH

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 3 March 2022 · Shabbos 5 Mar 2022 · ב׳ אדר ב׳ תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is feeling well.

Mazal Tov to Daniella on her birthday this coming Shabbos. Wishing you much happiness this year Daniella, especially with your upcoming wedding BEH together with your choson! Much love from all of us.

Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you continued happiness and simchos, especially for the upcoming wedding of Perry BEH. Looking forward to being with you all soon BEH.

Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee who also has a birthday this week. Wishing you a wonderful and happy year Kerry Lee. Love to all your Family.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Sarfati and Rivky (Ne Goodman) on the birth of a boy in Pennsylvania. Also wishing the connected Families, Devorah Leah and Shmuly, and Meyer and Malky Mazal Tov and much nachas!

We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of her father, Pepe, this coming week. His neshamah should have an Aliyah and he will continually be remembered fondly through all the grandchildren named after him.

On the same day as Pepe, it is also the yohrtzeit of a friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner. His neshamah should have an Aliyah.

The Zodiac sign of Adar is Pisces the FISH, and I saw an article by Rabbi L Ceitlin, on some lessons that we can derive from FISH.

Everyone moves at their own pace

Sailfish can move at nearly 70 mph.

The small seahorse can only cover about 5 ft in the same time. But it is still moving forward even although its movement is barely noticed.

Shlomo Hamelech advised "Educate a child according to his way" - Progress for one individual can look very different to that of another. Proverbs 22:6

We don't need to always be a sailfish.

We just need to make sure that we are swimming in the right direction.

Keep going forward

Most fish cannot swim backwards (eels are a rare exception)

Memories of the past can try and stall us, but our sights should be set firmly on the present, with the goal of shaping the future.

Israel Salanter, a 19th century Lithuanian Rabbi said "As long as we are alive, we can still accomplish."

Rise to the challenge

Rusty angelfish are born female.

In time one will become anatomically a male and will assume that role.

This teaches us that most of our lives we may rely on leadership figures to guide us, but we should be ready to rise to the challenge, and take up leadership, when the situation arises. Pirkei Avot 2:5

We have the potential.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh, and to keep adding JOY in the months of Adar.

Pekudei ↑ Pekudei · Contents · By date פקודי

THE JOY OF OUR HERITAGE

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 March 2024 · Shabbos 16 Mar 2024 · ו' אדר ב' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV ON THE BIRTH OF RIVKA EMUNAH TO SHMULY AND DEVORAH LEAH ON ROSH CHODESH ADAR 2! Such wonderful news BH. Wishing you much nachas from her and from the whole Family! See Dvar Torah following.

Mazal Tov for the special Opsher birthday of Shlomo Moshe Vogel on 7 Adar , which is also the birthday and yohrtzeit of Mosheh Rabeinu! Mazal Tov! Wishing Shlomo a wonderful year, and to give his parents much nachas. Wishing you all a beautiful simchah.

Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of good health and much happiness, with many simchos for you and your Family Chanan!

Mazal Tov to Batsheva for completing the 10 km Jerusalem marathon in under 1 hour! Well done Batsheva!

Continuing on the theme of ever increasing JOY in Adar and beyond, I came across some interesting teachings about EMUNAH (FAITH), and this was obviously also connected to the birth this week of Rivka Emunah.

Alte Rebbe

In the section of the Alte Rebbe's Siddur, which was an introduction to the 7 Blessings of Marriage Ceremony, I learnt the following:

The Belief and Faith which a Jew has in Hashem, can be seen even in those who are not very learned in Torah, as can be seen generally in women, youth and even very young children.

One can see in their nature, a powerful Emunah in the One G-d, as soon as there has been a slight development of their understanding.

They naturally reach a level which philosophers and intellectuals work very hard to try and reach over many decades of their life. (if they ever reach it at all)

The level which our young reach, is way, way beyond the Zodiac.

This has come about through the Mitzvos which our ancestors have performed, which has drawn down the Infinite light into our beings, and which has then been passed on to our children, who can immediately recognize this Infinite light as they begin to develop.

This started at Mount Sinai when we began to perform Mitzvot.

After the destruction of the Temples, when our levels dropped somewhat, our Sages introduced the saying of Brachot (Blessings) before we do Mitzvot, to address this drop in level.

Mashiach Day by Day

When Mashiach comes, Mosheh Rabeinu will join the 'simple Jews ' in the very first DANCE. This is because Torah does not stand on the shoulders of impressive scholars, but rather on those ordinary Jews with FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF and corresponding actions.

Likewise David HaMelech will take the hands of those Jews who recite Tehillim with simple sincerity, and he will DANCE with them .

Ashreinu, mah tov chelkenu umah naim goralenu umah yafah yerushasenu!

WE ARE HAPPY. HOW GOODLY IS OUR LOT, AND HOW PLEASANT IS OUR FORTUNE, AND HOW BEAUTFUL IS OUR HERITAGE! (Tehillim)

Gut Shabbos to all!

Pekudei ↑ Pekudei · Contents · By date פקודי

FRENCH ROOTS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 27 March 2025 · Shabbos 29 Mar 2025 · כ"ט אדר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

We wish Claude well (Yechezkiel ben Ester)

Mazal Tov to Selma (Penn) for her birthday on Shabbos! So nice to have you on the group with us Selma and wishing you a wonderful, happy and healthy year!

Mazal Tov to Ariella (Davidoff) whose birthday is today. Wishing you a happy year Ariella!

Mazal Tov to Ariel Jacobs whose birthday is tonight, and also Mazal Tov to Daniella (Jacobs) whose Hebrew birthday was yesterday. Wishing you both much happiness together and a year of much achievement and joy!

Mazal Tov to Rivka Emuna Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos. Wishing you a very happy year Rivka, and to give much nachas to your parents BEH

Birthdays are complicated during Adar with all the intricacies of leap years. I hope I didn't miss anyone out.

For the last few weeks we have been talking about our Family Roots - Lithuania, a possibility of Bukhara etc.

And so I found it interesting to see in Chabad.org this week, an article on the Jews of France

Mommy, Rahel ne Sarfati, traces the Sarfati Family back to Rashi in France!

So I thought that I would do another post of Jewish History, looking back into our FRENCH ROOTS.

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/6829515/jewish/15-Facts-You-Should-Know-About-the-Jews-of-France.htm

I am also attaching the updated version of our FAMILY TREE, to include the new addition to our Family of Sasha Viv.

Thank you for all your work on this Tree, Kevin!

If anyone wants to know how to us the Sheet, or add information, please contact Kevin or myself

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh as we head out of Adar into Nissan!

ויקרא

Vayikra

Vayikra · Tzav · Shemini · Tazria · Metzora · Acharei Mos · Kedoshim · Emor · Behar · Bechukosai

ויקרא

Vayikra

Vayikra 1:1 · parsha 1 of 10 in Vayikra · 24 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - THE RIDICULOUS AND THE SUBLIME 604
2017 / 5777 — EMUNAH - MIND VS HEART 606
2018 / 5778 — DOES EATING MATZAH HELP? 612
2019 / 5779 — PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK? 615
2020 / 5780 — REDEMPTION 619
2021 / 5781 — THE LITTLE ALEPH 620
2022 / 5782 — FUN WITH VOICES 622
2023 / 5783 — PRECIOUS MATZAH 624
2024 / 5784 — JOY OF PURIM 627
2025 / 5785 — THE SMALL ALEPH 629
2026 / 5786 — THE ART OF SACRIFICE 631

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

JOY CONTINUED - THE RIDICULOUS AND THE SUBLIME

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 March 2016 · Shabbos 19 Mar 2016 · ט' אדר ב' תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Uncle Chanan on his birthday tomorrow.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday this coming week. I suspect also that Nechama's wedding is coming up next week or soon after, and so we wish you a big Mazal Tov for this, and to the rest of your Family.

Next Wednesday night plus Thursday is PURIM, and so I thought to have one more entertainment session in preparation.

It is a bit RIDICULOUS, but isn't that what Purim is partly about!

It is just for a laugh in the Month of ADAR.

ENJOY.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX2rm-jLLFY

RAMBAM

5 minutes of Rambam for this week covering 7 Perakim are in Sefer Avoda, Hilchos Klei Hamikdash Chaps 6,7,8,9,10, And then Hilchos Bias Hamikdash Chaps 1 and 2. PAGE - 11

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Gut Shabbos and wishing everyone a HAPPY PURIM

EMUNAH - MIND VS HEART

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 March 2017 · Shabbos 1 Apr 2017 · ה' ניסן תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his upcoming birthday. We love you Binyamin.

As mentioned last week, we are exploring the subject of Emunah based on a series of lectures by Rabbi Yossie Jacobson.

It was again interesting this week especially a practical test which I have attached, showing how the mind works. (I think everyone will find this interesting but especially all the doctors and those interested in biology.) - please print all 3 attached pages.

I would like to divide the lessons I learned into two parts

1. Better understanding of how the MIND AND HEART work in relation to Emunah
2. Not to underestimate ourselves when we assess our own Emunah.

MIND AND HEART

The Maharal defines seichel (mind) as the ability to explain things rationally, to pick up patterns, and to prove things.

The mind can prove that there is a G-d, but it cannot experience this.

It is like going through a detector at the airport - it can see everything, outside, inside, and hidden in ones baggage, but it cant detect how the person is feeling.

The tools one has defines one's reality - the eye can see but it cannot hear, and defines the world by what it sees etc.

Similarly the mind can only reach what the world allows it to reach.

When we reach this maximum point of mind, there is another tool which helps us cross the threshold, ie emunah.

Faith is that dimension of self which, when cultivated, allows us to experience ultimate reality.

The word emunah is also derived from imunim which means training, or exercise

Even if one has a talent, it needs training to be developed and mastered.

If ones mind is honest it will allow one to to use other means when the threshold is reached. (the more one understands, the more one realises how little one understands (Tanya Chap 18). The Alte Rebbe also said that todays knowing becomes tomorrows belief, and that belief then becomes knowing and so on.

The mind can deceive us (see attached exercise)

The full infinite emunah within each of us can become blocked, but is always there seeing fully with its eyes of certainty.

OUR ASSESSMENT OF OUR OWN EMUNAH

When a person says my emunah is weak, because I have doubts, and I don't feel it, this is not true.

It is really the mind which is bringing up these doubts.

And it is because Hashem created the world in this way ie the Hebrew word for world is olam, and its root is from helem which means hidden. Ie the truth is hidden, and we cannot see clearly what is happening

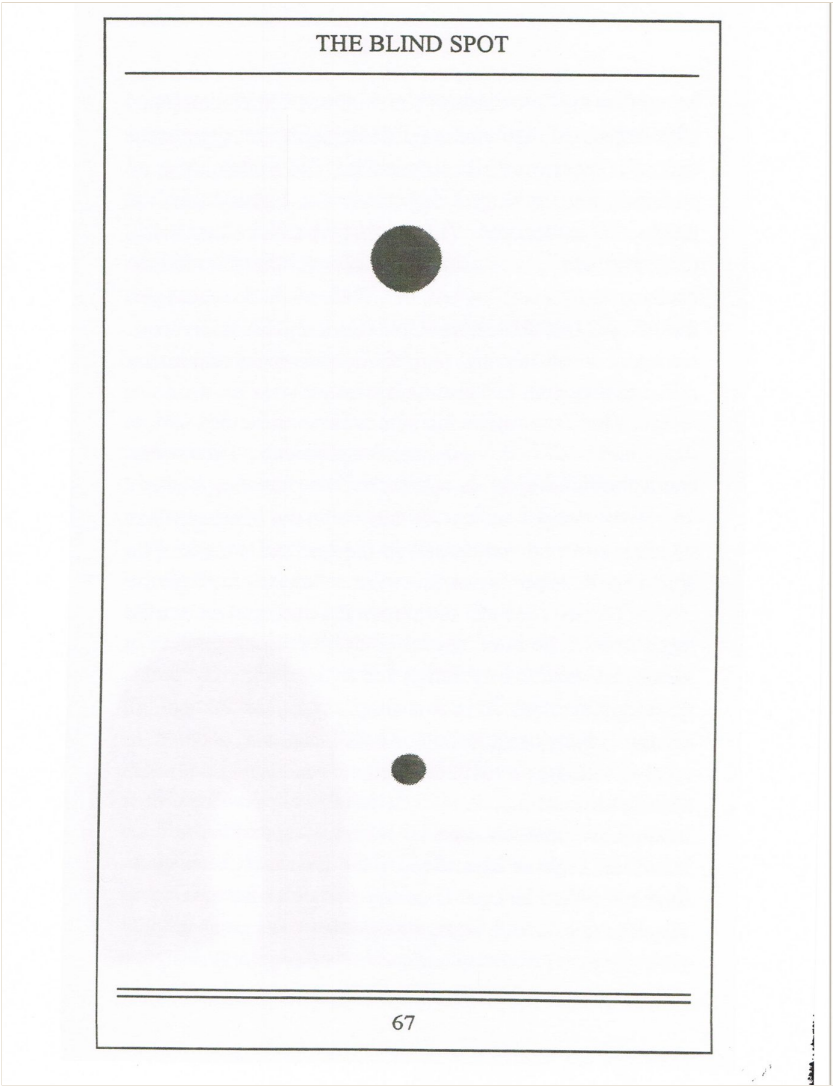
We need to use our minds to question and try and work through the hiddenness.

Emunah lies pure and untouched, equally in every Jew, and can be experienced fully at any moment.

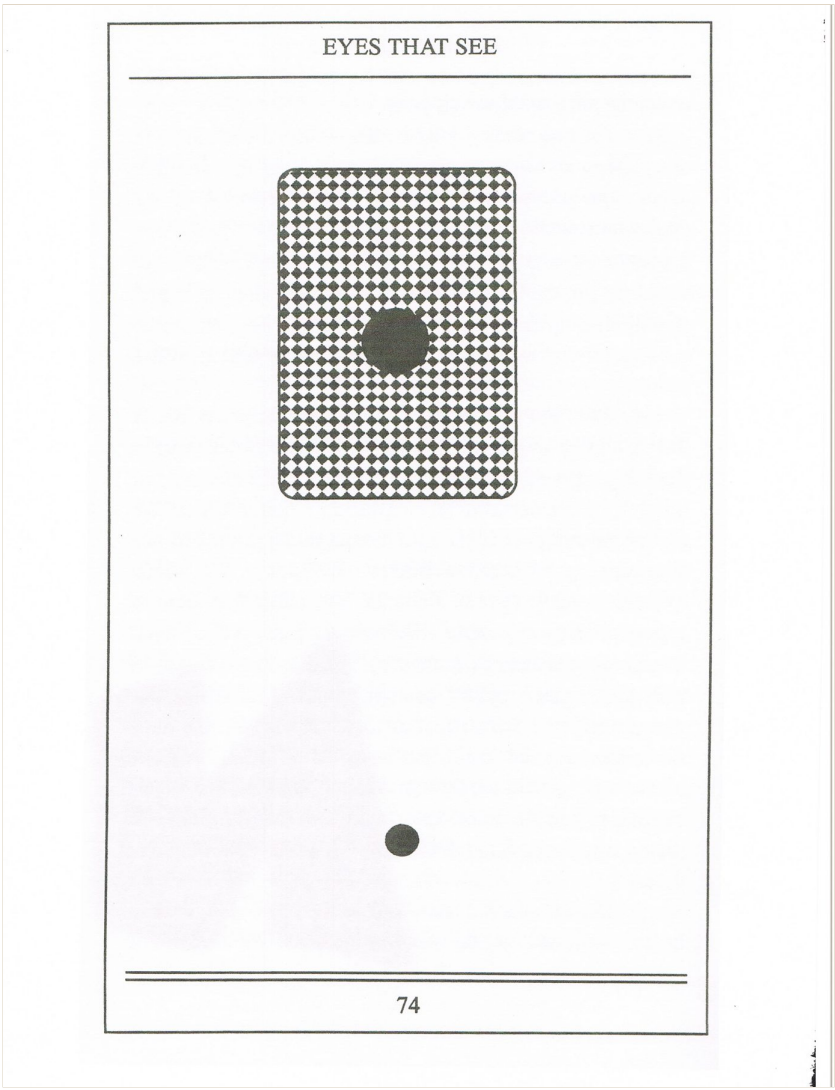
Gut Shabbos to all.

Attached to this letter

The 3-page "practical test" (scans)



Page 1



Page 2

Instructions for using the two pages, 'The Blind Spot' and 'Eyes That See'

Take page 'The Blind Spot'and hold horizontally with small spot on left and large one on right.
Cover your left eye with left hand, holding paper at arms length with right hand, so that you can see both dots with right eye.
As you move page closer towards you, the big dot will disappear (IE IT WILL BECOME WHITE) and will reappear as you bring the paper even closer.

Now take second sheet (Eyes that See) and repeat exercise in same way. Ie horizontal with small dot on left.
Again large black dot will disappear, but this time it will not appear white, BUT WILL APPEAR THE SAME AS THE DIAMOND PATTERN SURROUNDING IT.

Explanation:

The body (biology) and spirituality mirror each other.
There is something in the eye called the blind spot.
At the back of the eye is the retina which contains the photoreceptors which allow one to see.
However there is a block of photoreceptors missing from the retina at the place where the optic nerve originates – I think this is called the optic disc – it is the size of a quarter or 5p. This is nerve is the large channel of communication between the world that we see and the brain.

Now the above experiment demonstrates how we can find that blind spot ie when the big black dot disappears from view.
But why do we not experience this in our daily lives?? Ie why does this blind spot not appear while we are carrying out our daily functions?

Our mind does not like gaps or things it cannot understand.

And so what does it do?

In order to present uninterrupted vision it paints the gap over with another picture which it derives from the space around the gap.
Ie in the first case with white, and in the second case with the diamond pattern!

The mind can do tricks but Emunah is a gift. We can trust our soul beyond reason!

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

DOES EATING MATZAH HELP?

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 March 2018 · Shabbos 17 Mar 2018 · א' ניסן תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Chanan on your upcoming birthday next week. Thinking about it, yours is probably the first birthday I ever got to recognise, 2 years after I was born! Wishing you a happy year with many simchos.

We are now moving into the month of Nissan, with Pesach drawing close very quickly, and I have been learning a maamer about matzah. (from the Alte Rebbe called 'Sheshes yamim')

Really, I think Freida should give over the dvar Torah this week. It just so happened that she has been learning the same maamer! , and when we discovered this I could see that Freida was further ahead than me and really understood it so well BH!

Anyway, I will try and give over only one point, as the Alte Rebbes maamarim are very deep.

So far I can see 2 themes

1. The connection of 6 days to matzah (one pasuk says'You shall eat matzah for 6 days')
2. The connection of matzah to the recognition of Hashem and to emunah - faith.

In relation to the second point, the Alte Rebbe discusses a pasuk from Gemorra Brachos which says that 'an infant child does not know how to call out the name father until he has tasted the taste of wheat.'

The Gemorra specifically uses the word 'calling father', which implies that the child does not yet recognise, or have any real knowledge of his father. He just calls 'father, father' at 3 years of age or less.

This expresses a very high level of bitul from the child. Bitul means an acceptance and obedience with very little understanding. Here you have an infant who has been fed only milk from the mother, who has very limited and undeveloped faculties, who now starts to eat grain, and can now, without understanding, call out and recognise father.

The whole of humanity have the capability, by looking at the vast and intricate creation of the Universe, to recognise the greatness of Hashem.

But for Hashem, the creation of the world is like uttering a few words ('Baruch sheamar the hayah haolam' - Hashem spoke and the world came into being.) ie for Hashem , Creation is a tiny thing.

But a Jew has a connection to Hashem way beyond the creation of the world, and this connection and faith (emunah) is unique to the Jewish Nation.

In the same way as an infant can recognise his father even without any understanding, so do we have the capability to connect to Hashem at that very high level, AND BE ACCEPTING AND OBEDIENT, EVEN WHEN WE HAVE SO LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOVE AND CARE AND GREATNESS OF HASHEM.

In the Zohar matzah is called lachma dimhemnusa - the bread of our faith.

In the same way that a child's life has a massive transformation after he starts to eat wheat, and can now link, and call out 'father father', so on the first night of Pesach when we taste the taste of matzah, we draw down from a very high source, an infinite light 'that no thought can grasp'. And we can bring this down into our own small minds to enable us to call out 'Father, Father.'

And this is the meaning of 'roeh emunah' shepherd of emunah. It does not mean that we are a shepherd of emunah. It is just the opposite. It means that

we shepherd-in emunah ie we actually draw it down - with the eating of matzah!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all.

PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK?

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 March 2019 · Shabbos 16 Mar 2019 · ט' אדר ב' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and getting geared up for Purim!

Mazal Tov Chanan on your birthday this coming week. Wishing you success in all your varied and interesting activities, and much happiness together with your Family.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday also next week. Wishing you much success in both gashmiyus and ruchnius Mariasha.

We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of Pepe which was this week.

I learnt a Maamar over the last few weeks on Purim, from the Alte Rebbe in his siddur.

His maamarim are very deep, intricate and interesting, and I will try and summarise it to get a little bit of it's taste. (It may be a bit heady, but there is some entertainment at the end also!)

It basically explains all the 'behind-the-scene' workings, according to Chassidus, that were going on, in the story of Purim, and how these same dynamics are happening within each one of us, and therefore how we can all be a part of the story. And an explanation of how getting drunk falls into this picture, and how Purim is connected to Yom Kippur.

Amalek is the chief of the 7 Nations and of the forces opposed to G-dliness.

It's extent is similar to Hashem's, who starts high up and influences to very far down below in the world. But with Amalek it is like a snake (high up) and its venom (down below)

How he opposes G-dliness is by making a separation between the first 2 letters of Hashems Name ie yud keh, and the last 2 letters ie vav keh.

This is expressed in the posuk 'ki yad al kes yud-keh', milchamah baHashem (yud-keh-vav-keh) baAmalek midor dor' – his hand is on the throne of yud-keh, who swears that there will be a war of G-d against Amalek from generation to generation (End of parsha Beshalach).

Note that the beginning, the posuk spells Hashem with only the first 2 of the 4 letters of His Name. – and this is one of the main themes of the maamer, ie that Amalek tries to separate between the upper and lower parts of Hashems name.

Hashems Name

The vov of vav-keh stands for 6, which represents the 6 emotions, and in this area of vov-keh, the emotions are at play. When the influence of the yud-keh is cut off though, these emotions run wild, and ego and selfishness rule.

With the yud-keh, the yud represents smallness and humility, and a very high level of intellect.

This upper keh represents spaciousness into which the contracted intellect of the yud broadens out into all the myriad of its details.

When things are functioning normally, the influence from the yud-keh has a positive influence on the vav-keh, bringing about harmony and good feelings etc.

And there is also an influence coming from beyond Hashems Name.

The separation between these 2 parts, is reflected in the words kise and tikvah.

Kise is kes aleph, and kes also means TO COVER ie covers the aleph (alupho shel olam – the King of the world) – see main posuk above

Tikvah is letters tik, and vav-keh, which means A SHEATH of vav-keh - from the posuk 'velamalshinim al tehi tikva – there is no hope for the rebellious ones- in this case referring to Amalek

And how does this all relate to the scene of Purim?

One of the meanings of Purim is 'casting of lots'. Lots also represent a high level of 'beyond' where a person receives what they need, not by allocation, but by a lottery, which is beyond understanding..

And Haman (who is a representative of Amalek) was also trying to use by casting lots against the Jewish people because of its lofty power.

And on YOM KIPPUR there is also the casting of lots for the 2 goats.

To break Haman's plans of entering at these high exalted levels to cause separation between G-dliness and the lower worlds and the Jewish People, the Jews had to do a very intense teshuva, putting their lives at stake, together with fasting and prayer (and this was over a whole year) to arouse and break through to the Essence and Will of Hashem.- the whole story of Mordechai and Esther relating to Achashverosh, Haman etc, and Mordechai gathering all the Jewish children together etc

In the same way, on Yom kippur we spend the day fasting, doing teshuvah, and coming closer to Hashem. And that is why Yom Kippur is explained as being like Purim (ke Purim – kippur)

Drinking

And that is why over the generations we have taken on the custom to get DRUNK on Purim, which is just a representation of going beyond one's intellect, - until one cannot tell the difference between Haman and Mordechai, - because we cant really on our own reach this very high level of beyond yudkeh that was reached at the original Purim.

And the same battle of Purim can be fought within our own selves, where we can resist the forces of Amalek trying to separate between ourselves and Hashem.

Below is a video in Yiddish which has nice music and is fun.

My Yiddish is not very good, but I understood that Berel is the father and not the naughty boy.

Enjoy, and if you don't understand don't worry – it is all part of Purim!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsYZOlBEkhw> Motty Ilowitz - Berl | מאטי אילאוויטש - בערל

Gut Shabbos and Gut Purim

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

REDEMPTION

2020 / 5780

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 March 2020 · Shabbos 28 Mar 2020 · ג' ניסן תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and coping with the world health problem.

Mazal Tov to Ariella whose birthday is tomorrow. Wishing you a wonderful year and maybe we will see you in London when everything settles BEH!

Wishing everyone a healthy month.

It is said that when we left Mitzraim it was in the month of Nissan, and the Future Redemption will also be in the month of Nissan.

May it be this year, and very soon!

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos to all

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

THE LITTLE ALEPH

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 March 2021 · Shabbos 20 Mar 2021 · ז׳ ניסן תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his birthday next week. We are so happy you are having your birthday while staying with us this year while your parents are away. Wishing you an amazing year of growth and happiness Binyamin!

And in the same Family, Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the wedding of your brother on Sunday. Wishing the whole Family continued simchos!

Mazal Tov to Aaron on going official with his music on Spotify under the name of Aaron Percy. One of the virtues of Bnei Yisrael for which they merited to leave Egypt, is that they never changed their Hebrew names while in the Egyptian slavery. Wishing you much success Aaron. I love your music! (and your pride of your Hebrew name)

In this week's Sedra Vayikra, you will notice that the first word Vayikra is written with a small aleph.

There is much to be said about this, but a few items of interest related to this, came past me this week.

1. The Baal Haturim explains that this small aleph is referring to the HUMILITY of Mosheh. Hashem understood that Mosheh did not want to boast that Hashem had called him, and wanted it to be written vayikar (without the aleph) ie as if, rather, Hashem had appeared to him in a dream. So Hashem compromised and made the aleph small. It is said that Mosheh Rabeinu, despite his greatness, was the humblest of men.

2. In an article from Midrash Yalkut Teimani, it gives another reason for the small aleph. It is customary to start teaching young children the Parsha of Vayikra, when they first start learning Chumash. There are some beautiful Traditions relating to this. This custom is alluded to in the miniature aleph in Vayikra, a hint that it is the SMALL CHILDREN who prepare for the Redemption by studying the verses of Sacrificial Laws. Of course there are also much deeper reasons for this custom also.

3. And in relation to this second point, I received a beautiful cd from one of our secretaries at the office whose son had just had his Barmitzvah, and him and his father had composed a song together. This was very beautiful and meaningful, and brought tears to my eyes. I have attached it for interest, as it relates also to the education of young children and humility, and to all families.

4. And again, in relation to humility, we are also now moving into Pesach, characterised by the humility of Matzos.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kosher and Happy Pesach

.

FUN WITH VOICES

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Happy Purim · sent Thursday, 10 March 2022 · Shabbos 12 Mar 2022 · ט' אדר ב' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday this coming week. I hope you and the baby are doing well, and wishing you a year of much development on all fronts, and for all of your Family and with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday the day after. Wishing you many more Roy and in good health and happiness.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Rivky Sarfati and associated Families on the bris of Shlomo Yitzchak BH

We are in the week before Purim and I thought that we could have some fun.

A new talent has emerged in our Family, and that is VOICE DEVELOPMENT.

It made me realise more how varied voices are and how we all have a completely different and recognisable voice from everyone else.

But we can also MASK AND PLAY GAMES WITH OUR VOICES.

And so in the spirit of PURIM try and guess who is our new Voice-Over star. Listen to the attached.

She has also landed her first professional job in this field, and would be happy to grow her new hobby!

And some more VOICE AND ACTING from Zusha below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uP35iBYjVes> Zusha 'Mishenichnas Adar' || זושא משנכנס אדר

Enjoy!

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and Joyous Purim!

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

PRECIOUS MATZAH

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 23 March 2023 · Shabbos 25 Mar 2023 · ג' ניסן תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanan on his birthday this week. Wishing you an amazing year with much happiness, and many simchos Chanan, and in good health.

And also from Newton, Mazal Tov to Ariella on her birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Ariella with much achievement, and with joy!

Mazal Tov to another new American citizen. Well done Hirshy - michayil el Chayil!

I am part of a group learning one side of a Gemorra page, 5 days per week, and half an hour per day, on zoom

It is called Amud Yomi Chabad in English, and we have been learning the mesechta about Pesach.

This week many laws came up about MATZAH, and so I thought I would share some of them so that we can get a better appreciation of how much goes into the preparation of HAND-BAKED SHMURAH MATZAH. - (protected Matzah)

- Right from the time that the wheat (or any of the 5 species of grain) is harvested, the wheat is protected so as not to get wet. If water comes in contact with the grain after harvesting, it could become chametz ie become leavened. And it is forbidden to eat chametz on Pesach

- The people harvesting the wheat were told to have intention that this wheat would be used for the Mitzvah of matzos on Pesach, months in advance of its preparation.
- The chronicles of Jewish community life relate how the harvesting of the wheat for matzah always started at noon, long after the morning dew had risen.(to protect from water)
- From the time of harvesting until, and during, the making of the matzot, the wheat is guarded, with the specific intent for it to be used for the Mitzvah of eating matzah on Pesach.
- Similar precaution and intention was applied when grinding the wheat into flour.
- The water used for mixing into the flour for kneading, has to have 'rested for a day' -mayim shelanu. This is to keep the water cold ie it is drawn after sunset on the day before the matzos are to be baked (warm water causes quicker leavening, and is avoided)
- 18 minutes is allowed for the mixing of the dough, and shaping of the matzah etc prior to placing in the oven ie rapid preparation is needed to prevent leavening.
- Each and every matzah has to be made with the intention that it will be used for the Mitzvah of eating matzah on Pesach. And this is verbally articulated.
- One is not allowed to divert ones attention from the matzah, even for a moment, in those 18 minutes.
- The matzah is to be made thin so that it will be thoroughly baked, again to prevent the possibility of any moisture remaining.
- And I saw an article this week which stated that ' according to a survey conducted by Chabad.org, more than 1 million pounds of the handmade variety of shmurah matzah will be produced in the United States alone this year.'

BH! Torah observance continues to flourish world-wide!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh, and happy preparations for Pesach

JOY OF PURIM

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos Gut Purim · sent Thursday, 21 March 2024 · Shabbos 23 Mar 2024 · י"ג אדר ב' תשפ"ד

Also re-sent on 2024-03-21.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday tonight. Wishing you a wonderful year for you and your Family, business and also spiritually, with much happiness and nachas from the children. Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday the next day. Hope all is well Roy and wishing you a year of good health, happiness and lots of nachas from all your children and grandchildren. Mazal Tov to Kevin Marks on his birthday this week. Hope all going well with you Kevin. Wishing you a great year with success in everything that you do. Love to your Mom. See below for more! Mazal Tov to Ariella whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Ariella with much happiness! Mazal Tov again for the beautiful Opsheren celebration of Shlomo Moshe Vogel!

I would like to welcome a new Family member to our Group, Dov Hyman, who is originally from Baltimore, and lives in New York (correct me if I am wrong) with his Family. Welcome Dov! So nice to be in touch again Our children probably remember Dov when he came with his Family to join our Pesach Seder many years ago. And Mommy and I remember so well your parents Dov, Nat and Joy ah, who came to us in London when we were engaged, and we met on numerous other occasions.. I also remember when I was about 10 years old, my parents went on a trip to Baltimore (travelling was rare in those days) to have a reunion with your Bobba Vichna, your parents and the many other relatives who had formed a Davidoff club in Baltimore, as far as I understood it.. My Bobba Bryna ah and Dov's Bobba Vichna ah were sis-

ters. So my father ah and Dov's father, Nathan ah, were first cousins. So I suppose that Dov and I are second cousins.

It would be great if someone can draw up a small Family Tree, only showing the links of all the members of our Group. This will be a nice way for everyone to get to know each other better. Kevin and Batsheva were going to try and do this at some stage. It would be a nice time to revive this Kevin, especially as your birthday is coming up soon!! Or any other volunteers?

We are now headed for Purim, and Purim is the time for pure FUN AND JOY. So no words this week. Just some fun videos and audios: ENJOY.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TFkdL28S8E

https://collive.com/new-song-orah-vesimcha-in-honor-of-purim/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKxQ4_LRBkI

Gut Shabbos and HAPPY PURIM to all!

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

THE SMALL ALEPH

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 April 2025 · Shabbos 5 Apr 2025 · ז׳ ניסן תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on their Wedding Anniversary last week. The English date was yesterday. Blessings are never too late, and so, wishing you much continued happiness together with much growth and achievement!

Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his birthday next week. Wishing you continued growth and achievement Binyamin, and a year of flourishing in all your good efforts!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff Jnr on her birthday next week. Love having you with us each week, Nechama, and wishing you a happy year, giving your parents much nachas!

Hahem calls to us

I heard some beautiful points this week from Rabbi Gordon shiur ah, relating to this week's Sedra Vayikra, and the word Vayikra.

The Hebrew word Vayikra means 'He called', and Rashi says (1:1) that this term is an expression of affection or endearment (of Hashem calling to us).

The Hebrew word vayikar (vayikra without the aleph) means 'chanced upon'. It also refers to a communication, but it has connotations of transience and impurity. This was the term used by Hashem when addressing the non-Jewish prophet, Bilam.

To explain this, he brings a teaching from Chassidus as follows:

Life is not a series of coincidental happenings where we feel we are drifting in an ocean, or being blown about by the wind ie things just happening (vayikar).

Rather Hashem is calling out personally to each individual Jew with affection - Vayikra. And the aleph of Vayikra is in diminutive form in this week's Sedra, referring to this personal connection. Everything that happens to us is specific and focused. These situations are sometimes difficult, but nothing is random. They happen for a reason, and we don't necessarily understand.

Hashem has expectations of us, and we have to utilise every situation, and maximise this connection to Hashem through the guidance of Torah, Mitzvos, and acts of goodness and kindness.

We call to Hashem

And interestingly, this concept of 'calling', also came up in beautiful way in Tanya this week (Chap 37).

The Alte Rebbe brings the Talmudic expression regarding a Torah student reading Torah - korei baTorah. This is usually interpreted as 'one who studies Torah', but the Talmud interprets it to mean 'one who calls to Hashem through Torah', as a man calls to his friend, or as a child calls to his father to come and join him, and not to part from him G-d forbid.

Practically

Hashem accepts our small acts. The Sedra goes on to show how less well-off people could bring a bird as a sacrifice, or even just plain flour, instead of an animal brought by the more wealthy.

And over the past few weeks, Mommy (Rahel) has handed out dozens of Shabbos candles to Jewish women on the street, who have taken upon themselves the 'small act' of lighting Shabbos candles on time, Friday evenings!

Gut Shabbos to all

Vayikra ↑ Vayikra · Contents · By date ויקרא

THE ART OF SACRIFICE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 19 March 2026 · Shabbos 21 Mar 2026 · ג' ניסן תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

I saw an interesting editorial from Rabbi YY Jacobson this week, which I would like to share:

There was a successful businessman having a discussion with his new son-in-law and offering him a 50-50 partnership in his business

'All you will have to do is manage the factory' he said.

'I hate factories,the young man replied. 'Too noisy.'

'Fine said the father-in-law. Then work in the office.'

'I hate office work. I can't sit behind a desk.'

The father in law stared at him and said, ' I just made you a half owner of a thriving company, and you are refusing both jobs. What am I supposed to do with you?'

'Easy he said. Buy me out!'

This humorous exchange captures a deeper truth.

When a person refuses to give of themselves, even great opportunities become meaningless.

A life without sacrifice becomes centred entirely on the self.

In this week's Sedra Vayikra we learn about some of the SACRIFICES in the Temple.

The Alte Rebbe explains, from the word *mikem* -from you, that the primary Offering that G-d desires, is not from the animal, but from the person themself. Ie to sacrifice our own desires, ego, and inner resistances etc.

In our zeal for personal freedom, we have forgotten that meaningful living requires giving something of ourselves for truth, for another person, for our values, or for G-d.

When no part of life demands sacrifice, we become more fragile, more superficial, and more self absorbed.

The Book of Leviticus, centred on Offerings, reminds us that to live, is to live for something beyond ourselves.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

צו

Tzav

Vayikra 6:1 · parsha 2 of 10 in Vayikra · 25 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — JOY CONTINUED - A REFLECTION ON AN OBSTACLE 634
2017 / 5777 — 3 + 4 = FREEDOM 637
2018 / 5778 — MATZAH CONTINUED 641
2019 / 5779 — AND WHAT AFTER PURIM? 644
2020 / 5780 — MATZOS - BREAD OF EMUNAH AND HEALTH 646
2021 / 5781 — FAITH AND HEALING 649
2022 / 5782 — ANTITHESIS TO AMALEK 651
2023 / 5783 — SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION 653
2024 / 5784 — THE JOY OF CHASSANAH 655
2025 / 5785 — FAITH AND HEALING 657
2026 / 5786 — A FORMULA FOR FREEDOM 659

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

JOY CONTINUED - A REFLECTION ON AN OBSTACLE

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 25 March 2016 · Shabbos 26 Mar 2016 · ט"ז אדר ב' תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had a Freilichen Purim,

Mazal Tov to Ariella on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a Happy Year.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their upcoming Anniversary.

Wishing Mommy arichus yomim on the upcoming Yohrtzeit of Simcha.

Looking back at the 2 months of Adar and Purim with all its aspects of Joy, I couldn't help thinking about its connection to AMALEK.

Amalek has historically been the main enemy of our Nation, and in the week before Purim we are commanded to 'Remember Amalek, and totally Destroy Amalek'

There was the original Nation of Amalek at the time of Moshe Rabeinu, and then throughout history its descendants keep surfacing.

In the story of Purim it is Haman, and more recently it was Hitler yimach shmam (may their names be destroyed)

Besides the Nation of Amalek, the Rebbe explains, that within each of us there is an aspect of Amalek in some form or another, which we need to address and destroy.

I heard a few aspects of the nature of Amalek this week from different Teachings of The Rebbe:

1. Amalek makes a separation at the neck between the Head and Body. Ie the person knows what is right to do, but 'Amalek' forces one to act contrary to

this knowledge.. ie person may find themselves doing things they know are wrong, and are dismayed by this, and yet they carry on doing it!! (Melika, which is the same letters as Amalek, refers to the procedure for the Bird Offering in the Temple where the Head of the bird was completely severed from its Body at the Neck)

2. Amalek has a nature which is totally 'destruction oriented.' His only object is to destroy, even at the expense of himself, for no reason.

3. He cools us off -asher karecha baderech (karecha has a dual meaning of 'meeting' on the way, or 'cooling' off). It is that aspect in ourselves which reduces or cools our enthusiasm for Torah and Mitzvos. I heard it said that Amalek will jump into a boiling bath of water and get burnt, as long as he cools this water so that others will not benefit.

4. Amalek fought with us in Refidim (besides being the name of a place, the word refidim also implies weakness). He attacks us when we are feeling weak. (when we are weak in keeping Torah, Amalek comes and cools us further)

And so I was thinking how Adar and Purim and Amalek are connected, and it makes so much sense, that all the different energies of JOY that we have been exerting (even when it seems ridiculous), that these energies are needed to conquer the 'coldness and destructive nature' of Amalek within ourselves. And outside of ourselves - When I saw everyone yesterday out on the streets, celebrating Purim, I could not help compare this to the world news a few days before, of suicide bombers going out onto the streets and killing themselves and innocent people! Who has had a greater effect on the World?!

In Hayom Yom this week, the Rebbe explains the antidote to Amalek from the Posuk:

(Moshe commands Yehoshua to) 'Choose men for us, and go forth and fight Amalek' This is in the singular (and should have been plural!) and is explained as follows.

In every generation there is the extension of Moshe ie Moshes Teachings, and Heads, who are faithful to the Teaching. And each individual has to take up this fight with Amalek in every time and place.

RAMBAM 5 minutes per week covering 7 Chaps

Sefer Avodah (Book 8), Hilchos Bias Hamikdash, Chaps 3,4,5,6,7,8,9. PAGE 12

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and the strength to delight in our simple connection to Hashem without interference.

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

3 + 4 = FREEDOM

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 April 2017 · Shabbos 8 Apr 2017 · י"ב ניסן תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Sarah on her engagement. What amazing news BH. Word gets around quicker these days on Facebook than it does by mouth! So we knew about it before Reuven could tell us. Wishing you all much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his upcoming birthday on second night Seder. Wishing you a wonderful year Shlomo.

For the past few weeks we have been very philosophical in discussing Emunah, but now we want to bring it down to practicality and see its link to MATZAH and Pesach (the matzah we eat on first night Pesach is called the Matzah of our Emunah)

I heard a very powerful shiur about this from Rabbi Wolf basically explaining a sicha from the Rebbe.

2 main points came out ie

1. What is the connection between Emunah, Matzah and Pesach
2. HOW WE CAN EACH ATTAIN FREEDOM FROM OUR OWN PERSONAL RESTRICTIONS THROUGH THE MESSAGE OF MATZAH AND WINE ON PESACH.

The lesson was intricate but I will try and summarise.

At Pesach Seder we have 3 Matzos and 4 Kos (cups) of Wine.

The 3 matzos are instructed direct from Torah, whereas the 4 kos are instructions from our Sages (which one would think is a lower level)

The 4 kos represent the 4 promises of Redemption mentioned in Torah.

One of the questions which therefore arises is why is our Redemption on Pesach represented by the 4 kos of wine (from the Sages) and not the 3 Matzas (instruction direct from Torah), on the night celebrating our Freedom from slavery??

The Rebbe explains as follows:

Of the 4 Expressions of Redemption, the first 3 (hotzeisi, hitzalti and gaalti) all occurred on the first night when we left Mitzraim 15th Nissan).

The 4th Expression (velakachti) only occurred 49 days later on Har Sinai, when Hashem took us to Himself as a People.

Therefore the MATZOS represent only the Redemption physically on the First night (15th Nissan) as represented by 3, where Hashem Himself intervened and took us out of Egypt.

That night Bnei Yisrael only wanted Hashem, with all their heart and mind.

However, even although the First night Redemption was highly dramatic and inspirational, and we were now physically out of Egypt, there was still 210 years of Egyptian culture engrained within us - we were still steeped in the impurity of their society, as was evident with the subsequent complainings of Am Yisrael in the desert. Also the Egyptians still pursued us again to the Red Sea, and even after they were drowned we were still deeply scarred by Egyptian culture.

After 15th Nissan there were 49 days where we now started using our own mind to internalise what had happened to us over the past 210 years, Hashems intervention to set us free, and to start purifying ourselves from the impurities we had suffered, and which was now clear to us through our soul searching (as represented by the 49 days of Sefira)

By Har Sinai we became cleansed of our deep emotional scars from Egypt (Gemorra Shabbos)

THE 4TH EXPRESSION OF REDEMPTION THEREFORE REFERS TO OUR HARD WORK OF REFINING AND LIBERATING OURSELF FROM OUR INNER PRISON - EGYPT WHEN WE REACHED HAR SINAI.

Practically for us, this means as follows:

Every year on Pesach our Neshamos will relive that flash of inspiration from the original 15th of Nissan. And we probably will not be very aware of this.

Thereafter we need to realise that this inspiration is short lived, and the only way we are going to set ourselves free from our own personal problems and inhibitions, is through our own hard work to identify our problem (which arise from our animal side) and then work hard with thoughtfulness and force to remove these barriers.

This will allow us to own our freedom and it will be internalised and permanent.

Ie 3 matzos (representing Hashems input on ourselves) + 4 kos of wine (our efforts thereafter) = Freedom

To show how this all adds up in such a beautiful way, I have attached additional explanations from the shiur.

Gut Shabbos to all, and a Pesach of inspiration plus hard work.

Attached to this letter

His notes "3 + 4 = Freedom" (Word document)

> 3 + 4 = Freedom
>
> 3 MATZAH (refers to our inner Neshamah and or Hashem, which are huge but not so much related to our own efforts)
>
> Matzah does not need to be tasted but we cannot add flavour to it. (paradoxical)

2 of the 3 matzos are the same as for any Shabbos or Yom Tov, but on Pesach we have the 3rd matzah which we break in 2.- representing 'poor mans bread' – we had become poor in mind, emotions, morals and physically. We therefore needed dislodging by Hashem

Represents humility – flat and unleavened.- positive side

Eating of matzah is direct from Torah (ie from Hashem direct)

3 in Hebrew is gimmel. The root meaning is gomel which means the Giver

3 Fathers. Father represents the giver, and his contribution is like a seed (cf the flash of inspiration)

4 CUPS OF WINE

Cups represent our absorbing and internalising the lessons (receiving) resulting in our work of refinement to bring about our own redemption.

This is again reflected in the fact that it is a Rabbinic instruction ie from man.

The Hebrew word for 4 is daled, its root meaning the poor one or receiver.

4 Mothers. The mother represents receiver and the nurturing and the whole process of growth of the child.

IT IS THEREFORE OUR EFFORTS WHICH RESULT IN OUR FREEDOM, AND THAT IS WHY THE EXPRESSIONS OF REDEMPTION ARE 4 AND WHY IT IS THE RABBINIC INSTRUCTION WHICH REFLECTS THIS REDEMPTION ON PESACH, AND NOT THE MATZAH.

THE MATZAH RELATES TO AND STRENGTHENS OUR NATURAL INTERNAL AND ETERNAL EMUNAH.

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

MATZAH CONTINUED

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 March 2018 · Shabbos 24 Mar 2018 · ח' ניסן תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Ariella on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Ariella.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai who also has a birthday next week. We are missing you Binyamin and we love you. Tatti is coming to see you soon next week BEH, and you should have a happy year.

Wishing safe trips to all who are travelling away for Pesach.

Last week we spoke of how the eating of matzah on the first night of Pesach gives us the capability of reaching up to a very high level beyond daas (a level of knowledge), where we get a sense of, and recognise Father (Hashem) and it is called 'the bread of our faith'.

2 further points about matzah came up in the Alte Rebbe's maamer which was interesting ie

1. The character of the matzah which allows us to reach this high level
2. The link of matzah to it's eating of 6 days

The Alte Rebbe keeps quoting passages from all over Torah and I am not clear of their sources, but here he links matzah to chochmah.

There are 3 levels of intellect

1. Chochmah
2. Binah
3. Daas

Chochmah is the highest level and it is compared to the first flash of an idea or concept. It is just a point, a very simple pont, but it contains not only this flash of an idea, but also, in a hidden way, the entire extent and development of that idea.

Binah is the next level where the flash concept of chochmah now expands out in all dimensions into it's myriads of details ie in breadth, depth, height etc.

The link of matzah to chochmah shows the qualities of matzah.

It is simple, made up of water and flour.

After being baked it stays simple as it is, water and flour, in the same shape and dimension as original.

Chochma means koach mah - 'the power of what', reflecting humility and simplicity.

It is easy for holiness to dwell here, and because it is also a Scriptural mitzva on the first night, the matzah has the capability of linking us to a very high level, beyond all knowledge, similar to a child recognising his father at a very young age after he starts to eat grain.

The next level of intellect is binah.

This is where you get massive expansion of intellectual details in all directions.

This is compared to bread in comparison to matzah, where the dough can expand hugely and become very bloated.

Even although binah has this positive powerful expansion of intellect, it is also an area where negative forces can enter eg ego, aggression, appetites, haughtiness, selfishness etc.

These negative qualities express in the emotional qualities of a person, and there are 6 emotions as described in the zohar and chassidus.

Can you now see the link?!

The pasuk says '6 days you shall eat matzos'

Halacha explains that this means that the first day matzah eating is obligatory, and the next 6 are optional.

This means that the holiness and humility achieved by the matzah on the first day, effects the drawing down of an infinite light down into our being, which removes the dark and negative traits that have come about from binah and our 6 emotional faculties.

Ie humility has the power to overcome our negative traits.

This is effected by the mitzva of matzah on the first night of Pesach, followed by the matzah of the following 6 days.

And again to highlight the beauty and wisdom of Torah, mazot in Hebrew is usually spelt without a vav.

In the pasuk which says '6 days you shall eat matzos', MATZOS IS SPELT WITH A VOV!

And the numerical value of vov IS SIX!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and happy preparations for Pesach.

AND WHAT AFTER PURIM?

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 March 2019 · Shabbos 23 Mar 2019 · ט"ז אדר ב' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Purim.

Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff for your birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Ariella!

We would like to wish long life to Mariasha on the loss of her grandfather today. You and your Family should only know simchos in the future Mariasha.

Also to wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister Simcha, this coming week. Her neshamah should have an aliyah.

In London Purim has almost ended, but probably in other parts of the world it is still going strong.

And what now that Purim is ending? Does everything go flat after all the partying?

By the way Mommy and I really feel humbled to have seen all the care and thought each member of the Family has put in to making shlach manos for each other.

This has taken a tremendous amount of thought, time, artistic talent, expense etc, with so much love.

And all the costumes, etc, etc.

We are proud of you all BH

The Megillah says that AFTER THE MIRACLE OF PURIM, the Yidden were blessed with simcha (JOY).

Our Rabbis understand this to mean that they were now able to celebrate the Yomim Tovim. (in the future)

The Rebbe explains that although other Nations also have holidays, they celebrate them with drinking and unbridled conduct.

Am Yisrael, by contrast, even when they rejoice and drink, they become closer to Hashem, and heighten their Yiras Shamayim (Fear of Heaven) and holiness.

Gut Shabbos to all, and with much JOY

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

MATZOS - BREAD OF EMUNAH AND HEALTH

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 2 April 2020 · Shabbos 4 Apr 2020 · י' ניסן תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well in these very trying times, and following the advice of Government, Doctors and Rabbis, to stay at home, unless for urgent immediate unavoidable needs.

And linked to the above we want to applaud the work being done by all the doctors world-wide, but especially we would like to mention Uncle Reuven, who is working 18 hours a day, running the hospital he is in charge of ,at Boston University, going all out to literally save peoples lives!! We should only have good news and Hashem should remove this plague quickly from our midst, and replace it with Mashiach. Kol Hakavod and thank you Reuven!

And thank you to all the other doctors, dentists, therapists and nurses in our Family, who are also fighting on the front lines in one form or another.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai whose birthday is tonight. Your birthday this year is a light in the darkness, a simcha during difficult times, and you should always be a source of light and nachas for your parents. Wishing you a wonderful year Binyamin!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on the second night of Pesach next week. Wishing you a year of continued development in both physical and spiritual pursuits, with happiness Shlomo!

Mazal Tov also to Ariel Pesach in Australia, for your birthday next week. We miss you all being so far away, but you should have a very successful and happy year Ariel!

It is interesting to note that many people are going to be making Pesach on their own, in their own homes, this year due to circumstances which every country is facing.

Even although the sedarim will be smaller, it should be with much joy and self satisfaction, having reached a new level of achievement in making one's own Seder!

The MATZOS of the First night feed us with EMUNAH (FAITH), and the MATZOS of the Second night feed us with GOOD HEALTH. It should be for all of us!

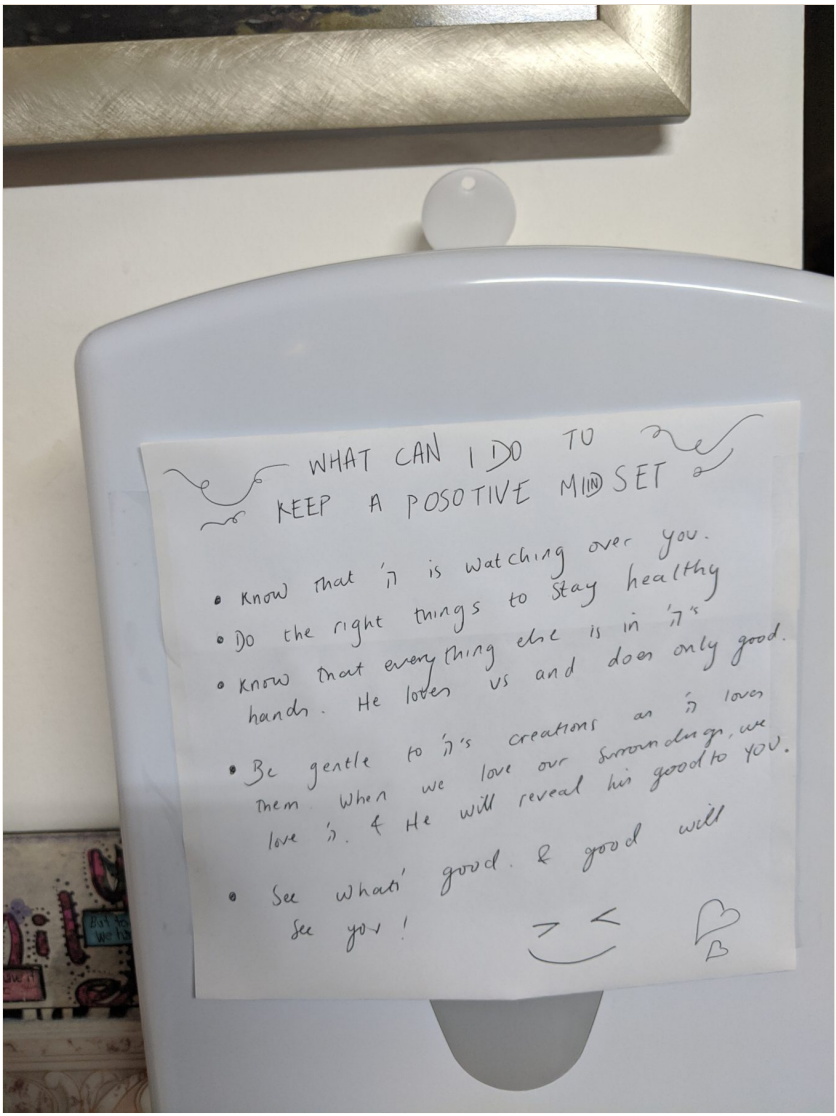
The best Dvar Torah that I saw this week, was a hand-written note stuck up in the kitchen from one of our children.

I think the author would like to remain anonymous, and so I will respect this. It certainly wont detract from the beautiful message which is so connected to us all now - SEE ATTACHED

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all!

Attached to this letter

The handwritten note "What can I do to keep a positive mindset" (photo)


WHAT CAN I DO TO
KEEP A POSOTIVE MINDSET
• Know that 'n is watching over you.
• Do the right things to stay healthy
• Know that everything else is in 'n's
hands. He loves us and does only good.
• Be gentle to 'n's creations as 'n loves
them. When we love our surroundings, we
love 'n. & He will reveal his good to you.
• See what's good. & good will
see you!

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

FAITH AND HEALING

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Wednesday, 24 March 2021 · Shabbos 27 Mar 2021 · י"ד ניסן תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos. That is right before Pesach this year. Wishing you a great year Ariella!

Mazal Tov to Slomo Levy whose birthday is on the second night of Pesach. Wishing you to go from strength to strength Shlomo in both gashmius and ruchnius!

And last but not least, following on in chol hamoed, is the barmitzvah of Ariel in Sydney. What a great milestone for you Ariel! Enjoy, and wishing you to become an important member of Klal Yisrael, and with much joy. MAZAL TOV!

We also remember Aunty Girlie Sacks with fondness, whose yohrtzeit is also on the second day of Pesach. Wishing all her Family long life.

As things may be very busy tomorrow and Friday, I am sending the email earlier this week (and keeping it short!)

From the Hayom Yom of 15th of Nissan, the Alte Rebbe declared:

"The matzah of the first night of Pesach is called the FOOD OF FAITH.

The matzah of the second night is called the FOOD OF HEALING.

When healing brings faith (because the person is grateful to Hashem for having healed him), then clearly there has been illness.

But when faith brings healing, there is no illness to begin with!!" (this needs to be thought about!)

And connected, in this weeks Parsha Tzav, is the Thanksgiving Offering (Todah), which was brought in gratitude to Hashem, when a person has come through successfully from a dangerous situation.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a Kosher and Happy Pesach

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

ANTITHESIS TO AMALEK

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 18 March 2022 · Shabbos 19 Mar 2022 · ט"ז אדר ב' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had a wonderful Purim!

A big Mazal Tov to Uncle Chanan whose 70th is today. Congratulations Chanan! Wishing you many more healthy and active years BEH with much happiness!

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you many more happy and healthy years together with much nachas from your whole Family BEH!

Wishing Mommy long life for Dani (Simcha), whose yohrtzeit is this coming week. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Adar is not yet over, and we can still counter Amalek, which is always ready to raise its head.

Amalek is ego and self-centeredness.

This may be expressed in very subtle ways but its core is a feeling of purpose-lessness.

When a person is self-centred, he feels no obligation to G-d or his fellow man.

The attitude of Amalek is, 'I can do whatever I want. I don't care if I destroy myself or harm others!'

In short it is a path of irrational destruction.

The antithesis of Amalek is a deep feeling of mission and purpose that guides every detail of our lives.

Every action is carefully weighed.

Mashiach demands that we have self-sacrifice to help others. - Mashiach Day by Day 11th Adar 2.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and continued happiness in Adar

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 30 March 2023 · Shabbos 1 Apr 2023 · י׳ ניסן תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Binyomin whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a year of much growth and happiness in both gashmius and ruchnius Binyomin!

Then on Pesach Seder second night, is the birthday of Shlomo Levy. Mazal Tov Shlomo! Keep up all your good work and learning and with much happiness.

Also on the second day of Pesach is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie. Wishing all the Sacks Family long life, and remembering Aunty Girlie with much fondness.

I saw a summary of a talk that the Rebbe give at the Yud Shvat farbrengen in 1974 and these were some of the points which I found interesting, and related to the coming week:

The reason we are losing so many of our youth, is due to the collapse of the FAMILY UNIT.

All difficulties in father-son relationships, stem from the laxity in EDUCATING principles such as honoring one's father and mother, the obligation of a father to teach his children, etc.

Every nation in the world is dependant on family ties, especially the Jewish People.

The previous generation made the mistake of not investing enough into FAMILY TIME, thereby neglecting many youth, who were left despondent, to climb the walls of exile by themselves. Not surprisingly, they strayed...

Today too there are families where husband, wife and children all daven in separate shuls. This is a recipe for disaster!

FAMILIES MUST BE TOGETHER!

An opportune time for togetherness is Friday night.

The entire family should sit together, in a Shabbat atmosphere and discuss Shabbat topics.

This is the formula for a HEALTHY FAMILY and success in EDUCATION.

This coming week on Yud Aleph Nissan is the birthday of the Rebbe, who spent his life reaching out to, and EDUCATING our generation.

And soon after that, next week is Pesach, where we have another opportunity to bring our families together, to keep Yom Tov, and discuss and explore the meaning of FREEDOM.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov. Wishing everyone a kosher and happy Pesach.

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

THE JOY OF CHASSANAH

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 March 2024 · Shabbos 30 Mar 2024 · כ' אדר ב' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and that everyone had a happy Purim.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama on their upcoming Chassanah next week BEH. The wedding should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas, and you should build a binyan adei ad together, and with much joy! We will be thinking of you at your oproef this Shabbos Zalmy, and sorry that we cant be there for this. If anyone on this Family Group can make it to the wedding we would be most happy to see you there for the dinner. We have available places. Here is the invitation link:
https://www.greenvelope.com/card/.public-f86667ed136d4e96972f536fd3d26bb5363
33934353038#card

I also found a cute video of a Chassanah from Ukraine, which I think will be nice for this weeks email theme - See below.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky (Levy) on their wedding Anniversary next week. Wishing you many happy years together with blessings in both gashmius and ruchnius with lots of nachas from all your Family!

Today is the yohrtzeit of Nadiv Dovber Kehaty ah, the brother of Mendel. Wishing you and all your Family long life Mendel, and you should know only many simchos BEH. Nadiv Dovber's neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Tonight is also the Yohrtzeit of Dani ah, Mommy's (Rahel) sister. Wishing you, Rahel, and the whole Family, long life, and Dani's neshamah should have an Aliyah. Wishing only continued simchos in the future BEH.

Even although Purim has passed, we are still in Adar, and we should still be increasing in JOY every day.

In a sicha (Sefer Hasichos 5751 Vol 1 p339), the Rebbe mentions that we should increase in joy day by day, minute after minute during Adar.

Even after Adar, we bring this joy into the entire year so that everything we do, is filled with it.

This preparation, will enable us to get some idea of the unlimited, ever-growing joy that we will experience in the Final Redemption BEH.

So this week we can share the JOY AND LOVE OF A CHASSANAH with the attached video from Ukraine

Just change the names to Zalmy and Nechamah, to reflect all of our good wishes to you both, for a wonderful Chassanah and wonderful life together.

LECHAIM!

<https://collive.com/kyiv-community-films-adorable-wine-making-clip-for-wedd ing/ > https://collive.com/kyiv-community-films-adorable-wine-making-clip-for-weddi ng/

Gut Shabbos to all!

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

FAITH AND HEALING

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 10 April 2025 · Shabbos 12 Apr 2025 · י״ד ניסן תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Pesach preparations, including travelling to Family!

BH our home is filling up.

Wishing a continued refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy for his birthday on 2nd night of Pesach. Wishing you a great year Shlomo, with continued advancement in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal To v to Ariel Bassin in Sydney for his birthday next week. We are missing you in London Ariel but hope that you have a wonderful Pesach in Au. And of course wishing you also a wonderful year with much success!

It is Aunty Girlie's yohrtzeit next week and we wish Adrian and all her side of the Family including Froma and Kerry Lee, long life, and many simchos in the future.

A short Dvar Torah Erev Pesach from the Alte Rebbe as mentioned in Hayom Yom of 15th of Nissan:

"The MATZAH of the first night of Pesach is Food of Faith.

The MATZAH of the second night of Pesach is Food of Healing.

When healing brings faith (as in 'Thank you G-d for healing me'), this indicates that there had been illness.

When faith brings healing, there is no illness to start with."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a kosher and happy Pesach with much inspiration!

Tzav ↑ Tzav · Contents · By date צו

A FORMULA FOR FREEDOM

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 26 March 2026 · Shabbos 28 Mar 2026 · י׳ ניסן תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying the Pesach preparations! Safe journeys for all those travelling.

Wishing Yechezkiel ben Ester a refuah shleimah.

MAZAL TOV TO BINYAMIN ON HIS BARMITVAH TONIGHT! Wishing you a wonderful celebration Binyamin and a wonderful life as a man, with much achievement in both gashmius and ruchnius! Wishing Shmuly and Devorah Leah much nachas from him and from all of your children BEH!

Mazal Tov to Selma Penn on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Selma. So nice to be in touch BH!

Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff on her birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a great year Ariella. I hope all is going well with you!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy for his birthday on Second Day of Yom Tov. Wishing you a year of much hatzlachah in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much simcha, Shlomo!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina on her birthday next week. Keep giving your parents lots of nachas, and wishing you a very happy year with much achievement Nechama.

As we now move into Pesach the Holiday of our Freedom, and from the time of our exodus the Jewish People have been called the Army of Hashem –

*Tzivos Hashem,*there is a Hayom Yom which gives us a formula for this FREEDOM:

".....The Jews in Egypt were utterly degraded under their severe and bitter affliction.

Yet despite it all:

· They did not change their Jewish names

· They did not change their Jewish language

· They kept their distinctive clothing

With absolute determination, they stood at their posts, for they knew that Hashem had promised to redeem them.

Whoever behaves as they did under such circumstances is a soldier in the Army of Hashem, and Hashem will come to their assistance in a manner, that manifests in nature, yet transcends nature! ....."

Gut Shabbos and wishing all a Kosher and Happy Pesach

שמיני

Shemini

Vayikra 9:1 · parsha 3 of 10 in Vayikra · 26 of 54 in the Torah
12 letters

2016 / 5776 — SIMPLE JOY AND MAZAL TOV 662
2017 / 5777 — THE PATH OF THE KING 664
2018 / 5778 — WEALTH 666
2019 / 5779 — HALFWAY MARK 668
2020 / 5780 — OUR ARMY OF HASHEM 669
2021 / 5781 — LASER BEAM 675
2022 / 5782 — CONQUERING WITH JOY 677
2023 / 5783 — LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE 679
2023 / 5783 — ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT 682
2024 / 5784 — CHASSANAH JOY OF DANCING, JUGGLING AND SINGINGING 684
2025 / 5785 — THE LABOUR OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE 687
2026 / 5786 — ALL OF ISRAEL HAVE A SHARE IN THE WORLD TO COME 689

SIMPLE JOY AND MAZAL TOV

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 March 2016 · Shabbos 2 Apr 2016 · כ"ג אדר ב' תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV FOR THE UPCOMING CHASSANA OF PENINA AND AVI. MAY YOU BUILD A BINYAN ADEI AD TOGETHER WITH MUCH JOY!

WE ARE ALL LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING WITH YOU SOON IYRH!

So we have just come out from the NOISY JOY of Purim, but we are still in the month of Adar, and of course we still have IYrH further celebrations to look forward to this Month!

BUT THERE IS ALSO A QUIET SIMPLE JOY WHICH WE HAVE NOT YET MENTIONED, AND THIS JOY RUNS VERY DEEP AND IS ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE EVERY DAY, AND MANY TIMES PER DAY.

The Rebbe has described this on one occasion as the JOY OF WATER, as compared to the JOY OF WINE.

In both Sefer Vayikra which we are reading now, and the current Rambam which we are learning (1 Chapter per day), we have been learning about the various Korbanos (Offerings in the Temple)

The Wine Offering was poured every day on the Mizbeach in the Temple, and the Water Offering was poured every year on Sukkos.

In fact todays Rambam discussed some aspects of both these Offerings!

In this sicha, the Rebbe discusses the difference between the Joy of Wine and the Joy of Water.

Wine has nice taste and many varieties of taste, and also has the power to make one feel good and release ones Base Emotions.

Water is completely different.

There is no taste, and no emotions, but there is no drink quite like water to really satisfy our thirst.

And it is said about the Joy of The Water Drawing on Sukkos - 'He who has not seen the joy of simchas beis hashoeva on Sukkos HAS NEVER SEEN TRUE JOY'

And what is the meaning of this Joy of Water?

The Rebbe explains that it is simply doing a Mitzva, even if one does not understand it, simply for Hashem. Just because Hashem has asked us to do it.

This brings about the SIMPLE JOY OF CONNECTION.

And so we give Penina and Avi the Brocha to have both!

Getting married is a Mitzva and you can experience this (and any Mitzva) with the Joy of Water and Wine.

Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov!

RAMBAM 5 minutes per week covering 7 Chapters - This week is Sefer Avodah, Hilchos Issurei Mizbeach Chaps 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 - PAGE 13

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

THE PATH OF THE KING

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 April 2017 · Shabbos 22 Apr 2017 · כ"ו ניסן תשע"ז

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, had a wonderful Pesach and safe journeys back home.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week. Wishing you lots o f success in NY this year with much happiness Batsheva. Mazal Tov to Brian who has a birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Brian with much achievement. Mazal Tov to Aaron who also has a birthday next week. Wishing you much success Aaron Mazal Tov to Chava who passed her driving test today BH.

The Frierdike Rebbe once gave an analogy of a person who finds himself wandering through a forest and is surrounded by dangerous animals. He said that this does not mean that the person just walked out of his home straight into the middle of the forest. Rather it means that he was walking along the path in the forest ('THE PATH OF THE KING - HASHEM'), and then he deviated from it very slightly. Following that slight deviation, he made another slight deviation, and so on, until he realised that he was nowhere near the path. Instead he was now in the middle of the forest among dangerous animals!

In a sicha from the Rebbe on Parshas Shemini (this weeks sedra), The Rebbe explains how the signs of a kosher animal relate to us, and can help us in our own service.

The 2 signs which Torah tells us regarding a pure animal are:
1. They have fully split hooves
2. They chew the cud.

The Ramban explains to us that the reason Torah allows us to eat certain foods and others not, is because the food becomes our own flesh and blood. Torah forbids those foods which have negative energies and permits those which have positive energies.

It therefore follows that the above 2 signs reflect positive energies, and because everything mentioned in Torah contains a lesson for ourselves, how do we therefore cultivate these aspects of purity within ourselves?

These signs would be relevant to our *animal* or physical natures rather than to our G-dly side.

Feet
Feet touch the ground.
This indicates that our lowest powers ie power of action, should be used for physical earthly matters. *The Head* The head of the 'animal' is above the ground and corresponds to our higher abilities such as emotions and intellect, which should be reserved for holy pursuits. *Hooves.* Furthermore a person should have a 'hoof' to separate even the lowest part of his animal soul from the earth ie not to become too stuck into the material world. And this hoof must be *split* so as to allow G-dliness *through* into his mundane activities (eg when we eat it should be for the sake of our bodies and in a holy way) *Chewing the Cud.* Having a split hoof however is not enough to make our 'animal' pure. We also need the second sign of 'chewing the cud'. This means that whenever we engage in a phsical activity, we must first examine it thoroughly. We must clarify over and over again whether this physical activity should be done and how it should be done. Only then will our activity be a pure one.

Wishing everyone a good and tasty Shabbos!

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

WEALTH

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 April 2018 · Shabbos 14 Apr 2018 · כ"ט ניסן תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on your upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with much success Miriam. The midot for the sefirah on your birthday is netzach of tiferet – endurance in compassion ie the ability to be compassionate to another through good and even difficult times.

Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy whose birthday is on the same day. We love you Nechama and look forward to seeing you again soon. Wishing you a happy year.

This weeks Parsha is Shemini, (the Eighth day), and because of the set up of Yom Tov this year through Pesach, it works out that we read this parshah 8 times! This is not so usual and the expression describing it is 'Shemini shmonah shimnah'. – When Shemini (the parshah) comes up 8 times (shmonah), it is a sign for WEALTH (SHIMNAH). – each word based around the root meaning 8.

There is also many 3's connected to this year.

We received the Torah in the year 2448 of the Hebrew calendar, and we are now in the year 5778, ie 3330 years ago!

Talking about the Hebrew calendar, we have been learning the Laws of the New Moon in Rambam this week (and for the past few weeks).

These laws are fascinating, especially if one enjoys maths and astronomy, but even if not, it is still very interesting to see how advanced is the Torah guid-

ance on this subject, and actually how it relates to Pesach and the month of Nissan.

It says in Devarim 16:1 'Observe the month of Spring, (chodesh ha aviv) and offer a Passover sacrifice'

This led our Sages to make our unique 'luni-solar' calendar, which allows Pesach to always fall in spring.

It prevents both types of problems of having just a solar year calendar like the Christians, whereby the calendar months never correlate with the phases of the moon, or a lunar year like the Mohammedan calendar, which results in no specific winter or summer months. This results in religious festivals that can fall at any time during the year.

As a result of the above passage, Nissan becomes the first month of the Hebrew calendar year.

And look at the beauty of our Hebrew language – the Hebrew word for spring is aviv – this is made up of אב and יב ie father (av) of 12 (months) - (numerical equivalent of yud and beis is 12)!! I read all this in a very interesting book called 'A Glimpse of Light' by Dr Schamroth, which explains Rambam's Laws of the New Moon.

There is a minhag to place a key inside the challos on the first Shabbos after Pesach, ie this coming Shabbos.

It is supposed to be a segulah for WEALTH.

Therefore, eat your challos carefully!

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing everyone a year of ABUNDANT WEALTH IN BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL.

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

HALFWAY MARK

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 March 2019 · Shabbos 30 Mar 2019 · כ"ג אדר ב' תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH Mommy had an operation on her bunion yesterday and is back home today, and looking reasonably comfortable BH

Mazal Tov to Alisa Davidoff on her engagement. We should keep hearing good news and you you should both progress from strength to strength!

Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on your Anniversary Today! Wishing you many more good and productive years together with much joy.

Mazal Tov Penina and Avi on your upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you many simchos and happiness together.

All the Family and extended Family should continue to have good news and many simchos.

Just a short interesting point in this weeks sedra Shemini.

If you look out in the 7th portion, you will see that the word gachon has a larger than normal vav

It is brought down in Torah Ohr, that this letter is also the very middle letter of the entire Sefer Torah!

So this must be rich in much meaning and explanation.

Gut Shabbos to all

Shemini · Pesach ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

OUR ARMY OF HASHEM

2020 / 5780

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Monday, 13 April 2020 · Shabbos 18 Apr 2020 · כ"ד ניסן תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. I am doing the email early this week because of Yom Tovim.

Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week. Have a happy and Healthy year Brian.

Mazal Tov to Aron who also has a birthday next week. Love the songs you are composing Aron. Wishing you a great year.

And last but not least Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week. Wishing you a very successful year with much good news!

I would like to thank all the Family that have made so much effort for my 70th birthday.

I hope I don't leave anyone out, but I would like to thank Shmuel, Rivky and Pesach, for all the work they did in trying to arrange the Family reunion in Orlando which did not work out in the end. Mommy, Channa, Batsheva and Chava for arranging the meal last night. Batsheva for arranging the Zoom meeting last night. Chava for putting together such a special album of the whole immediate Family. This needs a special thank you for its beauty and for the many, many hours of fine work that went into its creation. It is something I will cherish for my whole life Chava. Thank you!!

Then a special thanks to Shmuly for the composition of such a fine song. So much control in your notes selection!

And thank you to everyone who participated in the Zoom get-together and sent such beautiful heartfelt notes.

This all brought me many tears of joy.

Besides being very nice, the Zoom meeting was also a bit frustrating because I could not communicate my thanks to everyone who was there, because there was so much cross talking going on, and so what I would like to do is make up for this by repeating and expanding on the Dvar Torah that I gave, to include each member of the Family

Firstly I would like to express extreme gratitude to Hashem for allowing us all to be here today, and for all His kindnesses, which are truly beyond words.

Of course I am also so grateful for the wonderful family which Hashem has granted us.

It is our little, growing ARMY - A PART OF THE ARMY OF HASHEM - TZIVOS HASHEM

To describe this, I am going to use the theme of the Basi Legani Maamer of the Frierdike Rebbe from Yud Shvat of this year.

This is what Bnei Yisrael were called when we came out of Mitzraim ie Tzivos Hashem. And this is therefore, also very relevant to us now, during Pesach.

And this is the way I see our family i.e. as the start of a new, small army of Hashem.

The Frierdike Rebbe explains the concept of Tzivos Hashem more fully as follows

The word Tzava in Hebrew, has three explanations

1. In its simple sense it means an army and conveys strength

2. Secondly it has the meaning of an allocated time - tzava leanish alei aretz i.e. an allocated time is given to each person on this world

I noticed in the introduction to the saying of Tehillim, ie the Yehi Ratzon which we are supposed to say before reading Tehillim, the following:

'May You not take us from this world before our time Hashem, before we complete 'the span of life of 70 years', so that we can fix what we have corrupted. May the merits of Dovid Hamelech of Blessed memory shield over us and for us, that You Hashem will be patient with us, until we return towards You in complete repentance.'

(And therefore, I am completely grateful to be here today to continue working in this direction beyond the 70 year allocation.)

3. Thirdly, tziviyon means colours. And when you have many colours coming together this results in beauty. One colour alone does not contain beauty in most instances

And so in summary, in looking at the words TZIVOS HASHEM, it refers to us coming down to this world for a short allocated time, in which we do our Avodah to come close to Hashem with joy, love, and beauty, to transform the imprisonment of 'Mitzrayim', and leading to our own personal redemptions. And we do this with strength, WITH THE AID OF TORAH AND MITZVOT!

And so how does this relate to our family, our new army of Hashem?

Each one of us has a general colour and also many hidden internal colours .

And so I thought it would be nice to take a general look at the colours of our family to see its beautiful fabric. In the process I am only going to look at each member very superficially, so please forgive me if I do not give true recognition to all the talents of each member.

OUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY

I suppose I need to start with myself, the black and white member of the family.

Now Baruch Hashem, Hashem knows how to put couples together, and so He has given me, and of course all of us, a very colourful Mommy BH. (as opposed to black and white). Mummy has every single colour on earth (in my opinion). This reflects in her clothes and her varied and talented nature as an eshes chayil, queen mother, an intellectual, a teacher and community figure etc.

Channa is a superb cook and a fine piano player

Rivky is the deputy mother of the family, besides being mother of her own family. She is intellectual, sporty, has accounting qualifications and still pursuing further interests.

Shmuel is a conscientious father, first-class Kodesh teacher and sporty.

Baty is exquisitely artistic. This has revealed itself in make up, children's jewellery, edible art i.e.cake designing, party planning and interior design.

Shmueli is a builder and building manager

Pesach is a dynamic accountant and businessman and father, travelling back and forth between Long beach and London almost every two weeks and sometimes more frequent.

Chanie is an ace housekeeper and mother travelling almost as much as Pesach between Long beach and LA. What parents don't do for their children!!

Shmuly is honing his skills in dentistry and practice management and balancing these skills with attending to his growing family, Torah learning, community work and musician. It is a great pleasure and support that you are at the practice Shmuly.

Devorah Leah can put together a beautiful Shabbos or Yom Tov spread in no time at all, with her little team of helpers and make everyone feel at home. And does so much other good in and outside her Family.

Miriam Brocha is a super artist with her own unique style. Lately she has been focusing on cats, but she has many other styles and potentials.

Hirshy has put in a lot of effort to build a career in nursing and is almost there Baruch Hashem. I was amazed at his very high level of knowledge on medical issues. Also an active Hatzolah member.

Mariashah has been complementing the family team by being the temporary breadwinner and loving mother, working in legal and estate offices.

Avi is a businessman with his large Presto Co. trucking all across America. And a devoted and loving husband and father.

Penina has the wonderful opportunity of being a full-time mother and community member with lots of talents and social skills.

Zalmy is our budding lawyer.

Mendel is doing business and is an active well-respected community member with a high position in the Longbeach community, strong and sporty, and fitting in as much learning as he can. And loving husband and father.

Freida also has the wonderful opportunity of being a full-time Mommy with much artistic talent, and sporty.

Batsheva is also highly artistic focusing mainly on make-up, and special effects make-up. She is also working at multiple jobs including marketing of our Rambam books, and helping in Pesach's business. Also on the lookout for more hiking trips to the grand canyon, and I hope also looking out for her bashert!

Chava is also highly talented in art and intellect, focusing her art talents to shoe design and painting, and studying a whole variety of subjects. In addition she has followed in the footsteps of all her brothers and sisters and is now working at the surgery doing Administration.

GRANDCHILDREN

Add to this all the new colours and talents of the grandchildren

EXTENDED FAMILIES OF OUR MARRIED CHILDREN

So many new Family members BH

MY BROTHERS AND FAMILIES

Chanan and Reuven and their Families and extended Families undoubtedly contribute a huge variety of Medical specialities, plus, plus.

COUSINS AND FAMILIES

The ones specifically in our group are Renee, Roy, Brian (Sid in Australia), Adam, Froma, Kerry Lee, Claude and Joy, and their Families. Each with all your own special talents and colours

Now add all these components into one big picture with all its various colours and talents.

And I'm sure you will admit that Baruch Hashem this all adds up to a very beautiful fabric, and a growing and mighty Tzivos Hashem.

In our kitchen in London, we have a very cute inscription on a tile above the netilas yadayim sink, which I think sums it all up as follows: 'We may not have it all together, but together we have it all.'!

May our family be part of the whole army of Klal Yisrael with the coming of Mashiach speedily in our days.

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos to all

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

LASER BEAM

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 April 2021 · Shabbos 10 Apr 2021 · כ״ח ניסן תשפ״א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and still enjoying Nissan, post Pesach.

And I hope everyone had a wonderful Pesach.

Mazal tov to Batsheva on your birthday tonight. I hope you have something exciting arranged! Wishing you a wonderful year!

Mazal tov to Miriam Brocha whose birthday is next week. Wishing you to find your full potential with much joy Miriam!

Mazal Tov Tiferet on your birthday next week. Keep giving your parents much nachas and growing up nicely!

Mazal Tov Nechama on your birthday next week. Wishing you continued growth and achievement in both your learning and your sports!

Mazal Tov to Zeevi whose birthday is on the same day. You have grown up so quick Zeevi. Keep up all the good work and fun!

I also always remember the birthday of my cousin Alden Sacks AH, which comes up this week. And thinking of you both, Froma and Kerry Lee.

The sefira for this week is called Gevurah, which can be translated as Discipline or Restraint, or Awe, or Justice

It gives direction and focus to our life and our love.

Like a LASER BEAM, it's potency lies in the focus and concentration of light in one direction, rather than allowing it to be fragmented and dispersed in many directions.

Gevurah - discipline and measure - concentrates and directs our efforts, and our love, in the proper direction.

Another aspect of Gevurah is Respect and Awe.

Healthy love requires respect for the one that you love (The Counting of the Omer by Rabbi Simon Jacobson)

Gut Shabbos to all

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

CONQUERING WITH JOY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 March 2022 · Shabbos 26 Mar 2022 · כ"ג אדר ב' תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary this coming week. Wishing you much continued happiness together with much achievement in both the material and spiritual!

Mazal Tov to Ariella for her birthday this coming week. I hope all going well for you and wishing you a wonderful year Ariella!

We are now in the last week of our double Adar, and we still have time to add in joy.

We, and the whole world are all shocked, and in disbelief at the barbaric war going on in the Ukraine.

But I saw this week an interesting, related, short vort from Mashiach Day by Day for the 18th of Adar 2, to bring us joy and light in the darkness.

It says in Tehillim Chap 20, "These trust in chariots and these in horses, but we will call the Name of G-d, our G-d. They have bent and fallen, but we have risen and stand upright."

The Jewish People are called "the army of G-d".

But we are not like other armies.

Instead of using weapons of destruction to fight evil, we use Torah and Mitzvos.

Instead of bloodshed, WE CONQUER WITH JOY.

TO THE POINT THAT EVEN OUR ENEMY, THE EVIL INCLINATION, REJOICES IN OUR VICTORY.

(Because Hashem only created evil to test and challenge the good, so that we may prove our strength and dedication to G-d. Therefore the true purpose of evil is is fulfilled when we overcome it, and it then rejoices in having fulfilled it's purpose!)

Gut Shabbos, and love to all!

Shemini · Pesach ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE

2023 / 5783

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 5 April 2023 · Shabbos 8 Apr 2023 · י״ז ניסן תשפ״ג

Shabbos 2023-04-08 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

The text calls Shemini "this week's Sedra" (sent just before Pesach 2023, when Shabbos was Chol HaMoed Pesach); filed under Pesach and also listed under Shemini.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and ready for Pesach.

Mazal Tov again for Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on second night of Pesach! Wishing you a great year Shlomo!

Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday follows on Chol Hamoed. Wishing you a year of much progress in your studies Ariel, and also generally, and with much happiness!

Mazal Tov to Penina on graduating to be a Personal Trainer! You have put in so much work to achieve this Penina, and we wish you much success and joy in helping yourself and others become fit. Well done!

I heard an interesting shiur from Rabbi Gordon on the significance of the NUMBER EIGHT, in this week's Sedra Shemini (Shemini means 8 ie On the 8th day..), and we also learnt a Sicha of the Rebbe in Vol 22 of Likutei Sichos , which was connected.

Without going into the details, in Judaism, 7 refers to the natural order, for example the 7 days of the week, and 8 refers to the supernatural, (but the supernatural entering into nature.)

Examples are:

- On the 8th day of Pesach, the Haftarah is about the coming of Mashiach. And on this day the Baal Shem Tov also introduced the custom to have a seudah called, Mashiach Seudah
- After the 7 days of Sukkot, where the sacrifices relate to the whole world, we move on to the 8th day, Shemini Atzeres, which is Hashem relating to the Jewish People alone.
- The miracle of the 8 days of Chanukah
- Bris Milah is on the 8th day etc

The 8th day in our Sedra relates to Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the 8th day, after the 7 days of consecration of the Mishkan (Mini Temple).

During the 7 days, Sacrifices were offered, and holiness was present, but Hashem had not yet descended into the world to dwell in the Mishkan (and the subsequent permanent Temples).

This only occurred on the 8th day, and it happened as A FIRE IN THE SHAPE OF A CROUCHING LION, COMING DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO CONSUME AHARON'S SACRIFICE.

And the Zohar (p32b) explains that this fire represents the angel Uriel, who appeared in this form.

The Zohar uses 2 terminologies in describing the form of the LION

- Mighty lion crouching over it's prey
- Large lion crouching over a Sacrifice

In short the explanation of these 2 forms is that:

- The first relates to the Sacrifices offered on the SEVEN days of consecration, and relates to the personal atonement of each person - this is a limited light.

- The second relates to the Sacrifice offered by Aharon, now the Kohen Gadol for the first time, on the EIGHTH day, where there was a revelation of Hashem from beyond nature, and related to bringing satisfaction to his Creator. - Hashem (the Shechinah) descended to dwell in this world, in the Mishkan.

The month of Nissan relates to Pesach and we wish everyone a kosher and happy Pesach, with it's opportunity to connect with 'beyond nature within nature'

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos

ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT

2023 / 5783

Gut Moed, Gut Yom Tov · sent Tuesday, 11 April 2023 · Shabbos 15 Apr 2023 · כ"ד ניסן תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and having a wonderful Yom Tov!

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much success, and to overcome all obstacles with much joy and growth!

I heard an interesting shiur from Rabbi Shais Taub, on a letter that the Rebbe had written to an EXTREME INTROVERT, which I found teaches important lessons, and which I wanted to share. I will summarise the letter , and am also attaching the full original letter and the shiur, for those who have the time to explore the matter further.

<https://collive.com/letter-30-advice-for-an-extreme-introvert/> https://collive.com/letter-30-advice-for-an-extreme-introvert/

The woman who wrote to the Rebbe, seems to have been in a situation where she was sitting at home, and contemplating and debating on whether to go out and take a job, where it would involve being in the company of others.

The key point that the Rebbe made, was that EVERY PERSON, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, IS SOCIAL BY NATURE, ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY NOT TO THE SAME DEGREE. The Rebbe strengthens this by saying that he has observed this in reality.

If one acts contrary to this natural instinct, it will obviously cause complications....

And even although an introvert nature would be unwilling to participate in social activity, the Rebbe advises, that one has to go against this impulse, and force oneself to jump into these situations.

And "I strongly hope that within a short time, you will no longer need to be compelled, and you will see the importance and tremendous benefit of the matter, also for the other members of the group.

I saw also a connection here to this week's Sedra, Shemini, where the deaths occurred of Aharon's two sons, Nadav and Avihu.

On the one hand Rashi mentions that Hashem became sanctified through their deaths (10:3), but on the other hand the Baal Haturim explains that they were aiming at high spiritual levels, and in the process they were isolating themselves from the world (in summary)

Wishing everyone a Gut Moed and Gut Yom Tov, and especially, with company!

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

CHASSANAH JOY OF DANCING, JUGGLING AND SINGINGING

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 5 April 2024 · Shabbos 6 Apr 2024 · כ"ז אדר ב' תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

The highlight of this week are WEDDINGS (the wedding of Zalmy and Nechama Dina, and the Anniversary of Avi and Penina, who are also hosting the Sheva Brochos tonight BH!

So it has been an amazing week of celebrating, with many members of the Family coming together. I hope I don't miss anyone out, but thank you so much to those who came in from far - Reuven and Chana Lieba, Perry and Mikayla, Ariel and Daniela, Brian and Sharon, Baty, Sarita and Ariel, Shmuly and children, Batsheva, Chava. And of course we missed all those who couldn't come due to their circumstances and commitments.

And thank you to all the Family for hosting us, making Sheva Brochos, and so much more!

We are humbled by all the kindness and blessings!

MAZAL TOV!

Therefore, we want to give a big welcome to the new member of our Family, Nechama Dina, also known as Nini!

Wishing you and Zalmy to build a beautiful home together with much joy, peace and harmony, founded on the guidelines and Teachings of Torah, which will also make it an eternal home.

We have done much DANCING, SINGING, PERFORMING, JUGGLING this week.

And so I would like to share a related Dvar Torah from the Alte Rebbe's Siddur in the section of the Sheva Brochos of a Chassanah. (The Alte Rebbe gives deep explanations to most areas of his Siddur) which I was learning in London last week, as follows:

Rav Shmuel bar Yitzchok would DANCE in front of the bride JUGGLING 3 branches of myrtle (Ketuvit p 17)

Shmuel would DANCE and JUGGLE with 8 jugs of alcohol, and would not even spill 1 drop (Sukkah p 53)

In short, and much summarized, the Alte Rebbe explains that this is related to the 3rd intellectual faculty called Daas (Knowledge).

When the Daas of a person is greater, there are higher levels of tolerance.

For example a child has less tolerance than an adult because their level of Daas is not yet developed.

Similarly men and women have different levels of Daas.

And great Sages have a level of Daas which is even greater, and can take them beyond intellect.

Similarly there is a difference between weekdays and Shabbos. During the week we are more light-headed, where we are caught up with lots of issues. But on Shabbos there is an elevated Daas, AND IT IS CALLED KALLAH (BRIDE) - that is why we start the Friday night kiddush with the word Vayechulu, which has the same root as the word Kallah.

So what Rav Shmuel bar Yitzchak and Shmuel were doing with their dancing and juggling, was to draw down this high level of Daas, as on Shabbos, to the kallah, and not even 1 drop of Daas was spilt.

Ie, even although dancing and juggling (and also song) removes one from ones thoughts and Daas, their Daas was so strong, that they could remain connected to this higher level of Daas, while doing those activities, and draw it down to the kallah, which is also representative of the whole of Klal Yisrael.

Gut Shabbos, and wishing much continued simcha and simchos to all.

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

THE LABOUR OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Friday, 25 April 2025 · Shabbos 26 Apr 2025 · כ"ח ניסן תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and had enjoyable flights and traveling back home after Pesach.

Wishing Yechezkiel ben Ester a refuah shleimah.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday tonight! Wishing you a year of much success in EY Batsheva, in both gashmius and ruchnius.

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of continued growth and happiness Miriam!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy for her birthday next week. Wishing you a great year Nechama with continued nachas for your parents!

Mazal Tov to Tiferet for her birthday next week. You should also give your parents a lot of nachas, and have a wonderful happy year!

Mazal Tov to Shirley Isaacson on her birthday next week. So good to be in touch again Shirley. Wishing you much continued happiness and good health!

Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff on his birthday next week. Haven't seen you for a long while Aaron, but you should know that every now and then I listen to your music on Spotify. Wishing you much success and happiness in all your endeavours! And see the dvar Torah below about Aaron!

BH, lots of birthday celebrations this coming week!

After Pesach, this coming Shabbat, we start reading Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) - 1 chapter every Shabbat, and I saw an interesting article, being an excerpt from Rabbi Yosef Marcus, which I would like to share.

Pirkei Avot Chap 1:12

Hillel said: Be of the disciples of Aaron - loving peace, loving your fellow creatures, and drawing them close to Torah.

In Biurim of the Rebbe, it is mentioned that pursuit of peace demands strenuous work.

Hillel's message is built upon the teaching of his Master, Shmayah, who taught his students to 'love work', since it is only through hard work that one can succeed in bringing peace to others.

And with regard to loving your fellow, the order of the Mishneh is precise- first love the person unconditionally, and then if you truly love him, you will seek to unite him with the Torah, which allows his soul to fulfil it's purpose in the world.

Hashem behaved with us in the same order: First he took us out of Egypt despite our lack of merits, then He brought us close to Mount Sinai, and then He gave us the Torah.

Gut Shabbos to all, and Gut Chodesh

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

ALL OF ISRAEL HAVE A SHARE IN THE WORLD TO COME

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 10 April 2026 · Shabbos 11 Apr 2026 · כ״ד ניסן תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and has had a good and inspiring Pesach!

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva, whose birthday is coming up next week. We are so happy that you are in London with us for Pesach and for your birthday, having managed to get out of EYisrael through Egypt. Wishing you a wonderful year with much peace and happiness BEH!

Every year on the 15th of April, I also remember the birthday of my cousin Alden Sacks ah. Wishing his Family only simchos and growth in all areas.

From the first Shabbos after Pesach, which is this Shabbos, we start reading one chapter per Shabbos of Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), up until Shavuos.

Pirkei Avot (called Avot) is a section of the Mishnah, and whereas the other sections of Mishnah deal with Torah Law, Pirkei Avot deals with the moral Principles upon which Torah Law is based (this is one of the reasons why they are called" avot - fathers"). Avot is a general tractate which sheds light on the rest of the Mishnah.

In case we think that Pirkei Avot is just for the learned, each chapter is introduced with praise for every Jew, implying that *every Jew can and must fulfil the words of Avot*, as follows (Gemorra Sanhedrin (11:1) :

"*All of Israel have a share in the World to Come, as it says (Isaiah 60:21), Your people are all righteous. They will inherit the Land forever. They are a branch of My planting, the work of My Hands in which I take pride."*

Some explanations:

The Rebbe explains in Biurim that Avot is read in preparation to receive the Torah on Shavuos.

The first step in this preparation must be to engage in *acts of love* *towards one's fellow*.

The above understanding of the loftiness of every Jew, helps us to better appreciate our fellow, and overcome natural biases.

Another point about the above introduction (from The Bartenura) is that 'the planting' mentioned above implies nurturing and taking care ie even although every Jew will inherit the World to Come, the quality of that share is dependent on our efforts.

Gut Shabbos to all

תזריע

Tazria

Vayikra 12:1 · parsha 4 of 10 in Vayikra · 27 of 54 in the Torah
10 letters

2016 / 5776 — MAZAL TOV MAZAL TOV 692
2017 / 5777 — HEALTH - GENERAL 693
2018 / 5778 — ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS? 696
2020 / 5780 — LOVE WORK 698
2021 / 5781 — THE DIRECT APPROACH 700
2022 / 5782 — CLEAN SPEECH 702
2023 / 5783 — CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD 704
2024 / 5784 — THE POWER OF FAMILY 707
2025 / 5785 — LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS 709
2026 / 5786 — CAREFUL SPEECH 713

Tazria ↑ Tazria · Contents · By date תזריע

MAZAL TOV MAZAL TOV

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 8 April 2016 · Shabbos 9 Apr 2016 · א' ניסן תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

BH we are all having a wonderful time in LA celebrating AVI and PENINA's CHASSANA BH, together with the Vogel Family and other relatives and friends. The Chassana was truly beautiful from all sides, and this is now being followed up with beautiful Sheva Brochos BH.

What stands out in my mind is what was said by Rabbi Teichman under the Chuppa of how your 2 Neshamos have come down to earth from shamayim and have been journeying across the rough and dangerous oceans. Ie all the difficulties and tests that you have been experiencing and all the battles that you have fought.

But now as the Neshamos have found each other, and were now under the chuppa, the shoreline has become visible for you both.

BH you have both now reached the shore safely, and we wish you to go on further journies, this time together, and in the process build a binyan adei ad with joy, good health and much achievement, with the foundation of Torah and Mitzvot

MAZAL TOV. MAZAL TOV!!

Love from all of us and Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh!

HEALTH - GENERAL

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 April 2017 · Shabbos 29 Apr 2017 · ג' אייר תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her upcoming birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a year with lots of new growth in all areas.

Mazal Tov to Nechama on her birthday also on Shabbos. Love you Nechama and looking forward to see you soon BEH.

We are now in the month of Iyar and it is said that the letters of Iyar in Hebrew spell out the sentence

1. *Aleph - ani* (I)
2. *Yud, yud – (*abbreviation for Hashem)
3. *Reish –* *rofechah *(your healer)

Ie I am Hashem your healer (this posuk came up in one of the haftorahs on Pesach)

I am also reading a book called Nature's Wealth, which is about HEALTH and HEALING based on the Teachings of the Rambam, and so I thought I would share some of the points that I learned.

Most of the comments below are from the Rambam's 10 Books on Medicine and he lived 1135 – 1204

Centuries before the invention of MRI, CT scans, xrays, aspirin and antibiotics, sphygmomanometer, and even the thermometer, this medieval Rabbi and philosopher was also a brilliant physician, who treated the patient rather than the illness and emphasised moderation and disease prevention.

All the Doctors and budding Doctors in our Family, should please feel free to add, comment or correct.

General points relating to Health.

1. One should make every effort to be happy.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslev taught that 'It is a great mitzva to always be happy.'

We learn from other giants of *Chassidus '*that it is not a mitzva to be happy, and yet no nitzva can bring one to the level which happiness can. Similarly sadness is not a sin, but no sin can throw one to the depths that sadness can.'

One is obligated to make every effort to be happy with our lot in the short stay we have in this world.

One should be cheerful and reasonably happy without being caught up in frivolity.

There is nothing better for both body and soul than joy.

It strengthens and increases body heat, improves vision and digestion, eliminates toxins and wastes, and sharpens the mind.

A happy person's face shines, his body is healthy and strong, and he will not age prematurely.

Our Sages taught us an important principle, 'You shall leave with joy' ie through joy we can truly leave all troubles behind.

1. Everything in creation has its own unique characteristics.

Laughter is unique to mankind. It has no equivalent in the animal, vegetable or mineral worlds.

When one sees or hears something funny or is tickled, we laugh.

There is no physical or medical explanation for this phenomenon, other than it is part of the nature of mankind.

1. 6 things improve one's health and vitality: a. Controlled consumption of wine.

b. Balanced eating. c. Non strenuous physical exercise, d. Healing of such organs as the heart and arteries through medication or diet, e. Happiness, f. Elimination of waste

1. 8 things sap one's strength: a. Fasting, b. Insomnia, c. Worry, d. Excessive excretion of body fluids such as diarrhea, heavy perspiration etc, e. Severe pain in a particular organ, f. A weak digestive system, g. An accumulation of superfluous 'phlegm' in the body, h. Weak organs of poor constitution.
2. When the body accumulates more flesh and fat than it needs, it grows sluggish.

Although the Rambam advocated regular and balanced meals, he worked so hard as a physician in the Sultan's Court, that he would arrive home in his nearby town of Fostat exhausted and hungry.

Here he would find many Jews and Gentiles waiting to be treated.....'and I would go to heal them and write prescriptions for their illnesses until night.....

Maybe next week we could look at specific details of diet, exercise, sleep etc

Gut Shabbos to all

Tazria, Metzora ↑ Tazria, Metzora · Contents · By date תזריע - מצורע

ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS?

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 April 2018 · Shabbos 21 Apr 2018 · ו' אייר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and enjoying the good weather.

Mazal Tov to Pesach on your upcoming birthday. You should have a year of much success and with joy. It should also be 'meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal letovah'. Pesach and Family are planning to move to California at end of summer, while retaining his business in London. So we hope to still see lots of you and your Family BEH, and it should all be with success!

Mazal Tov to Pesach Dovid Levy (Dovi) on your upcoming birthday this week. It looks like you also have an exciting year ahead Dovi BEH with a trip to EY and passing through London! Have a happy year Dovi.

Mazal Tov to our latest sweet 'Pesach', Pesach Yeshayeh Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week. Big kisses for a wonderful year.

Mazal Tov to Brian Davidoff who also has a birthday this week. It should be a happy and healthy year Brian. I also want to mention that Brian has just been visiting SA on a 'memory lane trip' where many of our Family's roots started from, and I want to thank him very much for having visited our fathers AH, at the cemetery. Thanks Brian and I hope you had a very inspiring trip!

Mazal Tov to Aron Davidoff who also has a birthday next week. Wishing you success with all your works and interesting pursuits Aron!

Wow, so many celebrations BH! Wishing the whole Family many more.

As we have already mentioned, the 49 days of sefira is a period when we are refining our character traits.

So here is a little exercise.

Try and guess who is being spoken about with the following personality:

1. He works quietly, without others knowing
2. He is ready to place himself in danger
3. The smallest detail is of great importance to him
4. He labours with great toil
5. He labours with alacrity
6. He is confident and optimistic
7. If he does not succeed the first time, he tries again and again.

Is it obvious?

These are the characteristics of a thief!

In the Hayom Yom of 3rd Iyar this week, the Rebbe points out how it is possible to use all character traits for the service of Hashem.

He brings the example of how Rabbi Meshulum Zusya of Anipoli borrowed or learnt all the above qualities from a thief, and applied them to his service of Hashem.

The lesson for us is, that if we identify bad, or even evil traits within our nature, we can redirect them to do good.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Tazria, Metzora ↑ Tazria, Metzora · Contents · By date תזריע - מצורע

LOVE WORK

2020 / 5780

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 April 2020 · Shabbos 25 Apr 2020 · א' אייר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov on your birthday Miriam. Wishing you continued success in all your activities, all with much joy.

Mazal Tov Tiferet on your first birthday! Wishing you to continue giving much nachas to your parents BH.

And 2 Levys on the same day:

Mazal Tov Nechama I think on your 6th birthday. Wishing you a happy year with lots of new growth.

Mazal Tov to Zeev also on his first birthday. You should continue giving much joy to your parents BH.

Tonight is Rosh Chodesh Iyar, and the letters I-Y-A-R stand for Ani Hashem Rofecha - I am Hashem Your Healer.

It should be that Hashem brings healing to all those who need, this month.

The epidemic we are facing has caused a lot of disruption, but also, so much good is also emerging.

One little example at home, is that last Shabbos afternoon, Batsheva started an initiative that the family sit down together to learn that week's Pirkei Avos. (London is still in lockdown)

She has a beautiful colourful book on Pirkei Avos - the Weiss edition from Living Lessons - which is so easy to read, and illustrated, with so many life lessons - highly recommended.

We took turns reading one Mishna at a time from Chapter 1. (It is a custom to read one chapter every Shabbos, through the summer, until after Sukkos)

So I thought to share one of the lessons that we learnt from Chapter 1.

'..Shmayah says: You should LOVE WORK, hate positions of power (and do not choose them unless the responsibility is placed upon you), and do not become too friendly with those in power.'

And the following came up in the Living Lessons section:

'Some people think that the less they have to do, the happier they will be.

However, the truth is that a person will naturally feel his best through working hard and succeeding at something.

There is no greater feeling of accomplishment than seeing the fruits of one's labour.

Even if you don't succeed, you can always be proud of your efforts!

So the next time you are feeling down, get up and get to work. You will begin to feel much better!'

And this is connected to the last part of the Mishnah where 'those in power -reshut' also refers to the yetzer hara.

So Shemaya is also saying: Love work and despise power ie by being occupied there will be less time to become too friendly with the yetzer hara (one's evil inclination, which thrives on idleness)

Wishing everyone a Gut Chodesh and a Gut Shabbos.

Tazria, Metzora ↑ Tazria, Metzora · Contents · By date תזריע - מצורע

THE DIRECT APPROACH

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh · sent Friday, 16 April 2021 · Shabbos 17 Apr 2021 · ה' אייר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

Mazal Tov to Brian, whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a great and successful year Brian. Thanks to you and Sharon for being such good relatives to our family in California!

Mazal Tov to Pesach for his birthday next week. Wishing you much success with all your projects and good work Pesach. And with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Dovi for your birthday next week. Wishing you hatzlochah rabbah in both gashmius and ruchnius Dov. And Mazal Tov for achieving your driving licence! Michayil el Chayil!

I saw an interesting letter from the Rebbe which reflected 2 of the current themes of this week. Ie:

1. We are now in the month of Iyar which has connotations of HEALING. This is because the Hebrew letters of Iyar are an acronym for the saying ani Hashem rofechah - I am Hashem your Healer
2. This week marked the birthday of the Rebbe Maharash, (the 4th Chabad Rebbe) who was famous for his attitude and saying "Lechatchilah ariber" - To begin with, GO OVER

The Rebbe Maharsh explained that when we come up against an obstacle to a task that we are involved with, or an obstacle to a Mitzvah, or project or good deed which comes our way, or which we are pursuing, we should GO OVER the obstacle in the most direct and transcendant way. While some people pro-

pose that the best route would be to go around, or under the problem, I say one has to go OVER IT from the start!.

The letter that I saw was the Rebbe advising someone about an illness problem.

The Rebbe quoted, in response, with the above saying of the Rebbe Maharash, and followed up as follows:

'It would seem that revealed joy should wait until after you are actually healed.

However according to the above-mentioned saying of the Rebbe Maharash, it is reasonable to begin the revealed joy for improved health, even although it is not yet visible.

This itself will hasten the recovery.

Like the saying from the Nesiim of Chabad, "Think good and it will be good."

And definitely when think good is expressed in joyous words and actions. (Igros Kodesh Vol 16, p252)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh, and good health.

Tazria ↑ Tazria · Contents · By date תזריע

CLEAN SPEECH

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 31 March 2022 · Shabbos 2 Apr 2022 · א' ניסן תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This coming Shabbos we take out 3 Sifrei Torah in Shul.

I heard it stated (from Sefer Hechalot) that these are rare events, and when the Aron is opened, there is a gate in heaven which only opens up on this occasion, and it is an opportune time to make requests from Hashem!

So if possible, try be in shul for pesichah, when the 3 Sifrei Torah are taken out of the Ark.

It is interesting that the daily learning of Chumash this week (Parshah Tazria), and the daily learning of Rambam this week, have both been discussing the subject of tzaraas.

Tzaraas is basically a skin lesion, but can also occur on clothes, and on buildings, and is loosely translated as leprosy, because of it's resemblance.

Tzaraat, however, is a spiritual disease in its own right, and is not leprosy.

In our times we do not see this spiritual manifestation of tzaraas, but the Rambam in Chap 16 of the Laws of Tzaraas in Mishneh Torah, concludes the whole section as follows (in summary):

Tzaraat is not a natural occurrence. It is a sign and wonder from Hashem to warn against lashon hara (undesirable SPEECH).

A person who wishes to structure his life, should distance himself from the gatherings of fools, so as not to get caught up in the web of wickedness.

Miriam received tzaraat for a very minor excess of words about her brother Mosheh.

How much more so the foolish people who use a major excess of words.....

What set the foolish off on this path? Their tongues which were given free rein when loitering on street corners, drunk parties etc.

Again, the Rambam, but this time in Perush HaMishnayos on Pirkei Avos, mentions that there are 5 types of SPEECH:

1. Speaking as a Mitzvah (such as studying Torah)
2. Forbidden speech (like falsehood, lashon hara, unclean language)
3. Redundant speech, which brings neither benefit or harm (like discussing current events and news)
4. Commendable talk (praising positive things and noting the damaging effect of negative things)
5. Permissible speech (which is necessary for day to day living and for business)

One should try to concentrate most of his speech on that which is Mitzvah, and Commendable (1 and 4)

And minimise the rest.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh and much brachos from Hashem!

Tazria, Metzora ↑ Tazria, Metzora · Contents · By date תזריע - מצורע

CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 20 April 2023 · Shabbos 22 Apr 2023 · א' אייר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had a wonderful Pesach.

BH we had lots of Family come over to London and this was very special!

Lots of birthdays this coming week BH:

Mazal Tov to Brian Davidoff. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Brian, with continued achievements!

Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff. Hope you are doing well Aaron and wishes for a year with lots of success.

Mazal Tov Miriam Brocha Davidoff. Wishing you much happiness and growth Miriam.

Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy. Wishing you a happy year Nechama.

And on the same day we wish Zeevy Levy a happy birthday. Keep growing up to become a fine boy Zeevy.

And welcome to our group, grandchildren who are growing up BH - Dovi, Shlomo and Mendel Levy, and Talya and Ariel Bassin. So happy you are with us, and feel free to comment and participate.

We learnt a Sicha from Vol 17 of the Rebbe's Sichos on Parsha Tazria/ Metzora this week, which I would like to share in a very summarized form, and which is linked to the upcoming completion of all the Cycles that are learning Rambam's masterpiece, covering the whole of Torah in halachah format, The Mishneh Torah.

The METZORAH (spiritual 'LEPER') discussed in our Sedra, is basically a spiritual punishment, mainly for idle talk and gossip (lashon hara). His condition shows as skin lesions and he also imparts impurity to everything around him. This is different to a medical leper we may see today.

So the Mishneh (Negaim 13:11) says 'that if he entered a house, all the vessels therein immediately become unclean. But Rabbi Yehudah said that this is not immediate, but only starts after a delay of how long it takes to light a lamp.'

Commentaries explain that this lighting refers to the LIGHTING OF SHABBOS CANDLES AT TWILIGHT.

The Rebbe explains by showing the nature of the light of Shabbos, and the darkness engendered by the metzorah.

Through the negative talk of the metzorah, discord and division was sown between people. And RAMBAM states at the end of the Halachos of the Metzorah, that this also leads to the denial of Hashem.

Whereas the light of Shabbos candles promote peace and unity to the home, and beyond to the rest of the world, and heals the rift between the world and Hashem (as do all Mitzvos, but not felt as fully as Shabbos light).

Therefore the light of the Shabbos candles promotes peace and unity, which is a powerful antidote to the divisiveness of the metzorah.

And that was the basis of Rabbi Yehudah's statement ie that there is a delay in time before metzorah impurity starts to spread, equal to the 'time taken while lighting Shabbos candles at twilight.'

The Rebbe encouraged young girls from the age of 3, to join their mothers in lighting their own Shabbos candles at home, to increase the light!

If anyone is interested to start learning one of the new Cycles of Rambam, starting this Sunday, I would be happy to help supply timetables, translations, summaries etc

Mazal tov to all those who completed a cycle, and hatzlachah to those who are starting again anew!

Gut Shabbos to all and Gut Chodesh

Tazria ↑ Tazria · Contents · By date תזריע

THE POWER OF FAMILY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 April 2024 · Shabbos 13 Apr 2024 · ה' ניסן תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai on his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much growth and achievement Binyomin in both the material and spiritual and with much happiness. Continue to be a boy who does many Mitzvos!

The highlight of this past week has been experiencing THE POWER OF FAMILY, having been together with many members of Family and extended Family at the wedding and Sheva Brochos of Zalmy and Nechama BH.

I watched and reflected upon, the thousands of interactions that go on at every level, between infants, children, adults, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts etc in every combination, and got a glimpse of the power and influence that a Family exerts on all its members, and all the goodness and kindness displayed (and there is much more that we don't see, and what goes on the whole year quietly all over the world)

So interestingly, I found some insight into MARRIAGE in this week's Sedra Tazria, and I saw a very touching, related video clip, both of which I wanted to share.

Tazria (From Likutei Levi Yitzchak)

"When a woman conceives (tazria) and gives birth.(12:2)"

One of the points made was as follows:

"Once a couple is married, a paramount value that is also essential for the propagation and rearing of children, is SHALOM BAYIS, domestic peace and harmony.

The husband who lives according to this ideal, can be described by the phrase from Dovid Hamelech in Psalm 37:37 as "Ish Shalom", A man of peace

The numerical value of the Hebrew words, Ish Shalom, is equal to 687, which is exactly equal to the numerical value of the Hebrew word Tazria"

Our enemies want to destroy this unit in one form or another. But our aim is to keep building!

Video:

https://drive.google.com/drive/my-drive

Gut Shabbos and wishing many simchos to all!

LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 May 2025 · Shabbos 3 May 2025 · ה' אייר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Yechezkiel Ben Ester a refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Pesach for his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of continued success in everything that you do Pesach and to find also new rewarding projects, all with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Dovi Levy for his birthday which is also next week. I hope that all is going well in NY Dovi. Wishing you a year of continued success with all that you are doing, in both gashmius and ruchnius with much simchah!

In this week's Pirkei Avot (1:6) Yehoshua ben Perachya says ".....and judge everyone (kol adam) in a meritorious manner."

I saw an interesting article in Living Jewish where it pointed out different aspects of the above Mishna:

• The Frierdike Rebbe said that the current times demand strengthening of the Mitzvah of having love for every single Jew: 'One must judge every Jew favourably, there must not be division. This does not mean that one should never rebuke another, but rather that it must be done in a way of closeness, without piercing or harming.'
• When one judges another, then in the future it will be said to him:
'According to the very judgement that you passed, so shall it be done to you.'
• The Rebbe reveals an even deeper layer: 'When a person judges another Jew favourably, they help that Jew to overcome their struggles..they uncover and awaken the merit within that person - their pure and lofty inner strengths,

which in turn empowers them to withstand their trials. Eventually that person's negative traits will fall away...'
• The Friederike Rebbe said: 'When a person judges another, whether in public or in his heart, he has to, as far as is possible, to try and take into account their circumstances and environment, and deeply consider the reasons that brought this person to live their life as they do. Only when he places himself in the other's situation, and lives their challenge, and fully considers all these factors, only then can the judgement be true.'

(And in another explanation that I saw, the word used in the Pirkei Avot Mishna above is kol adam. The simple meaning is 'every person'. But the Hebrew word kol also means 'the whole' person. Ie before we judge someone we should know everything about that person)

Learning to live this way brings a happier and more effective life BEH

I am attaching a related interesting story from the Gemara, to do with this subject, for those who have the time to read it.

Gut Shabbos to all

Attached to this letter

"Penniless Employer? - Judging Others" (Word document)

> Penniless Employer?
>
> The Talmud relates this story: (Shabbos p127b)
>
> Once a man went from the Upper Galilee (in northern Israel) to work for an employer in the south for three years.
>
> On the eve of Yom Kippur of the third year, he said to his employer, "Give me my wages, and I will go home and support my wife and my children."
>
> The employer said to him, "I do not have any money to pay you."
>
> "Give me fruit instead," said the worker.

"I have no fruit," answered the employer.

"Give me land," said the worker.

"I do not have any land," answered the employer.

"Give me animals," said the worker.

"I do not have any animals," answered the employer.

"Give me quilts and pillows," said the worker.

"I do not have any quilts and pillows," answered the employer.

The worker packed his bags and went home, disappointed.

After the holiday, the employer travelled to the worker's home with the man's wages and with three donkeys. One was laden with food, the second with drinks, and the third with delicacies.

When he arrived, after they had eaten and drunk together, the employer gave the worker his wages and all the other gifts, and said to him, "When you asked me for your wages, and I told you that I did not have any money, did you think that was the truth?"

"I thought," answered the worker, "that you had obtained merchandise at a bargain price, and had spent all your money."

The employer said to him, "When you asked me for animals, and I told you that I did not have any animals, what did you think was the truth?"

"I thought," answered the worker, "that they were rented out to others."

The employer said to him, "When you asked me for land, and I told you that I did not have any land, what did you think was the truth?"

"I thought, “answered the worker, "that the land also was rented out to others."

The employer said to him, "When you asked me for fruit, and I told you that I did not have any fruit, what did you think was the truth?"

"I thought," answered the worker, "that the fruit had not yet been tithed."

The employer said to him, "And after you asked me for quilts and pillows, and I told you that I did not have any, what did you think was the truth?"

"I thought," answered the worker, "that you had given away all Your Possessions to the Beis Hamikdash (Holy Temple) by making a vow of hekdesh [pledge to the Temple]."

The employer said, "I swear to you that that is exactly what happened. I had promised away all of my possessions to the Holy Temple because of Hurkanos, my son, who did not wish to learn Torah [and I did not want him to be my heir]. And when I came to my friends in the south, they annulled my vows.

“Just as you judged me favourably, so may G-d judge you favourably." (It is said by some that this employee was Rabbi Akiva)

CAREFUL SPEECH

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 16 April 2026 · Shabbos 18 Apr 2026 · א' אייר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Brian with much continued success in everything that you do BEH. Thanks to you and Sharon for keeping in touch with our Family in California!

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of continued growth and happiness in all areas Miriam.

Mazal Tov to Tiferet on her birthday next week. Wishing you much success in your school studies Tiferet. You should continue to give much nachas to your parents, and to be such a lovely girl.

Then 2 Levy birthdays:

Mazal Tov to Zeevi. Wishing you much success with your school work and your sports Zeevi, and continued nachas for your parents.

Mazal tov to Nechama. Wishing you much continued growth Nechama in your studies and your sports, all with much happiness.

The subject of SPEECH came up many times this week mainly in relation to this week's Sedra Tazria Metzora, and in the Pirkei Avot Chapters..

The Rebbe on V 14:23 – 25: Which I heard from Rabbi Gordon ah:

Hashem says to Moshe and Aharon that when you come to the Land, and I put a mark of leprosy on a house, the owner of the house should come to the Priest and say to him that there is *an appearance * of leprosy on my house (which needs inspection).

If the Priest comes to the conclusion after much investigation, that this is really leprosy, he instructs that the house should be demolished.

Rashi comments, that when the house was demolished, treasures of gold were found, which the EMORI Nation had hidden in their walls.

So what is the connection to speech?

One of the Hebrew words for speech is EMOR, which has a connection to Emori mentioned above.

Another place where Emori is mentioned is where Yaakov is blessing Yosef, and he says that he is giving Yosef an extra portion (the city of Shechem) which I took from the Emori with my sword and with my bow. The Medrash interprets 'my sword and bow' as " *with my prayer and supplication"* ie with his SPEECH

And the lessons:

· The owner of the leprous house did not jump to conclusions that his house was leprous, even although it looked like it. Rather he went to the Priest and said that my house has *the appearance of leprosy. *He was careful with his words because words have the power to bring about negativity chas veshalom. And he did what was correct to have it investigated

· After the investigation, the house was found to be leprous and had to be demolished, which sounds like bad news. Yet Hashem had arranged for a treasure to be found. Difficulties have the potential to bring hidden blessings .

· Our speech in prayer, Torah Study and kindness can be very powerful when we help other people. (For eg saying nice things about another person) It is like revealing hidden treasures (and in ourselves)

· We have to therefore be careful with our speech, not to do the opposite

· The leprosy being spoken about in the Sedra is 'Biblical Leprosy' and not the medical leprosy as we know it. Biblical leprosy came about mainly as a punishment for speaking *lashon hara *– negative speech about others.

We are now going into the month of Iyaar whose acronym is 'I am G-d who heals you.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh

מצורע

Metzora

Vayikra 14:1 · parsha 5 of 10 in Vayikra · 28 of 54 in the Torah
4 letters

2016 / 5776 — THE POWER OF A WOMAN 717
2019 / 5779 — LIGHT INSIDE THE DARKNESS 719
2022 / 5782 — MARITAL AND GENERAL HARMONY 721
2024 / 5784 — THE CURE FOR SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION 723

2017: read together with Tazria, see HEALTH - GENERAL

2018: read together with Tazria, see ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS?

2020: read together with Tazria, see LOVE WORK

2021: read together with Tazria, see THE DIRECT APPROACH

2023: read together with Tazria, see CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD

2025: read together with Tazria, see LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS

2026: read together with Tazria, see CAREFUL SPEECH

Metzora ↑ Metzora · Contents · By date מצורע

THE POWER OF A WOMAN

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 April 2016 · Shabbos 16 Apr 2016 · ח' ניסן תשע"ו

Dear Family

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai for his upcoming Third Birthday this coming Sunday IYrH, and therefore also his Opsheren (first time he is cutting his hair).

We are all very excited for this party on Sunday which will IYrH be held at the Pesach and Nechama Davidoff Hall at the Boys School. Wishing Shmuly and Devorah Leah much nachas from him and we also look forward to hosting Zaidy Goodman.

BH all the travellers have returned home from the Chassana of Avi and Penina, and everyone is settling back into normal routine after an amazing beautiful wedding BH!!!

And of course the Choson and Kallah are now starting out on their new journey of building a new BAYIS BEYISROEL.

Mazal Tov again.

In regard to this, a beautiful Dvar Torah came to my attention from the Hayom Yom of the exact day of the wedding ie 26th Adar Sheini.

The Rebbe says the following about the ESSENTIAL ROLE OF JEWISH WOMEN.

'All that is sacred to the Nation of the G-d of Israel, and that is fundamental to the House of Israel, in establishing and rearing an upright generation and their Education, ie kashrut of food, and the sublime pure Holiness of Shab-

bos, was entrusted by the Awesome and Revered G-d to the WOMEN OF ISRAEL (for preservation and development).

The woman who fulfils her obligation and destiny in the life of the Family, in conducting the Home, and in seeing that the education be according to Torah, of her it is said 'Chochmas nashim bansa baysah' - The wisdom of women built her Home - Mishlei 14:1'

We wish Avi and Penina to build together in happiness a Binyan Adei Ad.

ENJOY YOUR FIRST SHABBOS TOGETHER (AND OF COURSE WITH KOSHER FOOD)

Gut Shabbos to all

RAMBAM 5 minutes for this week is Sefer Avodah, Hilchos Maaseh Korbanos Chaps 8,9,10,11,12.13,14. PAGE 18.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Metzora ↑ Metzora · Contents · By date מצורע

LIGHT INSIDE THE DARKNESS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 April 2019 · Shabbos 13 Apr 2019 · ח' ניסן תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.
I heard that Renee had an operation on her back, Mommy had an operation on her foot (bunion), and I am recovering from complications following a few bouts of flu etc. Thank you everyone for all the good wishes, care, and help etc - much appreciated! Wishing everyone who needs, a refuah shleima, and please see dvar Torah below.

We wish long life to Annette Davidoff on the passing of her father Sheldon. We were all so fond of Sheldon ah, who was a great man and achieved so much in his life. Wishing you only simchos in the future. Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you to continue growing into a chayal. I haven't mentioned it yet to Shmuly and Devorah Leah, but I was so impressed on his knowledge of the Bet Hamikdash at such a young age BH.

I found it so interesting that the last 2 parshas Tazria, and this week Metzora have both been discussing illness. In specific this has mostly been about tzaraas, 'leprosy' (in truth it is not really leprosy but a distinct spiritual illness) But the lessons we learn here will equally apply to other illnesses also.

In Sichos from the Rebbe (Likutei sichos Vol 22, and Shabbos Tazria/ Metzora 5751), the Rebbe explains as follows:
If something bad occurs to one it could be for one of 2 reasons.

1. It is an expression of the forces of evil, or
2. It is actually an expression OF A VERY INTENSE FORM OF GOOD.

The method of correction will differ in each case:

1. Plain evil needs to simply be eradicated.
2. In the second case, the remedy is not through eradication, because there is a tremendous power of good here. Rather the solution is REVEALING THE TRUE NATURE AND SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM, HOW BELOW THE SURFACE, IT IS REALLY SOMETHING GOOD!

And a few points from the 2 parshas which reflect this concept:

1. The word in Hebrew for the tzaraas lesion is nega. This contains the same Hebrew letters of oneg, which means a high level of pleasure.
2. The first parsha is called Tazria which refers to birth. What is the link between birth and tzaraas? Because the illness allows the sufferer to see deeper into his current position in life, correct his ways, and have a spiritual rebirth.
3. When the walls of a house acquired tzaraas, it sometimes necessitated that the house to be broken down. Rashi explains that when these walls were broken down, buried treasures were discovered from the previous goyish owners. But the question is, if Hashem wanted the Jews to obtain treasures could He not have given this direct? The Kedushas Tzion explains, that Hashem wanted to demonstrate that EVENTS THAT APPEAR NEGATIVE, ARE A MEANS OF FACILITATING GREAT GOODNESS!!

We daven every morning that Hashem should not test us with difficulties, and so it should be. But if they do occur, let us find THE LIGHT INSIDE THE DARKNESS. Hashem is so kind, and gives us exactly what we need for growth and development.

Gut Shabbos to all.

MARITAL AND GENERAL HARMONY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 April 2022 · Shabbos 9 Apr 2022 · ח' ניסן תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you an amazing year of continued growth Binyomin, with much energy, channeled into good directions, and with much joy!

For the second week in a row, both the Chumash (this week's portion Metzora), and the Rambam, are both discussing the Laws of the 'leper' (tzaraas), and as mentioned last week, Biblical leprosy is different to medical leprosy.

I saw an interesting related Dvar Torah on this subject from the teachings of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, the Rebbe's father as follows:

With tzaraas there is a lesion on the skin, and in Talmud Yevamos 63b, it says that a bad wife is considered as a lesion to her husband.

The Hebrew word for a lesion (of tzaraas) is nega, and the Tikkunei Zohar observes that the 3 letters of NEGA can be re-arranged to form the word ONEG (PLEASURE)

These 2 words nega and oneg represent the far opposite extremes of pleasure and affliction.

These extremes are also seen in the relationship between husband and wife.

In the Shabbos davening we say the verse 'And you shall call the Shabbos day a delight (oneg). This delight manifests in many ways, ONE OF WHICH IS HARMONY IN THE HOME, AND SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO THE HARMONY BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

A nega is the opposite of marital harmony. The leper has to be isolated outside of the camp and is forbidden from being with his wife.

We can now understand the the Talmuds comparison of a bad wife to a lesion, since a bad wife brings strife and separation into the home, just as would tzaraas.

We further see that this idea extends to anyone who stirs up arguments and disputes, in the fightings of Korach. The Talmud here (Sanhedrin 110a) says that regardless of who it is who stirs up or perpetuates conflict, he is fit to be afflicted with tzaraas.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak then goes in to discuss the deeper spiritual significance with gematrias etc, and for those interested, his teachings are published in Likutei Toras Levi Yitzchok.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and much peace and harmony!

THE CURE FOR SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 18 April 2024 · Shabbos 20 Apr 2024 · י"ב ניסן תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and getting ready for Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Brian, with much achievement!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on the Second Seder night. Wishing you much continued success at Yeshiva, Shlomo, with much happiness and growth!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff whose birthday is tonight, on the very special day of Yud Aleph Nissan, which is also the Rebbe's birthday. Wishing you a wonderful year and to give much nachas to your parents!

Next week is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie Sacks. We were honoured to have one of her grandchildren Bronwyn Grossberg and her Family, from Melbourne, spend Shabbos with us this last week. They are touring through Europe and will also be visiting Benjy Grossberg and the Dahans in California (such an interesting link between our Families!) Wishing Aunty Girlie's Neshamah an Aliyah!

Based on the passage 14:32 - "This is the law (literally 'The Torah') regarding someone suffering from a lesion of tzaraat.. :

In last week's Sedra (Tazria) and this week's Sedra (Metzora) we learn about the eventful journey of an individual afflicted with the SPIRITUAL DISEASE of tzaraat (loosely translated as 'leprosy') and the process of his or her's redemption and purification from social isolation (Exile)

This can translate out as both our personal life journeys through crises and exile to Redemption, and also the collective journey of our Jewish Nation through Exile towards Redemption.

(In fact in Sanhedrin 98b it describes Mashiach as one with tzaraas, because he is with us (unrevealed) bearing the suffering of the Jewish People in exile)

In an extract from a Sicha of the Rebbe (Sefer HaSichos 5751 Vol 2) the Rebbe explains the positive value of our own inner sufferings.

The 'tzaraat' that we personally experience is the feeling of our unfulfilled potential. (Similarly there is the general unfulfilled potential of humanity)

However, this 'sickness', which is a wholesome sense of dissatisfaction with the status quo of the world, gives us the potential for growth. In fact it is a pre-requisite for growth.

It inspires us to renew our dedication to humbly fulfil the Will of our Creator, and to make the world a better place to live in.

When we move in this direction, the way to preserve the intensity of our inspiration, while still living our lives cheerfully and productively, is through the study of Torah. (As the above verse 14:32 mentions)

Because Torah is above the limitations of nature, and enables us to harmonise the opposing pulls of inspired urgency, and calm persistent dedication.

Wishing everyone a gut Shabbos, a kosher and happy Pesach, with experiencing of our own, and National Redemption.

אחרי מות

Acharei Mos

Vayikra 16:1 · parsha 6 of 10 in Vayikra · 29 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — THE WORLD IS ONE DAY OLD 726
2017 / 5777 — HEALTH CONTINUED 729
2018 / 5778 — HOLY SHABBOS 734
2019 / 5779 — LOVE OF A FELLOW JEW 737
2020 / 5780 — BREINA 739
2021 / 5781 — THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL 745
2022 / 5782 — EMUNAH 747
2023 / 5783 — OUR HOLY NATION 749
2024 / 5784 — TZEDAKAH AND KINDNESS 751
2025 / 5785 — GOOD HEALTH 754
2026 / 5786 — LOVE 757

THE WORLD IS ONE DAY OLD

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 May 2016 · Shabbos 7 May 2016 · כ"ט ניסן תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

BH a number of birthdays this week

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday today!

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha for her birthday next week.

And on the same day as Miriam, is Nechama's birthday next week. Mazal Tov Nechama.

Wishing you all lots of happiness.

And welcome back everyone from their Pesach travels , about which I had amazing reports BH!

It already feels like Pesach was a few weeks ago but really this is just the first week since Pesach.

What stands out in my mind, which I heard on the last day of Yom Tov was a stunning Vort from The Rebbe.

It was quoted from his Reshimos.

These are personal, hand written notes written by The Rebbe, found fairly recently, and these have now been printed.

The Reshima which was quoted was related to the last day of Pesach, in relation to mayim shelanu, where the Rebbe states that according to Torah the world is 6000 plus years old (now 6776).

But really THE WHOLE HISTORY OF THE WORLD IS ALL FOUND IN TODAY ALONE!!!

In other words there is no yesterday, and anything to do with yesterday is connected to impurity.

TODAY IS WHERE IT IS ALL HAPPENING.

I found this to be an amazing Truth, if one thinks about it, and it reminded me of similar statements from the Rambam in the Halachos of Sefer Hamada (The Book of Knowledge) Hilchos Teshuva Chap 5:

'Freewill is granted to all men (people).

If one desires to turn himself to the path of Good and righteous, the choice is his.

Should he desire to turn himself to the path of evil and be wicked, the choice is his....

There is no one who can prevent him from doing good or bad.....

Each person is fit to be righteous as Moshe Rabeinu or as wicked as Jeroboam.

Similarly he may be wise or foolish, merciful or cruel, miserly or generous, or acquire any other character traits.

There is no one who compels him, sentences him or leads him towards either of these 2 Paths.

Rather he on his own INITIATIVE and decision, tends to the Path that he chooses'.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and the FREEDOM to focus in to the moment of TODAY with all its potential.

'5 Minues per week' Rambam for this week is in Sefer Avodah, Hilchos Psulei Hamikdashim, Chaps 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 - PAGE 23

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

The 1 Chap per day group and 3 Chaps per day Group are both learning the same halachos this week!

Acharei Mos, Kedoshim ↑ Acharei Mos, Kedoshim · Contents · By date אחרי מות - קדושים

HEALTH CONTINUED

2017 / 5777
Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 5 May 2017 · Shabbos 6 May 2017 · י' אייר תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach whose birthday is tomorrow. Wishing you much success in all your pursuits Pesach, both gashmiyus and ruchnius.

MAZAL TOV TO DOVI WHOSE 13TH BIRTHDAY IS TODAY! And because it is Sefirah his Barmitzvah is delayed till Lag Baomer. You should grow up to be a chayal Dovi (acronym for chosid, yirat shamayim, and lamdan) and bring much nachas to your parents.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a year of continued growth and happiness Mendel.

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman whose first birthday is also this coming week! We love you Shneur Zalman.

Continuing the theme of HEALTH relating to the month of Iyaar, as I mentioned last week, I was reading the book 'Nature's Wealth - Health and Healing Plants' based on the Teachings of the Rambam, and I sensed that people were interested in this subject

Hope it is not too long!

For the sake of clarity, I have tried to categorise some of the points I read, but before I start, a few words of caution

1. I have not seen Rambams original 10 books on Medicine. I am just passing on what I have read in above publication.
2. Each person has a different make up and therefore some points may not be

relevant to one as it is to another.
3. Medical treatments are continually evolving. Etc

While it is impossible to prevent ageing entirely, it is certainly possible to slow down the process. Good nutrition, bathing, healthy sleep, and light daily walks will all retard ageing. In addition, elderly people should take extra care not to become dehydrated and not catch cold

Food

- one should make it a habit to eat something in the morning before leaving home. However a full meal should be eaten 4 to 6 hours after rising

. seeing the food makes one feel satiated, so one should only eat in a well lit place (Yoma)

. food should be and have a nice smell.

. sharp vegetables such as garlic, onions or horseradish should not be eaten alone as they are hard on the digestive system

. one should not eat or drink standing up but rather sitting down

. meals should be eaten slowly and not in a state of agitation

. one who is strongly tempted by the smell of good food or drink should make every effort to taste it as it is harmful for him not to(Kesubos)

- bread, the most basic food should be well baked. Other foods should be thoroughly cooked

. one should not eat too satiety, because when the stomach is to fall it can no longer break down and digests the food properly. One should eat moderately neither too much nor too little. Overeating to the point of gluttony is the cause of many illnesses.

. one who has damaged his stomach by habitual overeating should reduce his food intake

. young people should eat two meals a day, and as they grow older they should increase this number but reduce the intake of each meal

. food should always be well chewed. 50% of the digestive process results from contact with the saliva.

. It would be ideal if people could stick to a fixed diet. A varied diet may be pleasant but it is not as healthy.

. figs, grapes, pomegranates and arm and is healthful for everyone at all times

. excessive intake of fruit should be avoided. Fruit which is not fully ripe and is is damaging to the body .

. An egg should be eaten daily. The fresher it is the higher is its nutritional value. (I found it interesting to see an article this week which points out that sugar is more a cause of high cholesterol, and that eggs are back on the healthy lists!)

. Excessive consumption of meat and fat should be avoided

Drink

. thirst is more harmful than hunger

. do not become accustomed to drinking alcohol as one may become addicted

. however for older people wine is very beneficial if done properly

. Hashem made water, the best of all beverages, available everywhere

. it is best to drink after a meal but doctors say that it can be beneficial to drink small amount of water during a meal

. a small amount of wine before meals is beneficial

Exercise

. Exercise can be defined as any movement or activity which causes one to switch from a regular breathing pattern to stronger more rapid breathing

. one should begin exercising slowly, gradually increasing the pace until the body aspires heavily. Continue as long as the body is fresh and vigourous, and stop when strained, hot or tired

. elderly people need to be active because their bodies need the warmth

. exercise should always involve all the limbs equally so that all the organs both internal and external derive maximum benefit

. overeating, laziness, and inactivity should be strictly avoided

. heavy people need more exercise, slim people less

. ideal exercise is that in which the physical workout also lifts the spirits example playing a ballgame. Good spirits of healing to the body-many have been cured of physical illness through joy

Toilet

. It is essential for health, hygiene, and purity to become accustomed to emptying one's bowels morning and evening. It's a matter of habit which can be acquired

. one should never restrain urge to urinate

. one should make a point of eating laxative foods

Sleep

. Sleep is vital for physical and emotional health.

. Sleep is especially important and valuable for the elderly, the young, the ill, and the week.

. Too much sleep makes the limbs and spirit lazy and can lead to suffering and illness. The Rambam writes that eight hours is the average amount of sleep required

. one should not go to sleep hungry or honour.

. For healthy sleep one's head should be elevated. One should sleep on one side and not lying on the back, and nor on the face. The Rambam advises to start off the night by sleeping on the left side so that the liver rests on the digestive organs, and towards the end of the night turn over and lie on the right side.

. Our Sages teach that one should try to arrange one's schedule so that he can arise early, even before sunrise.

Behaviour

. The good character traits which one should strive to acquire, beneficial not only for the sole but also for the body's health and well-being.

. Destruction of character is the result of forming negative habits

. people of intelligence and refinement should behave differently to the masses who have only pleasures in mind

. one should learn from experience which foods do not agree with him and which activities upset him, and thereafter avoid them

. three factors upset one's well-being-overeating and an inordinate desire for food, excessive anxiety, and uncertainty about the proper way to behave

. depending on their constitutions, some people feel better during one particular season, and others during another season

. thinking of happy things expands and invigorates sole which in turn strengthens the body and increases its natural heat

Gut Shabbos and good health to all.

Acharei Mos, Kedoshim ↑ Acharei Mos, Kedoshim · Contents · By date אחרי מות - קדושים

HOLY SHABBOS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 April 2018 · Shabbos 28 Apr 2018 · י"ג אייר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I know we wished happy birthday to Yeshayah last week, but it is actually his birthday today. The emotional attributes of today's sefirah is Humility in Endurance. (Hod shebeNetzach). This means yielding in one's steadfastedness. This yielding (to Hashem) does not compromise one's drive. On the contrary, it strengthens it. Because human endurance can only go so far, whereas endurance that comes from the Divine soul is limitless. -Rabbi Jacobson. Mazal Tov again!

And tonight is the birthday of Shneur Zalman Davidoff (junior). Mazal Tov and a big kiss Shneur Zalman! Wishing you a happy year!

Mazal Tov Mendel (Kehaty) on your birthday next week. Looking forward to seeing you soon (and rest of Family) in Boston BEH! Wishing you a year of much hatzlocha with the fulfilment of all your needs in both the physical and spiritual.

We wish long life to Devorah Leah on the passing of her Aunt Debbie. You should know only simchos in the future.

This weeks Parshah is Acharei mos - Kedoshim.

Besides general Torah learning, we have a fixed daily learning of Chumash, Tanya, and Tehillim (abbreviated as Chitas) plus Rambam's Mishneh Torah. Each of these Books have been divided to be learnt over a year cycle. Rambam can be learnt either 3 chapters a day over a year, or 1 chapter a day over 3 years, and chitas is divided over a year.

So in this weeks Chumash one of the mitzvos listed in relation to Holiness (-Kedoshim), was the keeping of SHABBOS

And in Mishneh Torah (one chapter a day) the Rambam ends off the Book of Zemanim with a beautiful point about Shabbos, which I would like to share.

The last few laws in Zemanim were speaking about the Chanukah lights, and it was discussing about priorities if a person was poor as follows:

The mitzva of Chanukah candles is very dear and a person should be very careful in its observance to publicise the miracle Hashem did for us and to thus increase our praise for Hashem and gratitude.

Even if a person has no resources for food (and he receives this from charity) he should pawn or sell his garments to purchase oil and lamps for the mitzvah of Chanukah lights.

And what happens if it is also Shabbos?

On Shabbos there are 2 mitzvos (without going into too much detail) ie sanctifying the day with kiddush wine, and lighting the Shabbos candles.

So if he has only enough money for either the Chanukah candles, or wine for kiddush , which should he purchase?

Chanukah candles.

And if it has to be a choice between Chanukah candles (publicising to the outside) or Shabbos candles (for one's home)?

Or alternately choosing between kiddush wine, or Shabbos candles on a regular Shabbos?

In both these cases the SHABBOS LIGHTS FOR ONE'S HOME TAKE PREFERENCE.

Why?

BECAUSE THE SHABBOS LIGHTS GENERATE PEACE WITHIN THE HOME.

And Peace is of primary importance. As reflected by the mitzvah (with a sotah) which requires Hashems name to be blotted out TO CREATE PEACE BETWEEN HUSBAND AND HIS WIFE.

Peace is great, for the entire Torah was given to bring peace within the world. As it states in Proverbs 3:17 'It's ways are pleasant ways and all its paths are peace.'

Wishing everyone a beautiful Shabbos filled with peace.

LOVE OF A FELLOW JEW

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 May 2019 · Shabbos 4 May 2019 · כ"ט ניסן תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had a wonderful Pesach (it seems so far away already!)

Mazal Tov again to Batsheva whose birthday is today.

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha whose birthday is next week. Wishing you to keep going from strength to strength with much joy and success.

And on the same day next week is Nechama Esther Levy's birthday. We love you Nechama, and look forward to seeing you by Shlomo's barmitzvah soon. You should continue to give your parents much nachas.

I think it is the third week in a row that we have read the parshah Acharei Mos, and it is mainly about Yom Kippur Service carried out by Aharon, the Kohen Gadol.

Aharon is known for his tremendous Ahavas Yisrael (Love of one's fellow Jew) and this subject came up a few times this week in our daily reading of Mashiach Day by Day, which I would like to share.

There were a few points:

1. There are 3 loves - the love of G-d, the love of Torah, and the love of a fellow Jew

Of the 3, the love of one's fellow is the greatest, because if one has this, he will automatically love G-d and the Torah.

This is not the case with the other 2 loves (Sicha Parshas Ki Tavo 5705)

When a person harbours hatred and disunity below, it causes G-d to separate from him above, causing the person to sin.

THIS IS THE MAIN CAUSE OF OUR LONG EXILE!

On the other hand, by focusing on loving every Jew, and by doing acts of goodness and kindness, we bring blessings down from above.

ULTIMATELY THIS WILL BRING THE FINAL REDEMPTION.

2. In exile we are plagued by false beliefs about our fellow.

We believe that he is different from us, and we project negative intentions onto him (or her).

Harbouring these thoughts creates the very forces that we fear.

We must combat these false beliefs, and realise that in essence we are all one.

By uprooting senseless hatred and replacing it with love, we uproot the cause of exile, and automatically, the Redemption will follow.

3. Redemption is compared to a small child jumping and dancing in joy

He (or she) is free of self-consciousness.

There is no gap between who he is, how he feels, and what he does.

Mashiach is a state of total nullification, where the soul shines through our body from head to toe.

Sometimes our inner child is shy, and we need to coax him out with song and dance. (and with others)

When we do we taste Mashiach!

Gut Shabbos to all!

Acharei Mos, Kedoshim ↑ Acharei Mos, Kedoshim · Contents · By date · אחרי מות - קדושים

BREINA

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 April 2020 · Shabbos 2 May 2020 · ח' אייר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and looking after themselves

BH lots of birthdays this coming week:

Mazal Tov Pesach on your birthday next week. Wishing you continued success in all areas of your life!

Mazal Tov Dovi (Pesach Dovid) on your birthday on Shabbos. You should continue growing into a Chassidishe all rounder with many talents and much potential.!

Mazal Tov to Yeshayah (Pesach Yeshayah) on his birthday next week. This is the special 3rd birthday, and your opsherin will be on Lag Baomer BEH. Looking forward to seeing you with your new kappel and tzitzis!

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman on his second birthday next week. Have a happy year and continue to give everyone much nachas!

And last but not least Mazal Tov to Adam on you birthday at the end of next week. Hope all is well Adam. Have a wonderful year!

Anyone notice anything about these birthdays?

So many Pesachs! And ALL THE BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK ARE DESCENDANTS OF BREINA.

This past week Renee sent me the beautiful Family picture (see attached - IMG 2784) with some history, and I thought this would be interesting to share with the Family

I would also like to connect this to the Tanya that we have been learning for the past week.

Tanya has been discussing LOVE and Fear of G-d, and one of the aspects discussed was, that when one focuses one's mind intensely (Daas) on the greatness of G-d, this gives rise to both the feelings of Fear and Love within a person.

And then it says in Hayom Yom (78-12) from the Mezritcher Maggid 'HE WHO LOVES HIS FELLOW JEW, LOVES G-D (because every Jew has a part of G-d in his inner Essence.

And so I saw in Breina and her Family, Love of one's Fellow, and in Tanya, Love of G-d

I don't know exact details, but the picture was taken probably a year or 2 before 1918.

In the picture is my (and Chanan and Reuven and Renee and Brian's) great grandfather ah.

Breina ah, is his daughter in law with her hand lovingly on her father- in- laws shoulder.

Her husband is missing from the picture as he may have died at this point together with another child called Reuven ah. This could have been from the Spanish flu pandemic?

Uncle Morris ah, the oldest of the brothers (our uncles) is also not in the picture, and I don't know the reason for this, but he was alive at this stage.

The children in the picture are Uncle Dave ah, the tallest (Renee and Brian's father), below him was uncle Meyer (Maker - because he was good with his hands) ah, and the youngest on the left is my father ah, after whom all the Pesachs were named.

It sounds like the next thing that happened was that uncle Morris and uncle Dave emigrated to Jhb SA.

And it sounds to me that BREINA WANTED TO STAY IN LITHUANIA TO LOOK AFTER HER FATHER IN LAW. She did not want to leave him alone.

Only when he also died from the Spanish flu in 1918, did she leave for SA with uncle Meyer and my father to join with Uncle Morris and Uncle Dave who were already there.

And there in SA you have a single mother with 4 boys to look after, in a totally foreign land, not knowing the language, and having to try and survive.

And the motto of this family was to love each other. These 4 brothers never fought with each other. And this is not an exaggeration. They built a large shoe factory together and shared everything between them, becoming wealthy BH

In Renee's words 'She (Breina)was an amazing woman. Strong and brave. She lived with us and I adored her. She died July 1949.'

And I was left with a feeling of loss that I never met her, because I was born in 1950!

Thank you for this story Renee!

So that is Love of one's Fellow Jew

And as an exercise to reflect on the greatness and Love of Hashem I am attaching a translation of Psalm 104

Gut Shabbos to all.

Attached to this letter

Translation of Psalm 104 (3 scans)

My soul, bless the Lord! Lord my God, You are greatly exalted; You have garbed Yourself with majesty and splendor.

2. You enwrap [Yourself] with light as with a garment; You spread the heavens as a curtain.

3. He roofs His heavens with water; He makes the clouds His chariot, He moves [them] on the wings of the wind.

4. He makes the winds His messengers, the blazing fire His servants.

5. He established the earth on its foundations, that it shall never falter.

6. The depths covered it as a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

7. At Your exhortation they fled; at the sound of Your thunder they rushed away.

8. They ascended mountains, they flowed down valleys, to the place which You have assigned for them.

9. You set a boundary which they may not cross, so that they should not return to engulf the earth.

10. He sends forth springs into streams; they flow between the mountains.

11. They give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild animals quench their thirst.

12. The birds of the heavens dwell beside them; they raise their voice from among the foliage.

13. He irrigates the mountains from His clouds above; the earth is satiated from the fruit of Your works.

14. He makes grass grow for the cattle, and vegetation requiring the labor of man to bring forth food from the earth;

15. and wine that gladdens man's heart, oil that makes the face shine, and bread that sustains man's heart.

16. The trees of the Lord drink their fill, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted,

Page 1

17. wherein birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the cypress.

18. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the rabbits.

19. He made the moon to calculate the festivals; the sun knows its time of setting.

20. You bring on darkness and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth.

21. The young lions roar for prey, and seek their food from God.

22. When the sun rises, they return and lie down in their dens.

23. Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening.

24. How manifold are Your works, O Lord! You have made them all with wisdom; the earth is full of Your possessions.

25. This sea, vast and wide, where there are countless creeping creatures, living things small and great;

26. there ships travel, there is the Leviathan that You created to frolic therein.

27. They all look expectantly to You to give them their food at the proper time.

28. When You give it to them, they gather it; when You open Your hand, they are satiated with goodness.

29. When You conceal Your countenance, they are terrified; when You take back their spirit, they perish and return to their dust.

30. When You will send forth Your spirit they will be created anew, and You will renew the face of the earth.

31. May the glory of the Lord be forever; may the Lord find delight in His works.

32. He looks at the earth, and it trembles; He touches the mountains, and they smoke.

33. I will sing to the Lord with my soul; I will chant praise to my God with my [entire] being.

34. May my prayer be pleasant to Him; I will rejoice in the Lord.

35. May sinners cease from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord!

THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 April 2021 · Shabbos 24 Apr 2021 · י"ב אייר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish long life to the Levy - Gollub Family on the passing of David Gollub ah, a much loved and kind man. Wishing the Family only happy occasions in the future.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday next week. Wishing you much success in both gasmius and ruchnius and continued achievement with your many activities Mendel.

Mazal Tov to Aaron on his birthday next week. Wishing you continued success with your music Aaron, and all your other activities.

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday next week. I hope all is well Adam. Wishing you a great year!

Mazal Tov to Pesach Yeshayah on your birthday tomorrow. Keep up all your beautiful achievements Yeshayah!

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman (Junior) on your birthday on Shabbos. Keep growing nicely and giving your parents much nachas.

I started using a Siddur this week, which Shmuly had given me as a present a while back. It is a beautiful Siddur, and it illuminates parts of the davening with teachings from the Rebbeim.

I decided to slowly improve my davening this way and would like to share one of the teachings that I saw this week.

It also had a connection to this week's Parshah Acharei Mos - Kedoshim, and an interesting life story which I saw on Chabad,org, which I think is also connected (see below)

The verse in the davening was "Bes YAAKOV (House of Jacob) go, and we will walk in the light of Hashem..."

The Hebrew word YAAKOV is made up of yud plus ekev. EKEV is a HEEL and Yud refers to the light of G-dliness ie the light shining in the heel.

That is to say, Yaakov is referring to the lowest level of the Jewish People (us) who are the HEEL

We are beset by manifold challenges, because it is extremely difficult to overcome the natural desires stemming from our bodies and animal souls.

And even when we understand the Truth of Hashem, this is usually not strong enough to motivate sincere change!

However, even in such a state, we can go in the "light of G-d" when we cry out to Hashem, beseeching His Mercy, and humbling ourselves, (like a child to a father), we can call forth abundant Divine compassion.

And Yaakov is the attribute of Mercy (being the third of the forefathers) - also see Tanya from this Tuesday.

And in the parshah 16:16, when the Kohen Gadol is making atonement for the Jewish People on Yom Kippur, it says "He shall carry out the same procedure, where the Divine Presence dwells with the Children of Israel in their impurities" and Rashi says "Even although they are impure, the Divine Presence is with them."

<https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/5094127/jewish/My-Journey-of-Transformation.htm> https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/5094127/jewish/My-Journey-of -Transformation.htm - Heart warming story of Mollie Resnik

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos.

Acharei Mos ↑ Acharei Mos · Contents · By date אחרי מות

EMUNAH

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 28 April 2022 · Shabbos 30 Apr 2022 · כ"ט ניסן תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH lots of birthdays this week!

Mazal Tov to Batsheva whose birthday is today. Wishing you a happy year with much growth in all areas Batsheva!

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week. Wishing you much happiness and achievements Miriam!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy on her birthday next week. Keep growing up to be a beautiful girl with many achievements and giving your parents much nachas

Mazal Tov to Tiferet on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Tiferet and to give much nachas to your parents.

Mazal tov to Zeevi on his birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year Zeevi, and you should also give much nachas to your parents.

I saw a beautiful analogy in this week's Tanya which I would like to share. (Chap 42 in Likkutei Amarim)

The topic was EMUNAH (FAITH).

The word Emunah is derived from the Hebrew word for a craftsman (uman) and this implies TRAINING (TO REACH A FEAR OF G-D), because a craftsmen reaches a high level of expertise in his or her field, by training and constant dedicated practicing.

The analogy given is that of a king.

The fear of a king is not related to his body or clothing.

Because when the king is sleeping, there is no fear of him no matter how many garments he is wearing, or even naked.

Therefore the fear of the king comes from his inner essence and vitality.

This inner essence is not visible to the physical eye. It is only visible to the eyes of our mind.

Similarly we must feel this fear of G-d when we gaze with our physical eyes at the heavens and the earth and all that they contain, with our minds seeing the inner essence and power of G-d the King.

The essential point is the TRAINING, to habituate one's mind and thought continuously, to understand that everything that one sees (the heavens and the earth and all that they contain), constitutes the outer garments of the King, the Holy One Blessed be He.

In this way we will constantly remember the inwardness and vitality, which is G-dliness.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh

Acharei Mos, Kedoshim ↑ Acharei Mos, Kedoshim · Contents · By date אחרי מות - קדושים

OUR HOLY NATION

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 April 2023 · Shabbos 29 Apr 2023 · ח' אייר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach on his birthday next week. Wishing you a successful year in both gashmius and ruchnius Pesach and with much happiness and nachas.

Mazal Tov to Dovi on his birthday on Shabbos. I hope you are doing well in Au Dov. Wishing you much success with Yeshivah and beyond!

Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his birthday next week. Keep growing up in leaps and bounds Yeshayah. So proud to see how nice you are learning. Michayil el Chayil

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday. Wishing you a wonderful year of growth and giving nachas to your parents

And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday right at the end of next week. Hatzlochah rabbah with everything Adam!

And Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin for passing her driving licence in Au!

Wishing Reuven and Chana Lieba, and Alisa and Juan, a wonderful trip in EY! Thanks for being in touch with Batsheva in the HOLY LAND.

This week's Sedras are Acharei Mos and KEDOSHIM (HOLY) and here the Jewish People, after having been made into a HOLY NATION at the Giving of Torah, are now instructed by Mosheh Rabeinu to be HOLY, ie we must hold ourselves to the standards of the code of conduct given to us.

And in relation to this, we have been learning this week, in the Introduction to Rambam's Mishneh Torah, his selection and listing of the 613 Command-

ments from the 5 Books of Moses. Everyone agrees that there are 613 Mitzvot as stated in the Gemorra, but Rambam shows us how he used 14 Principles, to select these out etc. And these are still recognized as being the accepted ones today.

In relation to some of the essential Mitzvot that we learn in this Sedra about Ahavas Yisrael - Love of a Fellow Jew, I saw a beautiful lesson from this coming week's Pirkei Avot (3:1)

It says, "Akavya ben Mehalel would say, ' Reflect on 3 things, and you will never come to sin: Know from where you came.., to where you are going.., and before whom you are destined to give a judgment and an accounting.."

The question is, why does the Mishnah put judgement before accounting? Surely it should be the other way around ie one first gives an accounting and then there is judgement!?

The Baal Shem Tov explains that the order of the Mishnah is in fact correct.

Because when we are judgemental on others, the same judgement will be passed on us. And therefore there will first be judgement, and then we will have to give an account.

The Mishnah is therefore telling us that when we reflect on the above 3 matters, that we come from nothing etc, we will then be able to realise that we are truly no better than our fellow. And if we do have some superior qualities, it is because Hashem has been gracious towards us and provided.

But the Rebbe explains even further, that 'nothingness' represents that our souls actually come from this very high source, and when we realize that we and our fellow all come from this vey high source, how can we then hastily make judgements on others.

Wishing everyone a good and Holy Shabbos

TZEDAKAH AND KINDNESS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 May 2024 · Shabbos 4 May 2024 · כ"ו ניסן תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and have had a wonderful Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much development, and with much happiness Batsheva. We should have good news from EY BEH!

In this week's Rambam learning from Mishneh Torah (1 Chapter per day) - Chap 10 of Gifts to the Poor - we have been learning the Laws of TZEDAKAH - CHARITY.

This is a very interesting chapter and I have summarised it below:

Giving tzedakah is the identifying mark of a righteous person. Of all the positive mitzvot,

this is the one we need to be most careful with.

Mashiach (Redemption) will come only through tzedakah.

Also a person will never become impoverished from giving tzedakah.

When a person shows mercy, Hashem will show mercy upon him. When a person does not

show mercy, his lineage from Avraham is suspect.

If a poor person asks for a donation and one has nothing to give, one should at least placate

the poor man with kind words.

On the other hand, a poor person should try and bear hardship and do labour, before

turning to beg. However, if he is severely afflicted, he should not be proud and refuse charity,

because this is similar to murder.

When charity is given, it should be with a pleasant face. If given with a reluctance, the merit

may be lost.

There are 8 levels of charity: Highest level first:

. Providing work for someone, or a loan, to earn his own money.

. Giving without knowing to whom one gave and poor person does not know who gave.

. Giver knows who he is giving, but poor person does not.

. Poor person knows who gave, but giver does not know.

. Giving in hand of poor, before he asks.

. Giving in his hand after he asks.

. Giving less than appropriate with a pleasant countenance.

. Giving with sadness.

Other meritorious acts of giving:

. Supporting ones children who are past age of majority (because really parents are no

longer obligated to support them).

. Feeding father and mother from one's own funds.

. Giving food and drink to the poor by inviting them into one's home. Whoever does this,

when he calls out to G-d, G-d will answer him.

Gut Shabbos to all!

GOOD HEALTH

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 May 2025 · Shabbos 10 May 2025 · י״ב אייר תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday next week. Wishing you much continued success in everything that you do Mendel in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much simchah!

Mazal Tov to Claude on his upcoming Birthday. Wishing you a year of good health Claude, and a refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday next week. Always warm feelings when I have the chance to communicate Adam. Wishing you a wonderful year!

Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his birthday tonight! Keep up all the good work you are doing Yeshayah, giving your parents much nachas! Wishing you a year of much growth and happiness!

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr for his birthday on Shabbos. Lovely learning with you each week Shneur Zalman, and wishing you to have much success in all your learning and activities with much chayus!

We are currently in the month of Iyar, and it is said that Iyar is a propitious month for HEALING.

It has been pointed out that the word Iyar is an acronym for the Hebrew words Ani Hashem Rofecha (I am G-d your Healer), from the verse, "If you will follow My Ways..the diseases I have placed on Egypt, I will not place upon you, for I am G-d your Healer." (Exodus 15:26).

So I found some interesting points about HEALTH, mainly from an article about Rambam - 'Maimonides: The Reluctant Doctor Who Changed Medicine', - which I would like to share.

- Once the ruler of Egypt said to his doctor, the Rambam, 'All my life I have had good health, and I have never had the opportunity to test your abilities in medicine.' The Rambam replied, 'The greatness of a doctor is tested in preventing illness, more than curing it.' And Rambam quoted the above verse to the Sultan.
- Hundreds of halachos testify to the value of the Jewish body before Hashem
- Laws of forbidden foods
- Laws of family life
- Laws of fasting
- Laws of the desecration of Shabbos and Yom Kippur (The Rebbe)
- 'Maintaining a healthy and sound body is among the ways of G-d, for one cannot understand or have any knowledge of the Creator if one is ill. Therefore one must avoid that which harms the body, and accustom oneself to that which is healthful, and which helps the body to become stronger.' (Rambam , Deot 4:1)
- 'The health of the body depends on the health of the soul.' (Rambam, Regimen of Health Chap 3)
- 'Fresh air is the foremost rule in preserving the health of body and soul.' (Rambam, Treatise on Asthma Chap 13)
- 'Overindulgence in food, drink, or sleep is a cause of illness, while moderation in these is the cornerstone of health.' (Rambam, Medical Aphorisms of Moses, Aphorism 12:5)
- 'The physician should constantly seek wisdom and not be ashamed to learn from anyone.' (Rambam Medical Aphorisms of Moses, Aphorism 9:6)

Rambam (Maimonides), (1138- 1204) in addition to his primary fame in his works on Jewish Law and Philosophy, also came to be a famous physician in the court of the Sultan of Egypt, and it is said that Richard the Lion Hearted also invited him to be his personal physician. Besides managing his demanding practice he also authored 10 influential medical treatises.

Wishing good health to all and a Gut Shabbos!

Acharei Mos, Kedoshim ↑ Acharei Mos, Kedoshim · Contents · By date אחרי מות - קדושים

LOVE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 April 2026 · Shabbos 25 Apr 2026 · ח' אייר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Yechezkiel ben Ester a refuah shleimah.

Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy for her Batmitzvah birthday this week! We heard also that you are going to New York next week as part of your celebration and then the big party close to Shavuos. It should all be with much joy Nechama, and you should have an amazing year, achieving in your studies, sports, Yiddishkeit, and all the things that you are working at, bringing much nachas to your parents and Hashem!

Mazal Tov to Pesach on his birthday next week. Wishing you hatzlachah rabbah for a beautiful year in both gashmius and ruchnius Pesach!

Mazal Tov to Pesach Dovid Levy on his birthday next week. Wishing you a beautiful, first year of marriage Dov. I hope all is going well. Hatzlacha rabbah in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Pesach Yeshaya Vogel on his birthday next week. Continue to be the amazing boy that you are Yeshaya, and wishing you much success with your school work and all the sports that you do!.

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday next week. Wishing you a successful year Shneur Zalman with your learning and your sports, and to give your parents much nachas.

Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff on his birthday next week. I hope all is going well with you Aaron and wishing you a great year!

In this week's Sedra Acharei Mos / Kedoshim, we come across many Mitzvot, one of which is Ahavas Yisrael - Loving our Fellow Jew

We have also been learning in Tanya this week, about the various levels of Loving Hashem, this being another Mitzvah and connected to Loving a Fellow Jew.

And I would like to share a few short points that came my way:

- Just as we love ourself, even although we are aware of our faults, so should we love another person with their faults (the Baal Shem Tov)
- One who has a faithful friend is not alone. This is so, even if thousands of miles separate them. Love knows no barriers, and in love there is no distance. (The Rebbe)
- One of the levels of our Love to Hashem is compared to the love of a son to his father - "...who strives for the sake of his father and mother, whom he loves more than his own body, soul and spirit .(sacrificing his life in order to redeem them from captivity). And this love is concealed within every soul of Israel as an inheritance from our ancestors. To access this love is not beyond our reach. When we accustom ourselves to this continually, habit will become nature. This means being occupied with Torah and Mitzvot with the intention of causing gratification to Hashem like a son serving his father to cause him gratification (Tanya Chap 44)

Gut Shabbos to all.

קדושים

Kedoshim

Vayikra 19:1 · parsha 7 of 10 in Vayikra · 30 of 54 in the Torah
4 letters

2016 / 5776 — HEALTH 760
2019 / 5779 — REFINING PROCESS 763
2022 / 5782 — GOOD HEALTH 765
2024 / 5784 — TIFERES AND NETZACH EMOTIONAL ATTRIBUTES 767

2017: read together with Acharei Mos, see HEALTH CONTINUED

2018: read together with Acharei Mos, see HOLY SHABBOS

2020: read together with Acharei Mos, see BREINA

2021: read together with Acharei Mos, see THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL

2023: read together with Acharei Mos, see OUR HOLY NATION

2025: read together with Acharei Mos, see GOOD HEALTH

2026: read together with Acharei Mos, see LOVE

Kedoshim ↑ Kedoshim · Contents · By date קדושים

HEALTH

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 May 2016 · Shabbos 14 May 2016 · ו' אייר תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you a Year of Hatzlocha for you and your Family.

Mazal Tov to Dovy who also has a birthday this coming week. Keep giving your parents lots of nachas Dovy.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Zalmy for getting excellent results at their colleges BH. Keep up the good work.

We are now in the month of IYAAR which spells out the rosh teves (acronym) of Ani Hashem Rofeecha, - I Hashem am your Healer (aleph stands for ani, the 2 yuds are Hashems name, and the resh stands for rofeecha)

So I thought I would share some interesting MEDICAL FACTS which I saw in a Book called Amazing Facts and Feats

Take a guess what is the most common non contagious illness in the world?

Tooth decay!

At least 90% of world suffers from this.

And while on the subject of Dentistry, Israel has the highest no. of dentists per capita - 1 dentist for every 783 people.

USA is 1 per 1882 and UK 1 per 2500.

And yet in Israel 63% of citizens above the age of 65 have lost all their teeth?!

Least common illness? Any of our Drs know?

Koro disease. - Only found in the Fore tribe living in the Eastern part of New Guinea.

It is also known as the 'laughing disease' because one of the symptoms is uncontrolled laughing.

And what is the best known Medicine in the world?

Laughter!

Studies have revealed that laughter lowers the stresses in the body and strengthens the immune system.

Healthy laughter also burns 10 to 40 calories in 15 minutes!!

6 year old children laugh about 300 times / day.

Adults laugh from 15-100.

And finally a Halacha from the Rambam Hilchos Deos Chap 4, where he discusses many Health issues:

'Another Principle connected to the health of the body is as long as one exercises, stops eating before being fully satiated, and bowels work regularly, a person will not suffer sickness and he will grow in strength.

This applies even if he will eat harmful foods.

Conversely, whoever is idle, does not exercise, and is constipated, even if he eats the proper foods and takes care to follow the rules of Medicine, will be full of pain and his strength will fade away.

Overeating is like poison to anyones body. It is the main source of all illness....

As mentioned by Shlomo Hamelech Proverbs 21:23 'Whoever guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from distress' ie guards his mouth from eating... and his tongue from speaking (wrong things).'

Gut Shabbos and Good Health to all.

RAMBAM 5 minutes per week for this week is Sefer Avoda, Hilchos Psulei Hamikdash, Chaps 8-14, PAGE 24

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Kedoshim ↑ Kedoshim · Contents · By date קדושים

REFINING PROCESS

2019 / 5779
Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 10 May 2019 · Shabbos 11 May 2019 · ו' אייר תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH THIS HAS BEEN A WEEK OF MANY SIMCHOS AND BIRTHDAYS!

Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on the birth of a girl, who has already been named Tiferes Chava BH. Beautiful name and wishing you much joy and nachas from her! And then Mazal Tov again for the birthday of Yeshayah next week! Only simchos! Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on the birth of a boy! So exciting to have a little brother for all the older brothers and sister. The bris should be at a good and auspicious time. And Mazal Tov again for Dovi's birthday next week! Wishing you many simchos and nachas from all the children, and going michayil el chayil. Mazal Tov to Claude and Joy who had a grandson in SA. This is such wonderful news. And Mazal Tov Claude for your birthday next week! So wishing you also many more simchos in happiness and good health. Mazal Tov to Pesach for your birthday next week. You should have a year of much success in all the areas that you are working so hard at, and more Pesach.

Wishing to hear of continued simchos and Mazal Tovs for all the Family!

The Zodiac for the month of Iyar is Taurus, the Bull.
In Jewish mystical thought the bull symbolises our animal soul. (we have 2 souls, an animal and G-dly) Our animal soul, like the bull, is unruly, with many desires, leaning towards self- gratification.

However the bull can be harnessed with a yoke and become abundantly productive.

Our mission in Iyar is to tame the bull.
Each night of the counting of the Omer, we say a prayer asking G-d to rectify a small part of our animal soul. There are 49 days from Pesach to Shavuot and 49 attributes to refine on each of these days. (7 weeks with 7 main categories of attributes, each category having 7 sub-categories)

These attributes also reflect the nature of people who are born on the day of these attributes.

So this week there are 7 aspects to the attribute of TIFERES,- each day reflecting a different facet of tiferes - and so I would like to share how Rabbi Simon Jacobson explains TIFERES in his book 'A Spiritual Guide to the Counting of the Omer' (49 Steps to Personal REFINEMENT)

Tiferes is the third group of attributes. (week 3)
The first week was Chesed (Kindness) and the second was Gevurah (Discipline or Strictness) Tiferes is translated as BEAUTY. It harmonises the free outpouring of the love of chesed, and the discipline of gevurah. Tiferes possesses the power to introduce a third dimension of Truth, which is neither love nor discipline, and can therefore integrate the two. Truth is accessed through selflessness, rising above our egos and our habits. Truth gives a clear and objective view of one's own, and other's needs. This allows one to express one's feelings in the healthiest manner.

So Tiferes blends the different colours of love and discipline to make a harmony which is beautiful.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Kedoshim ↑ Kedoshim · Contents · By date קדושים

GOOD HEALTH

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 May 2022 · Shabbos 7 May 2022 · ו' אייר תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH we have another week of many birthdays:

Mazal Tov to Pesach! Wishing you a year of continued success and happiness Pesach, in both the material and spiritual, with nachas from all your Family!

Mazal Tov to Claude! Wishing you a year of good health and happiness with much joy from your grand children, together with Joy

Mazal Tov to Dovi! Keep up all the good work Dovi, and wishing you much hatzlochah with everything that you do!

Mazal Tov to Yeshayah last but not least. We love you Yeshayah and wish you a sweet and happy year, giving your parents much nachas!

We are now in the month of Iyar, whose letters spell out "I am G-d your HEALER" (Ani Hashem Rofechah)

And in this connection, I saw a letter that the Rebbe had written to someone who had said about himself "that he wants to be realistic about his health, based on the prognosis he had been given by physicians on his condition" (It sounds like this person had been given not good news about his health)

The Rebbe answered as follows:

"I want to tell you first, that even from the realistic point of view, we must recognize the fact that, very many times, the greatest physicians have made mistakes.

Moreover, in recent times, we see that new discoveries are made daily in the medical field, with new wonder drugs and methods, which have revolutionised medical treatment.

Secondly, observing life in general, we see so many things which are strange and unbelievable, that to be truly realistic, one cannot consider anything to be impossible.

In a condition, which, to a large extent, is bound up with the nervous system and the resistance of the body, even medical opinion agrees that the stronger the patients faith in cure, and the stronger that his will is to get better, so the stronger becomes his ability to recover. .....

With blessing, and hoping to hear good news from you"

This week's Sedra is Kedoshim - Holiness, and it covers 51 essential, core Mitzvot, all packed into 64 verses, teaching us how to be holy

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and much good health!

Love to all.

TIFERES AND NETZACH EMOTIONAL ATTRIBUTES

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 9 May 2024 · Shabbos 11 May 2024 · ג' אייר תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Miriam. The sefira characteristic of your birthday is NETZACH in TIFERES

Mazal Tov to Tiferes whose sefira characteristic is TIFERES in TIFERES. Wishing you a wonderful year with much nachas to your parents.

Then lots of birthdays in the Levy Family:

Mazal Tov to Dovi whose sefira characteristic is Gevurah in NETZACH. Keep up with all your exciting yeshiva activities all over the world Dovi with much continued joy and success!

Mazal Tov to Nechama whose sefira character is NETZACH in TIFERES. Wishing you much continued happiness and success with all the nice things that you do?

Mazal Tov to Zeev whose sefira character is NETZACH in TIFERES. Continue to give your parents much nachas Zeevi and wishing you a happy year!

Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his birthday next week. I hope that you and Joy are well, and wishing you much happiness and good health together in the coming year.

Each week of Sefiras Haomer, which we are currently counting for 7 weeks, we try and refine one of the 7 emotional attributes of our natures.

And if we were actually born during the Sefira, the sefira relating to our birthday, is indicative of our personal nature, and the refining work that we need to work on throughout our life.

We are currently in week 3 of the Sefira which is refining the characteristic of TIFERES, and towards the end of next week we enter week 4, which is refining the characteristic of NETZACH (as can be seen by all the above birthdays.)

So what is the meaning of TIFERES and NETZACH? (From ' The Counting Of The Omer' by Rabbi Simon Jacobson)

TIFERES

Can be translated as Compassion, or Harmony, or Truth

It is a harmony between the first 2 Emotional characteristics of Kindness and Strictness

Tiferes tempers each of these emotions by introducing the dimension of Truth.

Truth is accessed through selflessness, rising above our egos, which then gives us a clear and objective picture of our own, and other's needs.

NETZACH

Can be translated as Endurance, or Fortitude, or Ambition

It is a balance of patience, with persistence and determination.

It is also being reliable, which establishes security.

Endurance means to be alive and to be driven by healthy and productive goals.

It is the readiness to fight for what you believe and to go all the way.

Therefore one has to carefully assess one's goals to make sure that they are worthy.

Congratulating those who have these beautiful characteristics, and wishing those who pursue them, much success!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

אמור

Emor

Vayikra 21:1 · parsha 8 of 10 in Vayikra · 31 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — SOME HISTORY AND BIOLOGY 771
2017 / 5777 — HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE 774
2018 / 5778 — 7 = 5 + 2 776
2019 / 5779 — SOFT SPEECH 779
2020 / 5780 — ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATION 781
2021 / 5781 — RASHBI 783
2022 / 5782 — LAG BAOMER 786
2023 / 5783 — AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE 788
2024 / 5784 — SERVANT WITH STATUS 790
2025 / 5785 — GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT 793
2026 / 5786 — TIMES AND TIME 795

Emor ↑ Emor · Contents · By date אמור

SOME HISTORY AND BIOLOGY

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 May 2016 · Shabbos 21 May 2016 · י"ג אייר תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday. If I have it correct your Sefira is Tiferes Shebehod. Just to let you know we have quite a few birthdays in Sefira and their main drift seems to be Chesed Netzach and Tiferes. So you fit in nicely with the Family Mendel and you bring in an added dimension! Enjoy the Shabbos farbreng and we wish you a happy and successful year.

In this weeks Parsha Emor, there are many Laws relating to KOHANIM, and I saw an interesting article about the Kohanim in 'The Coming Revolution' which I would like to share.

Historically, it is known that there was only one Kohen, after Bnei Yisrael left Egypt, and that was Aharon i.e. the brother of Moishe.

Moishe (and Aharon and the rest of their Family) were from the tribe of Levi and they (ie Moishe and rest of their Family) remained Levites. Only Aharon was granted the title of Kohen, and was actually the Kohen Gadol.

In the Divine decree of appointing Aharon the Kohein Gadol, it was stated that the Priesthood would be passed from father to son, and it would be Aharon and his descendants for all generations who would serve in the Temple as Kohanim.

The halacha is also, that if a daughter of a Kohen marries a non-Kohen, she loses her Priestly status, and also her sons are no longer called Kohanim.

The passing of Kehuna from father to son was obviously Spiritual in nature, but the article goes on to explain an astounding discovery, that this transmission is also visible in the physical realm.

A GENETIC Research Project was carried out by Prof Karl Skorecki at the Rambam Medical Centre in Haifa, to investigate this matter by looking at the Gene structure of Kohanim.

Many other researchers from all over the world participated over manyyears, and the results were published in 1997.

Without going into extensive detail, it is incredible to see how a Torah directive is also so encapsulated right within the physical genes.

The project collected data from Kohanim all over the world, and it was found that they carry a shared genetic marker on their DNA. I.e. 80% of Kohanim tested carried the same genetic trait, whereas only 20% of other Jews carried this trait, and only 5% of non-Jews.

Furthermore the most compelling finding of this research is that these shared characteristics are passed on only from father to son, and not from mother to son or daughter.

This is because the gene in question exists only in the mail Y chromosome which travels from father to son only.

The Research also managed to determine the number of generations that have passed since original father, and they decided that the average number of years per generation is 30.

They worked this out to be 106 generations, and if this is multiplied by 30, it equals 3180 years.

According to Jewish tradition Aharon lived approximately 3300 years ago.

I.e. a scientific calculation has determined dates and generations very much in line with Aharon's life according to Torah!!

If anyone is interested to get more Scientific details of the Project it was printed in 1997 in the journal Discovery, and in 1998 in Science News entitled 'Chromosomes of Jewish Priests.'

Wishing everyone a Good and Happy Shabbos.

Emor ↑ Emor · Contents · By date אמור

HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 12 May 2017 · Shabbos 13 May 2017 · י״ז אייר תשע״ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

BH lots to report this week.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on the birth of a beautiful baby boy! Wishing you both much joy and the bris and pidyan haben BEH should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas. Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on the upcoming Barmitzvah of Dovi on Sunday and the Family Shabbos this week, which they have arranged together with the Shalom zachar for Avi and Penina's baby, with the coming together of many Families BH! Yasher koach! Mazal Tov to Mendel for his birthday today. It was nice to celebrate this last night together with you in LA BH. Mazal Tov again to Mendel for passing his exam for Interior Decorating. This new work should be with much success. Mazal Tov to Mariasha for becoming certified in Estate Agency. Michayil el chayil. I believe that also Devorah Leah passed her exams for Teaching. Mazal Tov Devorah Leah Good luck for all those currently studying and writing exams. We are thinking about you!

BH so much to be GRATEFUL for, and wishing all those in need of brochos, to have all their needs fulfilled very soon!

Just to remind the Family of the great opportunity that exists for Blessings on Lag Baomer this Sunday, where Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai is there with us at all his gatherings, and where it is a most favourable time to request ones needs.

Every day of the sefira between Pesach and Shavuos involves the refinement of different aspects of our character traits, and these are expressed by combinations of the 7 Emotional Attributes - *sefirot*.

It is interesting that many members of the Family and extended Family have birthdays in the sefira period, and many have the aspect of *NETZACH - *ENDURANCE (one of the translations)

What is relevant to this week, and I think is relevant for the whole Family, is that Avi and Penina's new baby was born on the day of the sefira *HOD* in *NETZACH - *HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE. Dovi the Barmitzvah boy's real birthday was about a week ago and he is also an aspect of *NETZACH, ie gvurah shebenetzach.*

What we can learn this week is as follows: (From a book by Rabbi Simon Jacobson)

HUMILITY means yielding.
The reed which yields to the wind does not get uprooted, and it survives. But do we yield out of strength or fear? And why are we often afraid of yielding?

ENDURANCE is fuelled by inner strength.

HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE is that we do not only attribute our strengths and determination to ourselves, but we recognise that it also comes from our Soul which Hashem has given to each one of us. This does not reduce from our drive as it may appear. Rather it strengthens it, because our own efforts are limited, and the Divine Soul is limitless.

Wishing everyone a beautiful Shabbos and many simchos, WITH GRATITUDE

7 = 5 + 2

2018 / 5778

Gut Lag Baomer, Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 2 May 2018 · Shabbos 5 May 2018 · כ' אייר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Tonight and tomorrow is Lag Baomer, and there will be events like bonfires, parades and outings etc.

BECAUSE LAG BAOMER IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT DAY, I DECIDED TO DO THE WEEKLY EMAIL EARLIER THIS WEEK, WITH THE HOPE THAT MAYBE MORE OF US COULD ATTEND SOME THESE ACTIVITIES, EVEN IF IT IS ONLY FOR A SHORT TIME.

It is well known that this day is very close to Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai, who is in attendance, and it is a propitious day for one's prayers to be answered!

To try and get a sense of the power of this day, I would like to share some points from the Maamer I learnt about Lag Baomer, from the Alte Rebbe's Siddur, and which I think also reflects the power of our Judaism, how precise and important everything is, and how true.

In brief the story of Rebbi Shimon is quite well known and interesting.

While he was in hiding in a cave for 12 years (plus another year) he learnt Torah very deeply and he wrote the Zohar. As food he had access to a spring of water and a carob tree.

It is said that his Neshama is a spark of Mosheh Rabeinu, and that Mosheh gave us the Revealed Torah, and Rebbi Shimon revealed to us the Hidden Torah. - 2 giants of our people.

He was niftar on Lag Baomer, with his knowledge, and he requested that this day be one of celebration! (See attached below for interest)

There are many instances in Torah where 7 is divided up as 5+2. For example the lights of the Menorah in the Temple were lit as first 5 and then at a different stage, the last 2. And when enumerating the 7 fruits of eretz Yisrael, there is an interruption after mentioning the first 5, before the final 2.

Similarly the 7 weeks of the Counting of the Omer, reflect the refining of our 7 Emotional attributes, as we have discussed (each attribute has within it each of the other 7, leaving us 49 combination of attributes to refine over the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuos)

Of the 7 main emotional attributes, the main 'body' of them ends after the first 5 (like our body containing all the vital organs). And the last 2 are like the 'lower body and thighs' - The Alte Rebbe says that this is a well known and established fact.

The first 5 relate to ourselves and our development, and the last 2 relate to our giving over to others.

And what week are we now in? The 5th.

And what day of the 5th week are we going into (ie Lag Baomer)? The 5th.

And what is the 5th emotional attribute? Hod.

So Lag Baomer is Hod within Hod! - the lowest of the lowest level of the body of our emotions.

And Hod is the character of Humility, Recognition and Gratitude. (and contains all 7 emotional qualities - Rabbi Shimon Jacobson)

Recognition and Gratitude

Both words have similar Hebrew roots - modeh (modim) and hodaah.

In shemoneh esreh prayer, in the section where we say' modim', (and bow) the Rebeim added in a second modim which we say in the repetition of

shemoneh esreh (called modim Derabanan) and this reflects the concept of HODAAH SHEBEHODAAH.

This can be explained briefly as follows: The main modim is the capability of a Jew to RECOGNISE and be GRATEFUL to Hashem in a fashion of beyond and higher than the world, and in a real way. Mostly we do not have this capability, but we do have the capability to at least RECOGNISE THIS RECOGNITION, or agreeing to recognise (represented by us saying a second modim in the repetition of Shemoneh esreh.)

Nearly there if you can still hold tight!

It is also well know from Sefer Yetzirah that the end is wedged in the beginning, and the beginning in the end. Ie the highest light and purpose of Creation, can be found specifically in the lowest most remote areas.

Translated, in our context, this means, that the highest light of Creation is manifest at the level of HODAAH SHEBEHODAAH (where we barely recognise Hashem, but we agree to recognise Him, and we have not rejected Him), on the day of HOD SHEBEHOD, LAG BAOMER, the day we celebrate with REBBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI, a day which is full of blessing, and potential for blessing.

May all our prayers be answered for good, and wishing everyone a happy Lag Baomer, and a Gut Shabbos.

http://www.merkazanash.com/sites/default/files/459%20-%20Lag%20Ba%E2%80%99om er.pdf.

Emor ↑ Emor · Contents · By date אמור

SOFT SPEECH

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 May 2019 · Shabbos 18 May 2019 · י"ג אייר תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Rivky and Shmuel for the bris of Yehudah Zeev Levy yesterday. This is a beautiful name BH! Wishing you much nachas from him and all the Family. And many more simchos.

It is Shlomo Levy barmitzvah coming up next week on LagBaomer, but I would like to reserve this Mazal Tov for next week BEH. Anyway no harm for an extra Mazal Tov now Shlomo! Looking forward to being with you BEH. Mazal Tov!

And again an extra Mazal Tov to Yeshayah whose birthday is today. We love you Yeshayah! Mazal Tov!

And then Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff (Shmuly and Devorah Leah's). Mazal Tov, and especially for your opsheren on LagBaomer Shneur Zalman. You should grow up to be a chayal - chosid, yirei Shamayim, and a lamdan, giving much nachas to your parents BEH.

Mazal Tov Mendel Kehaty on your birthday next week. Wishing you continued growth and achievement, and many simchos in your new home, with joy, together with Freida.

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel who also has a birthday next week. Last but not least Adam. Have a great year, and we are so happy to have you on the group with us.

BH, so many Mazal Tov's. Wishing for continued growth for everyone in the Family and extended Family BEH.

This week's Sedra is Emor, which means to SPEAK

In an extract from a sicha (Likutei Sichos vol 27), the Rebbe explains as follows:

Torah mainly uses 2 words for speaking

1. Dibur - Hard and straight speech with a very pointed delivery of a message
2. Amirah - SOFT SPEECH. This is where the speech is tailored to the recipient to ensure that it is indeed received, and clearly understood.

Our Sedra starts off using the term emor regarding the Priests duty to educate their children

THIS TEACHES US THAT WE MUST EDUCATE PRIMARILY WITH SOFT SPEECH.

Later in the Sedra Hashem turns to Laws relating to the Priests, and here the term dibur is used.

(Again by matan Torah, the term emor and dibur are used and Rashi there says that dibur was used for the men, and emor referred to the women.)

The Rebbe adds that the soft speech used by the Kohanim in educating their children has a lesson for all of us.

Whenever we see in someone else (child or adult) a behaviour or attitude that needs correction or inspiration, we are immediately given the responsibility of educator, AND IN ALL SUCH CASES WE MUST REMEMBER HASHEMS INSTRUCTION TO MAKE EXCLUSIVE USE OF SOFT SPEECH.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Emor ↑ Emor · Contents · By date אמור

ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATION

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 May 2020 · Shabbos 9 May 2020 · ט"ו אייר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Medel (Kehaty) on your birthday this coming week. Wishing you much success in both gashmius and ruchnius , all with much joy! And success with education.

This week's Sedra is Emor.

Emor means saying.

In a Sicha of the Rebbe he explains as follows:

In Torah when the word emor is used it implies SOFT SPEECH - here message is tailored, reflecting full consciousness of its intended recipient.

In contrast, when the word daber is used in Torah, this also means speaking, but it implies HARD SPEECH - straightforward and precise.

In our first verse of the Sedra, emor is said twice and Rashi comments that this is referring not only to saying but also to EDUCATING

The implication is that EDUCATION IN ALL IT'S CONTEXTS, MUST BE CARRIED OUT PRIMARILY WITH SOFT SPEECH

Furthermore the double expression of emor, is teaching us that if we want our education to be successful there has to be A LOT OF TALKING.

Even though the Mishneh says 'say little and do much', and 'I did not find anything better for the body than silence.' - it should not prevent us from using speech fully in education. Keeping these mishnayos in mind will help us avoid unnecessary repetition of our speech when educating!

Essentially, soft speech is PRAISING the student.

All our potential students possess infinite latent good, and by praising, we draw out these positive qualities, thus allowing them to actualize their potential.

This does not mean that we should ignore honest and objective assessment of the pupils shortcomings and failings.

However we should try and give them the benefit of the doubt, that their misdeeds have come about from the circumstances of their life.

Where education fails, it is due to the educator having not praised enough with soft speech!

We need to take responsibility.

Gut Shabbos to all!

RASHBI

2021 / 5781

Happy Lag Baomer and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 April 2021 · Shabbos 1 May 2021 · י"ט אייר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Ariel who is celebrating his Barmitzvah today on Lag Baomer! What a beautiful day to be celebrating. Wishing you a successful and wonderful life Ariel.

Mazal Tov to Dovber on his birthday next week. Wishing him a year of continued growth and happiness, and giving everyone much nachas!

It is always with much excitement that we await Lag Baomer, the Yohrtzeit of Rashbi (Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai). It is such a beautiful and powerful day!

Rashbi lived in the 2nd century CE, in Israel at the time of the Romans, and one of the many works that he is famous for, is the Zohar.

Up to then, the deepest secrets of Torah were passed on only by hints and allusions, but Rashbi was the first one to openly teach these secrets to his students.

On the very day that he passed away, he revealed some of the loftiest secrets, and brought a new level of G-dly light into the world. These teachings became more fully revealed many centuries later by the Arizal in Tsfat.

He also instructed that the day of his yohrtzeit (Lag Baomer) should be one of JOYOUS CELEBRATION! The bonfires represent the light of Torah that Rashbi brought into the world.

The Rebbe in a sicha pointed out a link between Lag Baomer and Rashbi, with Shavuot and Mosheh Rabeinu

The gematria of Lag Baomer is equal to that of Moshe Rabeinu, and that in the same way that the Revealed Torah was given to us on Shavuot through Mosheh Rabeinu, the Hidden Torah was given to us through Rashbi on Lag Baomer.

It is also said that Rashbi was a gilgul (re-incarnation) of Mosheh Rabeinu.

The Rebbe goes into much more details (Zayin Adar 33 years ago)

To get a slight inkling of his greatness, here are a few facts:

- He was a student of Rabbi Akiva who said of him "It is enough that I and your Creator know of your powers."
- Rashbi was one of the teachers of Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi, the revered compiler of the Mishneh.
- Many of his teachings were passed on orally to his close associates called the Chevraya, who committed these to writing, even over several generations. These included Rashbi's son R. Elazar, his scribe R. Abba, R. Yehudah, R. Yossi ben Yaakov, R. Yitzchak, R. Chizkiyah, R. Chiya, R. Yossi, and R. Yaakov bar Idi - all famous in their own right.
- He is the author of all the statements in the Sifri
- He is author of the Mechilta dRashbi
- He has the unique distinction of having been mentioned in every mesechtah of the Talmud
- He was well versed in performing miracles - (Article by Rabbi Moshe Miller)

There is a tradition that anyone who prays at the gravesite of Rashbi, especially on Lag Baomer, will have his prayers answered. BUT WE KNOW THAT THIS APPLIES WHEREVER WE ARE ON LAG BAOMER (Hayom Yom 18th Iyar)

He was buried in Meron, and right through the year there are thousands of visitors to his burial site. But on Lag Baomer itself there are 250-300,000 visitors!! See attached video in the article.

<https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/588227/jewish/Meron-Tomb-of-Rabbi-Shimon-ben-Yochai.htm> https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/588227/jewish/Meron-Tomb-of-R abbi-Shimon-ben-Yochai.htm

Wherever we are in the world, we can participate, and be part of this great joy, together with Rashbi!

Gut Lag Baomer and Gut Shabbos to all!

LAG BAOMER

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 May 2022 · Shabbos 14 May 2022 · י"ג אייר תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Dani and Ariel for their upcoming wedding on LAG BAOMER next week -continued in Dvar Torah below.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty who has a decade birthday coming up next week BH. Wishing you a wonderful year of continued building and achieving Mendel, together with Freida and with much joy and success.

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Adam. It should be with lots of success! Keep in touch.

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman (junior). Wishing you much continued success in your studies and growth Shneur Zalman, and giving your parents much sweet nachas!

Mazal Tov to Zeevi who is having his opsheren on Lag Baomer next week. You should continue giving your parents much chassidishe nachas!

BH so many big simchos coming up, and all within the radiance of LAG BAOMER, such a special day in the year!

Lag Baomer is the yohrtzeit and yom hilula of the revered, second century Sage, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who is buried in the mountains of Meron, and which takes place next Wednesday night and Thursday.

Hundreds of thousands of people from Israel and all over the world will be heading for Meron to celebrate all night at his resting place, and there will be celebrations at the same time all over the world.

He was, amongst other achievements, the author of the Zohar, the foundation text of the Kabalah.

Hours before his passing in approximately 160 CE, he informed his students that his soul was soon going to leave it's body and celebrate with it's Maker.

As such he requested, that instead of being saddened, his students should mark this day with great joy and holy rejoicing.

At that time the kedushah of Rebbi Shimon was so intense that none of the Talmidim were able to gaze upon him, and throughout the day a fire surrounded the house, keeping everyone else at an awed distance.....

Lag Baomer is marked with festive music, dancing, studying the mystical teachings, praying, lighting bonfires (representing the light of Torah which Rebbi Shimon brought into the world), and dozens of simultaneous events taking place at the same time.

And one of these events this year is BEH the wedding of Dani and Ariel! What a day to be celebrating such a happy event!

We all wish you to build an everlasting home together with much love and joy! And wishing Mazal Tov also to Chanan and Naomi. One simchah should lead to many more for the rest of the Family!

And at the same time BEH, Zeevi will be celebrating his opsherin in California!

Rebbi Shimon is celebrating together with us every year, and we should see the geulah soon!

Gut Shabbos to all

AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos, Happy Lag Baomer · sent Thursday, 4 May 2023 · Shabbos 6 May 2023 · ט"ו אייר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much hatzlachah Mendel, and lots of Chassidishe nachas from your Family, with much joy.

In this coming week's Pirkei Avot (4:2) it says "Ben Azai would say: Run to pursue a minor Mitzvah, and flee from a transgression...."

Why run, why a minor Mitzvah, why flee?

And I thought that this week's Tanya throws more light on the matter.

In Chap 46 of Tanya (Likutei Amarim), it says to take to heart the meaning of the verse (Proverbs 27:19) 'AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE, SO DOES THE HEART OF MAN TO MAN.'

Ie the features of the face which a man presents to the water, are reflected back to him with an identical face, from the water.

This can be seen:

- When a person has a LOVE for another person and shows him loyalty and affection, this awakens a loving response in the HEART of his friend, and they come to love each other loyally. This happens even when the 2 parties have equal status.
- How much more so is this case, if a great and mighty king displays his great and intense love for a commoner who is despised and lowly among

men. Yet he comes down from his place of glory together with his retinue, to meet this simple man, and bring him back to his palace, and to his most innermost chambers, with close companionship.How much more so will be aroused of itself, a doubled and redoubled love in the heart of this common and humble individual, with true attachment of spirit from heart and soul, from the infinite depths of his heart..and his soul will pour itself out like water with soulful longing for the love of the king.

- And how much more so, to an even much greater degree, doubled and redoubled, infinitely more than the above parable, has our G-d dealt with us.....in order to bring us near to Him in true closeness and unity, with a real attachment of soul, so that the Jew's soul will be truly bound up with the Almighty.....

The chapter goes on to explain, that when we do a Mitzvah, it may be that we are not conscious of the sanctity that resides in us at that time.

This would be due to the barrier of his bodily grossness within which the soul dwells which has as yet not been refined, and which dims the eyes of the soul.....

Gut Shabbos to all!

Emor ↑ Emor · Contents · By date אמור

SERVANT WITH STATUS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 17 May 2024 · Shabbos 18 May 2024 · י׳ אייר תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

BH many birthdays again this week in Sfiras Haomer period:

Mazal Tov Pesach whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a year of much success in both the material and spiritual, with much joy and much new development BEH! With the character trait of Tiferes in Netzach.

Mazal Tv to Yeshayah Pesach Vogel for his birthday on Shabbos. You should continue to give your parents much nachas and keep growing in all areas Yeshayah! Your Sefirah character is Hod in Netzach

Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday on next day following. Wishing you a wonderful year of continued growth in leaps and bounds Shneur Zalman! Your Sefirah character is Yesod in Netzach

And last but not least, on the next day, is the birthday of Adam Frankel. Adam is the son of Jody, and therefore the grandson of Renee ah, and Roy Cobb. Wishing you a great year Adam, and for your Family. So nice that we stay connected. I presume that your Sefirah character is Malchut in Netzach .

I would like to welcome Gavriel Davidoff to our Family Group. Gavriel now has his own email address. We are so happy to have you join with us Gavriel, and so happy to be hosting you in London!

The theme dominating this week, was Kohanim (Priests) and Leviim (Levites).

Kohanim were discussed in this week's Sedra Emor. In Rambam we have been learning the Laws of Trumah, the 2% agricultural gift given to the Ko-

hanim, and the 10% Maaser gift given to the Leviim. In the daily Gemorra learning (Amud Yomi) we are learning about Yom Kippur, (Tractate Yoma) demonstrating the Service of the Kohen Gadol and the other Priests.

And today I saw an interesting article from 'Hebrew Word of the Week' about Kohen and Levi, which I found interesting, and wanted to share.

The English translation of Priest is from the Latin word prevost meaning 'One put over others'- DOMINATE

The Hebrew translation of Kohen is just the opposite. It means 'SERVANT'!

This reflects, that instead of the masses 'below' serving those on 'top', the nobility in the Jewish world (in this case the Priests) serve on behalf of those 'below'

The Hebrew translation of Levi also reflects their essential role. It means TO JOIN AND CONNECT WITH OTHERS. Therefor instead of being an empty symbol of status and prestige, it is a call to selflessly serve Hashem and the people.

Therefore the uniqueness of the Leviim and Kohanim is not a privilege that sets them above others. But it is rather a responsibility to dedicate their lives to a cause beyond themselves.

Similarly there is the often misunderstood concept of Jews being the Chosen People.

This does not mean that we hold ourselves above others.

Rather, like the Kohanim, we are meant to lovingly practice and spread the Word of Hashem, and humbly portray a living example of an upright lifestyle, to be a 'light unto the Nations', to serve the spiritual needs of humanity. (to whatever degree we are able to do this in our own lives)

Rambam states this beautifully in the Laws of Shemitah Chap 13:

Not only a Levi can have privileges. Every individual can set himself aside to serve Hashem, and Hashem will provide for him his needs even in this world, as He provides for

the Priests and Levites, and Hashem will be his heritage forever.

Gut Shabbos to all!

GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT

2025 / 5785

Gut Lag Baomer, Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 May 2025 · Shabbos 17 May 2025 · י״ט אייר תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yecheskiel ben Esther.

Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his birthday. Wishing you a very happy year Dovber with much success in your learning and your playing! You should continue to give your parents much nachas BEH.

This week's Sedra is Emor, and I saw a powerful Sicha of the Rebbe from Parshas Emor 1962, which I would like to share in a summarised form

- The word emor means to say ie to TALK, and it refers to our speech to all Jews and not only to the Kohanim, and no limitation is set on how much talking. (See references for this)
- Speaking words of Torah has already been commanded previously, and so the speech being referred to here, is a different speech.
- There are 2 terms used for speech ie emor and daber. Emor implies GENTLE SPEECH, and daber implies firm speech
- Rambam in Chap 5 of Deos states that one of the characteristics of a Torah Scholar is that "He speaks favourably of his fellowman and does not denigrate him at all."
- Where Rambam speaks about " judging everyone favourably", he precedes this by saying that a Torah Scholar "must SPEAK GENTLY WITH ALL PEOPLE"
- Torah Scholar also refers to all Jews, because ultimately "All your children will be students of Hashem."

- There is a small leeway for admonishment but this should only be done rarely and under the guidelines of Torah, in a way that is acceptable to the one being admonished.

The explanation given is as follows:

When we see a Jew (or Jewess) whom Hashem has placed in a situation involving tremendous challenges, and 'behaving unfavourably', we have to realise that Hashem would not have given this person these challenges if they were unable to overcome them. Therefore this person must have also been granted extra-ordinary powers of character and ability to be able to overcome the challenges!

Therefore when a Jew looks favourably at his fellow Jew, not only is his fellow not held culpable, but it also brings out the merit and lofty inner powers of that person, which enable him to overcome even such difficult challenges. (and as a result the bad becomes nullified)

This is the lesson that we derive from the word Emor, Say, in our Parshah, ie we must continually and profusely speak favourably, and in a praise-worthy manner, of our fellows ie every Jew, even regarding those matters that require that we adjust our perspective, to judge in a favourable light.

Tonight is the beautiful celebration of Lag BaOmer and Rebi Shimon bar Yochai.

Wishing all a wonderful Lag BaOmer and a Gut Shabbos!

TIMES AND TIME

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Pesach Sheni Gut Lag Baomer · sent Sunday, 3 May 2026 · Shabbos 2 May 2026 · ט"ו אייר תשפ"ו

Re-sent on 03 May 2026 ("I am re-sending last week's email"); filed under the previous Shabbos, 02 May 2026.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a shnas hatzlachah Mendel in both gashmius and ruchnius with much joy and new developments BEH!

Mazal Tov to Shirley Isaacson on her birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a wonderful year Shirley with good health and much happiness! Thanks for keeping in touch!

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel whose birthday is today. Just realised that you birthday is always erev Pesach Sheni – so nice BH. Wishing you a great year Adam. I hope that all is going well with you and your Family. It would be nice to hear how you are all doing!

I heard a very powerful Dvar Torah this week from Rabbi Shalom Paltiel, on a point in this week's Sedra Emor, which I would like to share.

It is a bit complex, but I will try and summarise – Please try and get to the end, which has a rich lesson!

The talk is based on the mention of all the Festivals in this week's Sedra, and is based on a talk by the Rebbe as follows:

Sedra Emor gives a comprehensive listing of the Festivals, and lists them out in an orderly chronologic fashion ie Calendar, Shabbos, Pesach, Shavuos, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkos.

This same order is followed by the Talmud.

Now the Rambam, in relation to Mitzvos and Jewish Law, wrote 2 books – one was Sefer HaMitzvos, where he listed all the 613 Mitzvos, and one was his 'Magna Carta', Mishneh Torah.

In Sefer HaMitzvos, Rambam follows the same order as Torah and Talmud in listing out the Festivals, *but in Mishneh Torah he completely changes the order and uses different terms for the Festivals!?*

Now, anyone who has any knowledge of Rambam's works will know how precise he is with his words, and how amazing are his organisational skills. So how did this come about?

The Rambam's order is Shabbos, Eruvin, The rest of the Tenth (Yom Kippur), The rest of the Festivals (general Laws of the Festivals), Chametz Umatzah (Pesach), Shofar (Rosh Hashanah), Sukkah Velulav (Sukkos), Calendar, [Fasts, Shekels, Megilah and Chanukah]

The Rebbe points out the above 2 glaring questions plus 2 more ie the 4 are:

- Changing the order of the Festivals from that of Torah, Talmud, and his own listing in Sefer HaMitzvot? - And changing the names of the Festivals? - Rambam brings the Laws of the Festivals in his Section titled ZEMANIM (TIMES – a general term), whereas the Talmud uses the title for it's section, Moed (a more focused title meaning Appointed Times) Why does Rambam change the term? - Rambam uses an appropriate verse at the start of each of his 14 Sections to encapsulate that Section. For Zemanim he uses the verse "I have accepted your testimonies as an ETERNAL heritage, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. (Psalms 119:111) This is strange because the Festivals have specific times, and Rambam is expressing eternity. And why bring up joy here when the section is discussing times.

Answer

1. The Magid Mishna (commentary on Rambam) explains that Rambam lists the Festivals *in order of importance (or strictness)*
2. There are 2 ways to look at the obligations for the Festivals. There is the *Festival itself*. And then there is *the person keeping the Festival.* The Festival has a fixed time. But the Jew keeping that Festival has to do additional preparation for that Festival throughout the year. Torah and Talmud are looking at only listing the specific Festivals chronologically, and their fixed times. Rambam who has set out to explain the Laws of how to keep the Festivals (in this case) recognises that there are fixed times*, but for the Jew, his obligation is for the whole year,* and he needs to be guided in *how to do it*, and its order of importance. And the language he uses is according for the person to do (eg instead of Rosh Hashanah, Rambam uses the term The Laws of *Shofar*)
3. Not only do we work on each Festival through the year, but the effects of our work during the Festival carries throughout the year Eg the joy of Sukkos carries forward throughout the year. Similarly the Freedom of Pesach
4. Whenever we do a Mitzvah we not only elevate the article that we are working with. We also elevate that whole species (This could be Inanimate, Vegetable, Animal, Human, Place or TIME). Our actions run a long way. When we do Mitzvos which are time related we *elevate time.* That is why Rambam uses the title TIMES rather than Moed, and speaks about ETERNITY.

Similarly all Mitzvos are eternal, *no matter how small*. It could be merely placing a coin into a Charity box.

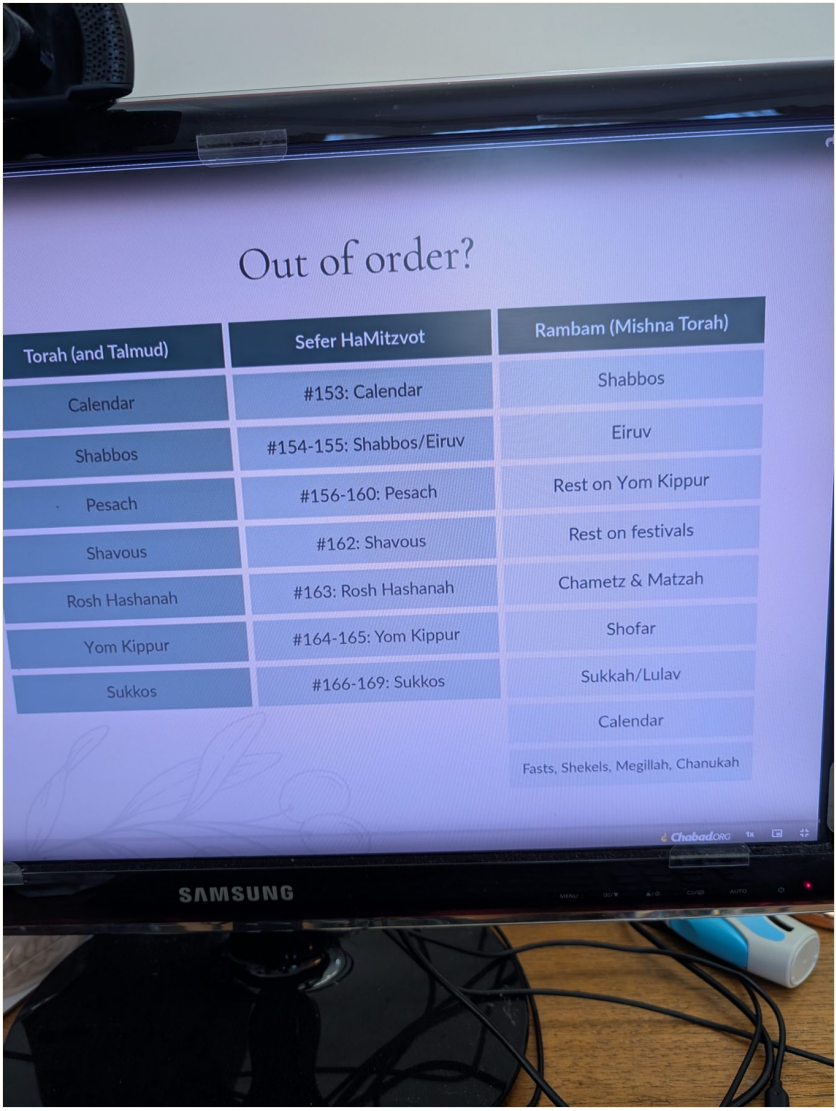
Every Mitzvah that we do connects us with an *eternal* unity to Hashem.

Gut Shabbos to all, Gut Pesach Sheni, and a very happy Lag Baomer

Compose:
New Message
[image: Minimise][image: Pop-out][image: Close]

Attached to this letter

The chart "Out of order?" (photo), sent separately six minutes after the letter with "This chart may help understand the Dvar Torah"



בהר

Behar

Vayikra 25:1 · parsha 9 of 10 in Vayikra · 32 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — A WATCHING EYE 800
2017 / 5777 — PROMISING 802
2018 / 5778 — CHAYENU 804
2019 / 5779 — HOD 807
2020 / 5780 — STRENGTH OF HUMILITY 811
2021 / 5781 — PLEADING 813
2022 / 5782 — MODESTY 814
2023 / 5783 — COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY 816
2024 / 5784 — WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG 818
2025 / 5785 — THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM 820
2026 / 5786 — HUMILITY AND GREATNESS 822

Behar ↑ Behar · Contents · By date בהר

A WATCHING EYE

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 27 May 2016 · Shabbos 28 May 2016 · כ' אייר תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had an enjoyable Lag Baomer.

Lag Baomer was beautiful in Stamford Hill, including the weather. BH I always find Lag Baomer with the HIDDEN presence of Rebi Shimon Bar Yochai, so powerful and full of Brochas BH.

And then that was followed directly today with the Bris of Shmuly and Devorah Leah,s new baby, who was named Shneur Zalman.

This was also such a beautiful and blessed simcha BH. Mazal Tov!

Wishing all members of our Family and extended Family to also celebrate many simchos and we should share these with each other.

Also wishing Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba for their upcoming Anniversary.

And Sara for her upcoming birthday on the same day!

Also Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha for moving into their new and larger accommodation BH.

An interesting point came to my attention in this week's Sedra Behar

This particular subject was on CHEATING.

In verse 14 it says 'do not cheat one another' and Rashi says this refers to cheating in money matters.

And I thought to myself why did Rashi have to say this? It is so obvious.

But my question was answered a few verses later verse 17, where Torah again says 'you shall not cheat one another' but here the next few words are 'and you shall fear your G-d'

In this case Rashi's comment is 'cheating with words.....not to offer advice which is not appropriate to him....and if you say 'who knows if I had evil intentions?'

So what makes Rashi differentiate between these 2 'identical' verses?

Because the next few words after the second verse says:

YOU SHALL FEAR YOUR G-D.

Ie that is what prompts Rashi and the Chachamim to point out that this second mention of cheating is relating to items which cannot be seen ie with words, thoughts, advice etc

Rashi now comments on these words:

'He who knows thought, HE KNOWS! All matters hidden in the heart, where only that person knows what is in his heart , it is said 'You shall fear your G-d'

Torah does not repeat words for nothing (even the syllables are very precise!)

And so I am always grateful to, in this case Rashi (Acronym Rebi Shel Yisrael), to pick up the clues and hidden messages in Torah with his SEEING EYE.

And explaining to us and pointing us to the WATCHING EYE,

WHO KNOWS ALL THE THOUGHTS IN THE HEART OF EVERY MAN AND WOMAN.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

PROMISING

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 May 2017 · Shabbos 20 May 2017 · כ"ד אייר תשע"ז

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and all settling back to 'normal' after a beautiful week in LA.

We originally came to LA for the Barmitzvah of Dovi Pesach David), which was on Sunday this week, and it ended up to be also the bris of Pesach Yishaya BH, BH.

So first of all a big Mazal Tov to Dovi on his Barmitzvah, and to Shmuel and Rivky for being such amazing hosts, for the accommodation, and for all the many months of hard work and preparations which went into this event, mostly with their own 2 hands! Everything was so well organised and tasty, and we had one long party from Friday through to Monday morning. THANK YOU.

Wishing you much nachas and happiness from Dovi and from all your children.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina for their new beautiful boy which was named Pesach Yishaya also on Sunday, at the same venue of the Barmitzvah, just before sunset, both events having taken place on Lag Baomer! I heard it said that we had 2 great guests at the celebrations that day - Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai and Eliyahu Hanavi! Thank you also for the very comfortable accommodation at your home.

It was also nice to be together with so many members of the Family BH.

The character development relating to Lag Baomer was Humility within Humility!, and interestingly the Parsha of that day - Behar (The Mountain) - mentions Har Sinai.

There is a well known Midrash which explains that Har Sinai was the smallest of mountains, and Hashem chose it to teach us a lesson in Humility ie If we want to be a vessel for the Torah, we must feel lowly and humble.

But the question then arises - If Hashem wanted to teach us a lesson in humility, would it not then have been better to give us the Torah in a valley? Ie why on a mountain?!

And the answer is that we need both - the greatness of a mountain, but the humility of Har Sinai.

Later on in the Sedra, the theme turns to Hashem PROMISING that if we will keep His commandments, we will enjoy material prosperity, and dwell secure.

He also delivers a rebuke warning, but says that 'Even when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor will I ever abhor them to destroy them and to break my covenant with them.'

And so for Dovi (Pesach David) and Pesach Yeshaya, we wish you both a PROMISING future, being a humble mountain, and keeping Hashems commandments, with much prosperity.

And similarly for all of us!

Gut Shabbos

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

CHAYENU

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 May 2018 · Shabbos 12 May 2018 · כ"ז אייר תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Claude. It is nice to be in contact again!

It may be a good time to introduce Claude and Joy. Joy is my first cousin (ne Davidoff) from SA, married to Claude and still living in SA.

I would also like to introduce Froma Sacks, who is Kerry Lee's mother, and Froma was married to Alden AH, who was also a first cousin from my mother's side (aunty Girlie's son). She is also still living in SA and also just joined our group recently.

We are so happy to reconnect with Family, where there have been so many years of separation, and I am proud to say that the ones bringing about these re-connections are actually our children through the social media etc! Amazing when one thinks about it! BH

Welcome all.

Chayenu means 'OUR LIFE' and coming up to Shavuos, the time of the receiving of our TORAH, I thought it would be nice to share a few related items which came my way this week.

Torah gives us life, but we also need to put life into our Torah and Mitzvos.

Sicha

I saw a summary of a sicha of the Rebbe about this based on a pasuk from 2 sedras ago 'And you should guard My statutes and My laws..AND LIVE BY THEM.. (chai bahem).

The Magid of Mezeritch explains that these words (chai bahem) can also be translated as 'put life into them', because bahem means 'into them' in addition to 'by them'.

How does one do this?

Visualise the following examples:

1. A person who prays with fervor, but when he goes out to the world, or business, or eating etc, no holiness is visible. There is a separation between the holy and mundane.
2. Then there is the person whose life and mitzvos are connected, but he (or she) does this with the hope, that by doing them, they will get what they need from Hashem. Here his mitzvot are bringing life to his needs.
3. And then there is the person who directs all his focus to the mitzvot. For example he eats, exercises, works and rests etc so that he will be healthy to be able to carry out Hashem's will. This is BRINGING LIFE INTO THE MITZVOT. His whole life is dedicated to Hashem. Of course this is not a small task. It is a life journey, and takes place one step at a time, and it gradually introduces new quality to all ones actions, making ones life more meaningful and connected. And one can start at any stage or age.

Chayenu Publication

Last week, I started receiving a very nice weekly publication called CHAYENU. It actually originated from SA and is now distributed worldwide.

It translates the main areas of learning which is current each week, in a linear and easy to read manner, like:

1. Daily Chumash portion
2. Daily Tanya portion
3. Daily Rambam for those learning one chapter a day
4. Daily Hayom Yom
5. And then lots of interesting insights into halacha, chassidus, gemorra etc, all in English or translated.

So with Shavuos coming up soon, it may be a good time to make resolutions to increase our learning and understanding of Torah.

For those interested, I have attached more information about this publication.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Behar ↑ Behar · Contents · By date בהר

HOD

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 22 May 2019 · Shabbos 25 May 2019 · כ' אייר תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Apologies for early email this week due to circumstances.

We are now in the middle of an amazing week, which is centred around the sefira of HOD, and in which we celebrate Lag Baomer, the hilula of Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai (Rashbi).

I hope the explanation below will give a slight understanding of how great is this day of Lag Baomer

And closely connected are all our Family members who have simchos in this week of HOD ie Shlomo's Barmitzvah, Shneur Zalman's opsheren (haircut at 3), and the naming of Yehuda Zeev Levy.

These connections are so interesting because they relates closely to the maamer of the Alte Rebbe in his Siddur, which I have been learning for the past few weeks.

As with all maamorim of the Alte Rebbe (and all the Rebbeim), they are highly intricate, and so I hope this will not be too difficult.

THERE IS AN AMAZING CONCEPT THAT IS STATED IN SEFER YETZIRA IE THAT 'THE BEGINNING (HIGHEST) CONNECTS TO THE END (LOWEST), AND THE END TO THE BEGINNING.' Why should it be like this and why can't the beginning connect to the middle or anywhere else?!

Let's start with explaining the emotional character of HOD.

There are 3 intellectual characters and 7 emotional ones.

These are sometimes linked to the shape of the body, and it works out that HOD, which is the 5th of the 7 emotions, is the lowest part of the body itself. The last 2, yesod and malchut, have a character of external organs relating outward to others ie reproduction, and then the thighs, which support the body.

The root word HOD has a no. of uses

1. HUMILITY

Here hod is the quiet partner of the previous attribute of Netzach (Endurance) and it gives quiet direction to Endurance (where one should apply one's endurance)

This humility is yielding, coming from ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, recognising our limitations, and the place of Hashem in our lives and in creation – how small we are and how great we can become. This yielding is not weakness. THIS HUMILITY AND MODESTY IS A GREAT STRENGTH. It is active, and not passive.

2. Acknowledgement - HODAAH

3. Thanks and gratitude – MODIM

In our prayers, in shemonei esrei, we show our gratitude to Hashem at MODIM, where we also bow down.

There are basically 2 levels of this recognition

1. Where we have a high level of knowledge and understanding and then express gratitude for the tremendous kindness and greatness which we can see. - Hodaah

2. Where we do not really see clearly, or not at all, BUT WE STILL ACKNOWLEDGE – Hodaah Lehodaah

Our sages recognised this level where we mostly all fall into, and they introduced the SECOND MODIM in shemonei esrei (which is in small print next to the main Modim) – called Modim DeRabanan.

Once we have any of these levels of acknowledgement, we are now open to receive the flow of light and energy of Hashem from a very high source.

Ie Because hodaah lehodaah is such a low level, it causes the connection to the highest of levels according to the concept in Sefer Yetzirah! Ie in particular to us little human Jews who have only the slightest recognition of Hashem – hodaah lehodaah.

And how does this connect to Lag Baomer?

Because the combination of characters on this day is HOD SHEBEHOD. - Hod, the lowest part of the body, and not only hod, but hod shebehod!

This is how great is the flow of light and energy coming down on this day, and this is the day that Rashbi passed on, and this is why he wanted his yohrtzeit to be celebrated with such great joy!

And so, what a week to have these celebrations, but I particularly want to make mention of Shlomo's Barmitzvah and how this connects to all the above.

Shlomo was born on the second night of Pesach when we start counting the Omer (THE BEGINNING), and start refining ourselves and our emotional characters, to be ready to receive the Torah on Shavuos , and is celebrating the Barmitzvah on Lag Baomer (LOWEST PART WHICH RECEIVES THE MOST LIGHT)

Wishing you much light in your life Shlomo, and the lesson for you and all of us on your Bar MITZVAH, is to know, that the simple, bland physical acts which Hashem has commanded us to do (mitzvos), and which seem to be so unexciting (LOW POINT), have the power to connect us to the HIGHEST levels.

And then Yehudah Zeev - The word Yehudah is also based on the root of hodaah.

Mazal Tov and wishing everyone an inspiring Lag Baomer and Shabbos

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

STRENGTH OF HUMILITY

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 May 2020 · Shabbos 16 May 2020 · כ"ב אייר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his opsheren which took place on Lag Baomer. We saw pictures of your beautiful party, and especially of Yeshayah with his first haircut, and wearing a kappel and tzitzis! All on such a beautiful day of Lag Baomer together with Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai, and thousands of people celebrating all over the world, ingeniously done in world lockdown BH.

Mazal Tov to Dovber on his first birthday next week! Wishing much nachas from him and many more simchos.

This weeks Sedra is combination of Behar and Bechukosai, and a common theme came up connected to Behar - on the Mountain, and this week's Sefira character of HOD - Humility.

BEHAR

We are told that Hashem chose to give the Torah on Mount Sinai because it was the LOWEST MOUNTAIN to teach us HUMILITY.

But the question is, if Hashem wanted to teach us humility why did he not give us the Torah in a valley?

The answer is that even although humility is an essential component of spiritual life, so is also a certain amount of pride.

A totally selfless person may feel powerless and 'trodden upon' by the mockery of the world, and the doubts and challenges that one experiences. These are from the forces that obscure G-dliness.

Hence we also need to be 'mountains - small mountains', mastering the art of asserting ourselves as representatives of Hashem on earth.

HOD

And even humility itself (Hod) is not weak. It only appears to be weak because it yields.

The root of Hod is hodaah, which means expressing 'thanks to Hashem'.

Hod clearly acknowledges one's qualities and strengths, but it also acknowledges that they are G-d given, and for a purpose.

This modesty of recognizing how small one is, allows one to realize how large one can become.

And humility is therefore actually, a FORMIDABLE STRENGTH.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

PLEADING

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 May 2021 · Shabbos 8 May 2021 · כ"ו אייר תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Claude whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Claude. And love to Joy.

This weeks Sedra is Behar - Bechukosei, and the Bechukosei section starts "Im bechokosei telechu.." - IF you will go in my statutes....

And I saw a nice short explanation of this pasuk in today's Hayom Yom, as follows:

The simple meaning of this verse is, "If you will go in my statutes, then you will receive all these rewards....

But our Sages (Avodah Zarah p5a) interpret the verse differently ie "IF ONLY you will go in my statutes.."

Hashem is PLEADING (as it were) with Israel to keep the Torah.

This in itself aids man and gives him the ability to remain steadfast in his choice of the good.

The verse also uses the word holech - go, ie the soul then becomes a mehaleich - It PROGRESSES from one level to the next continually ascending to higher levels of achievement.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and much progress in all areas!

Behar ↑ Behar · Contents · By date בהר

MODESTY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 May 2022 · Shabbos 21 May 2022 · כ' אייר תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again for todays simchos on Lag Baomer ie the wedding of Dani And Ariel in Boston, and the opsheren of Zeevi in LA - beautiful simchos on a beautiful day BH.

And the Boston Davidoffs are following up next week with the wedding of Perry Davidoff and Michaeli. BH! We wish you a Big MAZAL TOV. You should have a wonderful and happy life together and build an everlasting home! Mazal Tov also to Reuven and Chana Lieba. Wishing you much continued nachas from your whole Family.

Mazal Tov to Dovber on his third birthday next week. We are looking forward to your opsher after Shavuos Dovber and to see you with your haircut, kappel, and tzitzis!

We wish Claude long life on the loss of his brother. You should have only simchos in the future Claude.

Today is Lag Baomer, which has the Sefirah of Hod Shebehod.

One aspect of this beautiful characteristic is Modesty and Humility.

And so I am sharing a few insights into this characteristic which I saw today:

The Midrash teaches that there is nothing HaShem loves more dearly then modesty.

At a farbrengen on Simchas Torah (1969), the Rebbe said that young girls should be told what a lack of modesty implies. When partially uncovering

themselves to impress others, it is as if they are carrying a poster announcing that they have nothing else to show for themselves-neither intelligence nor middos, nor even a pleasant face . Now, why would anyone want to proclaim such a situation publicly?

But in fact that is not the true situation. In fact, every individual girl has her own innate inner qualities, and once she understands this, the test of dressing in a modest manner will become easier.

In a sicha to women, the Rebbe once explained that the main component of tznius is quiet and modest behavior at home. Appropriate conduct outside the home then flows from this as a matter of course.

Gut Shabbos and love to all!

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 May 2023 · Shabbos 13 May 2023 · כ"ב אייר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Claude on his birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Claude with much nachas from your children and grand children!

Mazal Tov to Dov Ber Kehaty on his birthday this coming week. Wishing you a year of much growth and happiness Dov Ber and to give your parents much nachas!

I saw a beautiful video clip this week which I would like to share (see attached below), and it also had a link to Lag Baomer which we just celebrated, and to this week's Parsha Behar/ Bechukosai.

On the Lag Baomer of 1967, at that public parade, (and it is recorded), the Rebbe spoke, and prophesised with complete confidence, a great victory for Israel in the upcoming 6-day war, using the verses in our Sedra of this week, 26:6 to 26:9. Ie "I will grant you peace in the land... You will go to sleep with nothing frightening you...You will pursue your enemies and they will fall before you....

And in todays Torah reading V 26:13 he pointed to the word KOMMIMIUT - UPRIGHT AND WITH PRIDE.

For the older members of our group, I am sure you will remember the fear that gripped our whole Nation just before the war!

Lag Baomer is a time of JEWISH PRIDE, where we openly display this in public, with the many world-wide Public Parades.

This attitude takes much COURAGE.

And the attached video story which I came across this week, very much reflected this heart warming, indestructible spirit of our People

Enjoy this beautiful 10 min story of Rivka Ravitz!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOyGuavJxks

Gut Shabbos to all

Behar ↑ Behar · Contents · By date בהר

WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 May 2024 · Shabbos 25 May 2024 · י״ז אייר תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alon Topol, who had his Barmitzvah this week. Alon is the son of Kerry Lee and Roy, and the grandson of Froma. We saw videos of his excellent layening from the Torah and beautiful voice doing Havdallah. We wish you a wonderful and successful future Alon, with keeping of Torah and Mitzvos. And to give much nachas to your Family

Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday tonight. Wishing you a great year with much new development in both gashmius and ruchnius Mendel, with harchavah, nachas from the children, and much joy.

Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick whose birthday is next week. Aaron is married to Sara (Davidoff). Haven't seen you for a long while Aaron. Wishing you and your Family a great year! Hope all is well.

I heard a very nice Dvar Torah today linked to the work we do on our Emotional Attributes during Sefirat HaOmer, the current world situation that Klal Yisrael is facing, and Lag Baomer which comes up this week.

Mashiach Day by Day 15th Iyar (today):

We are told by the Prophets that there will be a great war at the beginning of the Messianic age, known as the WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG.

The numerical value of Gog and Magog is 70.

This hints that all the 70 Nations of the world will gather together for this war against Israel.

In previous times the Jewish People alternated between being redeemed from one Nation, and then being oppressed by another.

But after the war of Gog and Magog, the Jewish People will be redeemed from all 70 Nations simultaneously by Hashem!

The war of the 70 Nations represents the process of refining our 7 Emotional Attributes.

Every individual has the ability to transform his or her Emotional Attributes.

And because we do not live in a vacuum, every individual has the ability to refine the 70 Nations within himself, thereby liberating the entire world at the same time.

Lag BaOmer

Lag BaOmer and Rebi Shimon Bar Yochai are always connected to the week when we are refining the attribute of HOD in Sefiras HaOmer.

And on Lag Baomer it is HOD in HOD (ie much intensified)

HOD means HUMILITY and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT derived from the Hebrew word HODAAH, meaning GRATEFULLNESS TO HASHEM. (thanking Hashem)

This Attribute recognizes our qualities and strengths, but it also acknowledges that these were given to us by G-d, to be used for a higher purpose, and through this, to transcend our ego natures.

Wishing a Gut Shabbos to all, and much celebration on Lag BaOmer!

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 May 2025 · Shabbos 24 May 2025 · כ"ו אייר תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick whose birthday is this coming week. I hope that you and your Family are doing well Aaron, and wishing you a wonderful year with much success and happiness!

I saw an interesting Dvar Torah from Rabbi YY Jacobson from this week's Sedra, Behar.

One of the points of discussion in the Sedra is about the sale of land in Eretz Yisrael.

If a home in a city without a wall, is sold, it has to be returned to the seller in the Jubillee Year (the 50th year of each cycle).

If the home is in a walled city, it can stay in the possession of the purchaser eternally.

This latter point is mentioned in V 25:30, but it has a rare expression used. The term used for a city without a wall is 'lo choma', the lo being spelt with an aleph

But then we are instructed to read it as lo choma spelt with a vav, and this means that it does have a wall! Ie the 2 lo's contradict each other!?

The explanation is as follows:

With an unwalled city, the returning of land in the Jubillee is a reminder that nothing that we own is eternal. We are merely borrowing from Hashem

With walled cities, it seems like we can get eternal possession, and this is the general illusion of society. We believe that what we are doing is going to last forever.

But over time it can be seen that houses, buildings, businesses, empires etc which were all held as indestructible, all came crumbling down.

When Yehoshua brought our Jewish Nation to Eretz Yisrael, he halachically endowed the Land with holiness.

He introduced the "walls" of Mosheh, the "walls" of Torah, the "walls" of Faith.

These walls appear at best very fragile, and at worst, non existent, ie spelled and written as lo with an aleph.

But if we search , we will discover that these walls defy time and history, they transcend all chaos and crisis, and are eternal. They are engraved with the eternal vav of lo...ie it is a city with walls which provide real eternality.

When Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai was given the option to preserve one part of Israel from the Romans, he did not choose Jerusalem, and not even the Temple. He chose the Yeshivah in Yavneh.

Because the only indestructible walls are those of Spirituality, those of Torah.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Behar, Bechukosai ↑ Behar, Bechukosai · Contents · By date בהר - בחוקותי

HUMILITY AND GREATNESS

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 May 2026 · Shabbos 9 May 2026 · כ"ב אייר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Refuah shlemah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Claude!

Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel and Family on the opsherin of their son Shlomo Zalman on Lag Baomer. It is so good to get good news from all members of the Family. I would also like to mention that Adam has created a shul in the area where he lives in Cleveland, which BH is seeing a beautiful growth and development. Kol hakavod Adam, and mazal tov to Jody and Roy, and all the connected Family!

Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you a wonderful happy year Dovber. You should continue to give your parents and all of us, much nachas!

This week, I saw a point in the Sedra Behar, and a point in Hayom Yom, plus a story which illustrated both these points, which I would like to share.

Behar V 25:38

In this verse Rashi points out that it is forbidden to leave Eretz Yisrael once one lives there in a permanent way.

But the halachah does allow one to leave for 2 main reasons ie If one has the opportunity to learn a higher level of Torah Study. Or for marriage.

Hayom Yom 19th Iyar

Chassidus is a G-dly understanding – a perspective that shows a person how small his station is, and, simultaneously, how much greatness he can achieve.

Story (Sefer Hamaamorim Kuntreisim Vol 1)

One of the Alter Rebbe's Chasidim R. Elazar, had left his home in Yerushalayim and had overcome severe obstacles in order to make the arduous journey to Russia so that he could study under the Alter Rebbe in Liadi.

The Chasidim in Liadi once asked him, "In Yerushalayim you spent your entire day in prayer and study, and here too you spend your entire day in prayer and study. Why did you need to uproot yourself and make such a drastic move?"

R. Elazar replied, "The answer to your question revolves around two questions and one answer:

· Before I studied Chassidus, I would ask myself, "How could G-d possibly grant me sufficient reward for all my diligence in prayer and Torah study? And I would answer that G-d is a *Kol Yachol *- he is capable of anything - even giving me the rich reward that I deserve!"

· After I began studying Chassidus and recognised how lowly and materialistic I really was, I would ask myself, "How can G-d possibly allow such a coarse and unrefined person to study his Torah? How can he bear hearing my self-centred prayers?" And I would give myself the same answer, " G-d is a *Kol Yachol -* he is capable of anything - even listening to my prayers and Torah study."

· And the transition from asking the first question to asking the second, was worth the long and difficult journey from Yerushalayim to Russia!

Gut Shabbos to all

בחוקותי

Bechukosai

Vayikra 26:3 · parsha 10 of 10 in Vayikra · 33 of 54 in the Torah
4 letters

2016 / 5776 — UNDERSTANDING THAT WHICH CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD 825
2019 / 5779 — LEARNING FROM CHILDREN 828
2022 / 5782 — HARD WORK 830
2024 / 5784 — THE LEVIATHAN 832

2017: read together with Behar, see PROMISING

2018: read together with Behar, see CHAYENU

2020: read together with Behar, see STRENGTH OF HUMILITY

2021: read together with Behar, see PLEADING

2023: read together with Behar, see COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY

2025: read together with Behar, see THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM

2026: read together with Behar, see HUMILITY AND GREATNESS

Bechukosai ↑ Bechukosai · Contents · By date בחוקותי

UNDERSTANDING THAT WHICH CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 June 2016 · Shabbos 4 Jun 2016 · כ״ז אייר תשע״ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

The Mazal Tovs this week are all in Sharon.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary today!

And to Sara, whose birthday is also today! Mazal Tov.

Wishing you all many simchos, especially one wedding should lead quickly to the next.

It was interesting that we finished Sefer Avodah of Rambam yesterday (Book 8), and in the very last halacha, the Rambam speaks extensively about CHUKIM in comparison to another area of Mitzvos called Mishpatim.

And this week's Sedra is also BECHUKOSAI

And one of the days in Hayom Yom this week also spoke about CHUKIM.

Rambam

Chukim are commandments Hashem gave us which we cannot UNDERSTAND.

Mishpatim are those mitzvoth where everyone can understand, and see their benefit for themselves, and for the world eg

1. Not to kill

2. Not to rob

3. Honouring ones father and mother etc

Most of Sefer Avoda deals with Sacrifices, and the Rambam says in the last halacha, that all the Sacrifices are in the category of CHUKIM (which we cannot understand)

'It is appropriate for a person to meditate on the judgements of The Holy Torah, and know their ultimate purpose.

If he cannot find a reason or motivating rationale for a practice, he should not regard it lightly.....

A person should not treat them (these mitzvoth) derisively because he does not understand their rationale...and the nations of the world also challenge them.

Which prompted Dovid Hamelech to say 'Wilful transgressors have stacked falsehood against me, but I guard Your precepts with a full heart'.....

And as it is said ' you shall heed My CHUKIM and MISHPATIM which a person performs, and live through them.'

Sedra and Hayom Yom

The Sedra starts 'Im bechokosai telechu', and the Rebbe points out a different angle to this by explaining the Sages interpretation of Im.

Im normally means 'if', but it can also mean 'if only'

In other words Hashem is pleading with us (as it were) to keep His Torah.

And moreover through this, the soul becomes a mehaleich ie it progresses, (from the word 'teleichu' - advances or walks.

So it should be possible to understand the value of keeping mitzvoth which we do not understand fully.

And it is their irrationality which gives us the greatest opportunity to advance.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

This weeks Rambam (5 minutes per week) was the last 4 Perakim in Sefer Avoda (Hilchos Meila) and the first 3 Perakim in Sefer Korbanos (Hilchos Korban Pesach)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zFsu7TC1IXA57FKtBGM5CJ0aAJZOJdvw-b8IdU8dD 89c/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lYiYbJRR8ZYU3FEzbBJdZq9soOXZeYGi6c-QCok2e s94/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Bechukosai ↑ Bechukosai · Contents · By date בחוקותי

LEARNING FROM CHILDREN

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 31 May 2019 · Shabbos 1 Jun 2019 · כ"ז אייר תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Freida and Mendel on the birth of a beautiful boy. We are so fortunate to be with you at this very special time, and be accommodated in your new flat BH. Wishing you many more simchos! Mazal tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on your anniversary next week. Wishing you much continued happiness together. And another Mazal Tov from the Family in Sharon - Happy birthday Sarah for your birthday on the same day as your parents anniversary. Wishing you (and Aaron) a great year. I know that it was mentioned last week about Dani's graduation, for which we extend a big Mazal Tov, but I also heard that she won an award for creating on campus environmental control (she obtained an Environment Science major) Mazal Tov Dani, and also for all your efforts in Judaism!

BH we have had a number of CHILDREN born in the Family, in the last few weeks, and a barmitzvah and an opsherin, and I heard an intersting dvar Torah at the barmitzvah last week. This was based on a mishneh in Pirkei Avot of last week: 'Elisha ben Avuyeh said: When a child learns Torah, to what is this compared? Like ink on a new and fresh paper. And when an older person learns Torah, to what is this compared? Like ink written on a used paper.'

To this The Rebbe poses a question: Why was it necessary for the Mishneh to add the second part about older people? Is this not going to discourage older people from studying Torah. It could have been left out, and just give over the message about the beauty of children learning Torah?

The answer given, was that even though we adults have 'duller' heads due to our super-imposed views and ideas which interferes with our learning, WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO LEARN FROM THE CHILDREN, AND RE-INTRODUCE THIS PURITY INTO OUR LIVES. THIS IS ACHIEVED BY BEING *BITUL *(puting aside our egos) AND OPENING UP TO HASHEMS TORAH, AND ABSORBING IT IN A WAY OF PURITY, LIKE A CHILD. Far from discouraging us, the Mishneh is teaching us how to get past our obstacles in learning.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and success with the education of children (and our own self-development in the process)

Bechukosai ↑ Bechukosai · Contents · By date בחוקותי

HARD WORK

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 May 2022 · Shabbos 28 May 2022 · כ"ז אייר תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

All indicators are pointing to Reuven and Chana Lieba's Family in Boston this coming week, and many interesting connected Torah teachings from the week BH.

So I would like to share this.

First of all we would like to thank Reuven and Chana Lieba for hosting us for Daniela and Ariel's wedding, and being with you and the rest of your Family. This and the wedding etc was so comfortable and enjoyable, and we bring back many happy memories BH

And now BEH it will be Perry and Mikayla's wedding this Sunday. It should be beshaah tovah umatzlachas - at a good and auspicious time. Mazal Tov! And wishing the choson and kalah to build an everlasting home together with much joy and love, and a wonderful wedding celebration BEH

Then there is Reuven and Chana Lieba's Anniversary next week. Mazal Tov!

And on the same day Sara's birthday. Mazal Tov!

And what came to light more clearly while we were in Boston, was the tremendous honour which Reuven received from the hospital where he works. - See attached. I only saw this for the first time.

Mazal Tov Reuven for such a huge achievement which has come about from HARD WORK AND DEDICATION!

And this links to the Dvar Torah that I would like to share.

Since Pesach we learn one chapter of Pirkei Avot every week, and I saw a beautiful vort from the Rebbe on Chap 2 Mishna 16:

It says, "He used to say: It is not your obligation to complete the WORK, but neither are you free to desist from it.

If you have studied much Torah, they will give you much reward. And your Employer is trustworthy to pay you the reward for your labour....."

Yalkut Shimoni 863 brings a parable: "A king once asked his servant to hire workers to fill an infinitely deep pit.

The foolish workers looked into the pit and said "how will I be able to fill this?"

The wise worker said " I am a day worker. I am happy to have found work"

Ultimately we are day workers (Eruvin 65a) as the Tzemach Tzedek explained "It is our job to illuminate..... And if necessary, when we stretch out our arm, Hashem is capable of stretching our arm even further hundreds of cubits.." (Igrot Kodesh vol 22)

When Batya, the daughter of Pharoah saw a child floating in a basket on the Nile, even though the basket was too far away for her to reach, she still stretched out her arm to try.

Miraculously her arm stretched out many more feet and she reached it (Rashi Exodus 2:5)

Similarly we must do our part, even if chances for success seem bleak, ultimately Hashem stretches our "arms" ten fold and helps our efforts to bear fruit (R Mendel of Kotzk)

This theme also came up in our Sedra Bechukosei, and in today's Hayom Yom.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and much success in both material and spiritual work!

Bechukosai ↑ Bechukosai · Contents · By date בחוקותי

THE LEVIATHAN

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 May 2024 · Shabbos 1 Jun 2024 · כ"ד אייר תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his birthday tonight. Wishing you to keep growing in the beautiful way that you have been doing, Dovber, and continue to give your parents much nachas BEH

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the wedding of his sister Sima this week. The couple should build a binyan adei ad together, and wishing you and all the Family many more simchos BEH. Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba whose Anniversary is on Sunday. Wishing you both many more happy years together, in good health, and much joy from your children and grandchildren.

And on the same day , it is also Sara's birthday. (Glick ne Davidoff). Mazal Tov Sara, and wishing you, Aaron and Family a wonderful year together.

This week's Sedra is Bechukosai, where we learn about the great rewards that we receive for keeping Torah and Mitzvos (Im bechukosei telechu. If you will walk in my Statutes .26:3-4.)

And in relation to this I saw a beautiful Dvar Torah from Mashiach Day by Day, (21st Iyar), on how we can improve the quality of our observance:

"The Midrash tells us about the LEVIATHAN and the SHOR HABOR, a COLOSSAL FISH and a GIGANTIC OX, which represent two great forces of Holiness.

Hashem will have them joust with each other in front of the righteous, when Mashiach comes.

The mighty Leviathan cruises effortlessly through the water with a single flap of its fins.

So too a Master of the inner Teachings of Torah, traverses the entire Spiritual cosmos with a single thought. When he views something in this world he immediately traces it back to its G-dly source. He senses deep significance in every detail of Creation and in every letter of the Torah...

By seeing the G-dly source of the Commandments, Torah and Mitzvos, we will perform them with greater inspiration and understanding."

Gut Shabbos to all!

במדבר

Bamidbar

Bamidbar · Nasso · Beha'aloscha · Shelach · Korach · Chukas · Balak · Pinchas · Mattos · Masei

במדבר

Bamidbar

Bamidbar 1:1 · parsha 1 of 10 in Bamidbar · 34 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — STRENGTHENING INTELLECT 836
2017 / 5777 — THE EARTH TREMBLED 838
2018 / 5778 — TRIPLE PREPARATION 840
2019 / 5779 — AMAZING TORAH AND TEHILLIM 842
2020 / 5780 — EXCUSES? 845
2021 / 5781 — HIDDEN POWER 847
2022 / 5782 — RENEWED COMMITTMENT 850
2023 / 5783 — REDEEMING OURSELVES 853
2024 / 5784 — PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS 856
2025 / 5785 — THE BURNING CANDLE 859
2026 / 5786 — THE BOUNDARY THAT SET ME FREE 862

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

STRENGTHENING INTELLECT

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 9 June 2016 · Shabbos 11 Jun 2016 · ה' סיון תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming birthday next week.

And on the same day is the Yohrtzeit of Meme. We wish Mommy long life.

It is coming up Shavuos straight after Shabbos, and in relation to this there were 2 vort that I heard which had an affect on me this week.

They were both in relation to EXERTING ONES INTELLECT IN THE LEARNING OF TORAH.

I apologise but I cannot remember their sources.

The first one was that Torah is the Truth, and it is constant and unchanging.

When we apply ourselves to delve deep into it and understand and work hard with it, unbeknown to us, our being rises above the world, and this protects us from worldly damages.

The second was based on the blessing people give each other on Shavuos that we should be 'Mekabel es Ha Torah besimcha uvepnimius'.- That we should receive the Torah with joy and inwardness.'

I heard it explained what means bepnimius ie when someone has an area of Torah which they had been learning that day, and he could not understand it, if he was a pnimi, he would not be able to fall asleep that night trying to work it out. (in the same way as a businessman would not be able to sleep if there was some problem in HIS OWN BUSINESS!)

These stories did make me realise to try and learn more carefully. Still a long way to go though!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov, and we should be mekabel es HaTorah besimcha uvepnimius.

Rambam 5 Minutes Per Week.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lYiYbJRR8ZYU3FEzbBJdZq9soOXZeYGi6c-QCok2e s94/edit CHAPTERS 3-10 on p4 - HILCHOS KORBAN PESACH

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

THE EARTH TREMBLED

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 May 2017 · Shabbos 27 May 2017 · ב' סיון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

2 Mazal Tovs in Sharon next week.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary. You should have many happy years together, and we look forward to seeing you in London soon. Please confirm your arrangements.

And on the same day, Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday. Have a happy year Sara.

Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli in Sydney on moving into your own new home. This is such nice news! It should be meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazel for good! Wishing you much hatzlocha in both gashmiyus and ruchnius.

Shavuos is coming up next week, and besides the Giving of Torah, there is also a connection on Shavuos to DAVID HAMELECH and the BAAL SHEM TOV.

And so I would like to focus on a pasuk in the Tehillim (of David Hamelech) related to my age, as we are supposed to say our own personal Chap of Tehillim every day. Ie if one is 67 it means we are in our 68th year and we say Chap 68.

And so in my kapitel (68), some of the verses are speaking about matan Torah. Ie 'THE EARTH TREMBLED, the sky rained because of G-d.'

(The Ibn Ezra says that this occurred at Sinai before the Torah was given. Ie thunder, lightning, thick cloud and a very powerful blast of a Shofar.)

In a sicha of the Rebbe (and Chassidus was revealed initially by the BAAL SHEM TOV) he asks the following question - If all the above effects were to cause a dread to the People surely this was unnecessary, because nothing could have been as frightening as the Voice of G-d Himself, which followed, at the time of the Giving of Torah?!

The Rebbe explains that it has always been and it will always be that Hashem is in the upper realms and is associated with dread.

But with matan orah, a major change occurred in the world ie the Divine would now penetrate and influence the physical, at a conscious level, in addition, whereby we could now relate directly with Hashem through the physical (mitzvos)

And so 'The earth trembled', was not a preparation, or even an incidental detail.

IT WAS THE PURPOSE OF MATAN TORAH - ITS VERY GOAL.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov, and we should receive the Torah once again with joy and inwardness.

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

TRIPLE PREPARATION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 17 May 2018 · Shabbos 19 May 2018 · ה' סיון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and looking forward to Shavuos.

It is known that Shavuos:

1. Was on the THIRD day (Tuesday)
2. Of the THIRD month (Sivan)
3. When the Torah of THREE was given (Torah, Neviim and Kesuvim)
4. To the Nation of THREE (Kohanim, Leviim and Yisroelim)
5. To Moshe who was the THIRD (child in his Family)

In preparation for Shavuos I am attaching some short videos, the first one being of The Rebbe explaining the THREE aspects of what Klal Yisrael (we) accepted upon ourselves by Har Sinai - 'Naaseh Venishma' - 'We will do, and (then) understand'

And The Rebbe explains how FAITH comes first.

I have also attached another light video about Shavuos.

And isn't it interesting, that this year is the 3330th Anniversary since the original Matan Torah in the year 2448 (we are now 5778)!!!

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos and Shavuos, when we should again accept our Torah with Joy and Inwardness.

<https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/livingtorah/player_cdo/aid/4020988/jewish/Faith-Comes-First.htm> https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/livingtorah/player_cdo/aid/4020988/jewish/Faith-Comes-First.htm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3AcZdMAMRQ> Shavuot - Beautiful video for Shavuot

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

AMAZING TORAH AND TEHILLIM

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 June 2019 · Shabbos 8 Jun 2019 · ה' סיון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Bris and naming of their son Dovber. This was a beautiful crowning of our trip to California BH. Wishing you much nachas from him, with joy and continued growth together.

Shavuos is coming up next week on Motzei Shabbos BEH.

Shavuos is the time when we received the TORAH from Hashem, and it is also the time of the yohrtzeit of Dovid Hamelech, who wrote the Book of Psalms (TEHILLIM)

In a Maamer said by the Rebbe Parshas Shemini 5699, the Rebbe explains how our Sages saw an amazing deep connection between Torah and Tehillim, besides the obvious connection that they are both comprised of 5 Books.

And just as an introduction, the Tzemach Tzedek said ' If we only knew the power of the verses of Tehillim, we would recite them constantly. They shatter all barriers, and ascend higher and still higher with no interference, and prostrate themselves in supplication before the Master of all worlds, and they effect and accomplish with kindness and compassion.'

If you remember a few weeks ago (Parshas Shemini), we discussed THE MIDDLE LETTER OF TORAH, which was the vav of gachon, and this letter was written in larger than normal size. We did not explain much about its meaning then.

Gachon means the belly of the snake, and the parsha was describing the non-kosher creatures which crawl on their bellys.

The Maharshah explains that this is referring to the snake which seduced Adam and Chava to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, and that the antidote to the seduction of the snake, is by applying oneself to the STUDY OF TORAH.

The challenge of the snake is the inability to navigate between right and wrong, and Torah strengthens our ability to do this.

And why the VAV?

The shape of the VAV represents a line drawing down from ABOVE, DOWNWARDS.

The Torah was given from upon High, in order to have a positive impact on this lowly world

Similarly the MIDDLE LETTER OF THE BOOK OF TEHILLIM has been marked.

If you look in Chapter 80 posuk 14, you will see the letter ayin of the word miyaar, is smaller than normal, and is higher than the baseline.

This is the middle letter of the Book of Tehillim.

Miyaar means the forest , and the verse is referring to the 'swine of the forest.'

The explanation for this is that swine is referring to Esav.

This is because the pig has split hooves but doesn't chew the cud, and is therefore not kosher. But what does it do? It shows its hooves and pretends to be kosher. This is how Esav acted with his father, pretending he was very pious.

And so Tehillim comes as an antidote to the schemes of Esav, because Tehillim strengthens our emotional disposition to Torah and Mitzvos.

Tehillim is a form of prayer through which we humans down BELOW, REACH UPWARDS, and that is why the key letter here, the ayin, is written above the line.

In prayer we reach up to Hashem himself, who is higher than Torah.

The challenge of the snake is the inability to navigate ones life between right and wrong.

The challenge of Esav is the apathy to matters of Holiness

Torah and Tehillim are the antidotes.

Gut Shabbos and Gut yom Tov to all, with the well known blessing to 'To receive the Torah with Joy and Inwardness.'

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

EXCUSES?

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 21 May 2020 · Shabbos 23 May 2020 · כ"ט אייר תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope you are all well.

Mazal Tov to Chanie for the birth of a nephew in Eretz Yisrael. Wishing you many simchos!

We are coming up to Shavuos next week BEH, which is the time of the receiving our Torah.

In last week's Pirkei Avot, chapter 5: mishneh 6, it speaks about 4 types of learning ability:

- One who is quick to understand but quick to forget, he will remain with nothing (keep trying)
- One who is slow to understand but slow to forget, will eventually have much knowledge.
- One who is quick to understand and slow to forget, has received a good portion from Hashem. (keep remembering that this is really from Hashem)
- One who is slow to understand and quick to forget, has received a 'not good' portion from Hashem. (keep trying)

A student once explained to R' Yechezkel Levinstein, that because he simply could not learn, he would be exempt from learning (it is a Mitzvah to learn Torah).

R' Yechezkel answered 'There are 2 types of people who don't learn - those who have an excuse and those who do not.

It would seem that you fall into the first group, and therefore you will not be punished for not learning.

In truth however, you are the one losing out by making excuses, because at the end of the day, you will remain ignorant.'

Thank you Batsheva for keeping up our weekly learning of Pirkei Avot on Shabbos afternoon!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov, and to receive the Torah with Joy and Inwardness.

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

HIDDEN POWER

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yomtov · sent Thursday, 13 May 2021 · Shabbos 15 May 2021 · ד' סיון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

On Sunday night we celebrate Shavuot BEH, the time when we received the Torah, and I would like to share some items which came up this week which were connected.

This weeks Tanya gives us a glimpse of the HIDDEN POWER OF TORAH (Chap 52)

And this can be further understood from David HaMelech, whose birth and yohrtzeit are both on Shavuot, in Psalm 8 which I noticed this week.

The Baal Shem Tov's yohrtzeit is also on Shavuot and his Teachings and those of the Alte Rebbe, (author of Tanya above) are integrally related.

Tanya

The flow of life and vitality and light into the various worlds, and the manifestation of this light is through the Shechinah

The Hebrew word Shechinah has connotations of dwelling, queen, and mother. Like a mother which is a source, and the queen illuminating the world and revealing the wishes of the king, and allowing this source of light to dwell in the world.

From this source, there extends to each world, individual or creature the particular light and vitality suitable for it.

But the light of the Shechinah is too powerful, and the worlds etc would not be able to endure or receive this light without a protective garment to 'screen' and conceal the light. (An analogy given is a ray of light which becomes nullified and non existent in the body of the sun)

And the question is then, what kind of garment can shield the worlds to prevent them from becoming nullified in the light of the Shechina?! Why does the garment itself not become nullified?

THIS GARMENT IS TORAH AND MITZVOT which originates from a higher source than the Shechinah, from the Supernal wisdom (Chochmah Illaah of the world of Atzilut) where He and His Wisdom are one.

This wisdom descends down through the various worlds from level to level, until it has clothed itself in material objects, namely the 613 commandments of the Torah

And as this Wisdom came down from level to level, so too did the Shechinah, and she clothed herself in each world where she dwelled.

(And we therefore, through Torah, have access to these very high levels of Wisdom and Light, through mundane activities down on earth, the lowest of worlds!

Ashreinu, mah tov chelkenu - How happy are we, and how fortunate is our portion!)

Tehillim - Psalms

Dovid Hamelech expresses these sentiments in V2 and V5 in Psalm 8, and the Talmud explains them as follows:

"When Moshe Rabeinu ascended Mount Sinai, the angels said to Hashem, 'Master of the Universe, what is someone born of a woman doing amongst us?'

Hashem answered, 'He has come to receive the Torah.'

They then said, 'This coveted treasure, which has been hidden with You before the creation of the world, how could you give it to a man of flesh and blood?' V5 in the Psalm says 'What is man that you remember him, and a person that you consider him?'

And V2 in the Psalm (the Angels speaking) 'G-d our Master, how glorious is Your Name in all the earth, that Your Majesty is spoken about in the heavens!'..... etc

The introduction to the Psalm explains that the Angels are jealous of our opportunity here on earth!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov, and we should receive the Torah anew with joy and inward permeation.

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

RENEWED COMMITTMENT

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 2 June 2022 · Shabbos 4 Jun 2022 · ה' סיון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and getting ready for Shavuos.

I would like to welcome two new Family members to our Family email ie Mikayla (ne Koval) Davidoff now married to Perry BH, and her father Mark Koval. We heard that the wedding was a beautiful! Mazal Tov again, and so happy to have you both join with us! I will try and arrange a diagram of the members of our email group some time, as an introduction BN.

Mazal Tov to Dov Ber who is having his opsherin next week after Shavuos. We cant wait to see you as a little man Dovber. You should give your Mommy and Daddy much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam whose birthday is at the end of next week. Wishing you a year of continued growth and development towards being a beautiful eidelah meidelah, with much happiness!

And on the same day is the yohrtzeit of Meme, who Esher is named after. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. And wishing long life to Mommy.

Shavuos is coming up on Sunday and is closely linked to 3 great Tzadikim in our history - Mosheh Rabeinu, the Baal Shem Tov, and Dovid HaMelech.

Mosheh Rabeinu received the Torah on Shavuot, and Shavuos is also the yohrtzeits of both Dovid HaMelech and the Baal Shem Tov (the founder of the Chassidic Movement)

The Frierdike Rebbe encouraged us to have a daily learning program of Chumash, Tanya and Tehillim (acronym ChiTaT), and we can see how this also reflects on Shavuos.

Chumash is directly connected to Mosheh Rabeinu, Tanya was authored by the Alte Rebbe representing the Chassidic teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, and Tehillim was authored by Dovid HaMelech.

Each of these books are divided into daily portions for the whole year.

And we are not going to forget about the cheese cakes!

So I thought that it would be nice to present a small element of each of these areas.

Chumash (Mosheh Rabeinu)

This week's Sedra is Bamidbar is always read before Shavuos in the calendar.

One of the lessons from this is that, it is not the case that Torah can 'also' reach those who are found in a spiritual wasteland.

On the contrary, this is a central theme of thegiving of the Torah - to transformevery spiritual desert into a civilised environment (Sicha of the Rebbe Bamidbar 5732 and 5734)

Baal Shem Tov

I saw this week from Keser Shem Tov par 89: Summarized

If by Divine Providence you see or hear something evil about your fellow, you should understand that you must also have a fault, however slight, that in some way resembles what you saw or heard about your fellow.

You should work to correct that subtle failing within yourself..even to a remote degree - which is incredibly difficult.....

Therefore when the sinful Jew serves as the impetus for your self improvement, that Jew is dragged out of his sinful state, as you spiritually elevate yourself...because all Jews combine to form a single entity.

Tehillim - Dovid Hamelech

We do not need to understand Tehillim

The Tzemach Tzedek said that if you only knew the power of the verses of Tehillim and their effect in the highest Heavens, you would recite them constantly.

Know that the chapters of Tehillim shatter all barriers.

They ascend higher and still higher with no interference.

They prostrate themselves in supplication before the Master of all worlds.

And they effect and accomplish with kindness and compassion. (Hayom Yom 22:24)

Cheese cake - Chana's Kitchen

This week I would like to feature 'Chana's Kitchen' which has become a big feature at Beis Chana, where her products are popular with the ladies activities there.

They are amazing, and each item is produced with tremendous care and individuality! See attached

Wishing you much success Channa!!

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov and to receive the Torah once again afresh with joy and inwardness.

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

REDEEMING OURSELVES

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 May 2023 · Shabbos 20 May 2023 · כ"ט אייר תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We are now approaching Shavuot, where we celebrate the Giving of Torah, which will be next Thursday night BEH.

At the Giving of Torah, every Jew became a SERVANT to Hashem forever (Maharal), and as it says in Vayikra 25:55 "For the Children of Israel are servants to me.....whom I took out of the land of Egypt.."

I found it interesting this week, that the concept of REDEEMING ONESELF came up in a few places, and I would like to share 2 of these:

Sedra

In a sicha in Vol 17 Likutei Sichos from Behar, the Rebbe discusses the verse where a Jew gets to a low point in his life, and needs to sell himself as a SERVANT TO A GENTILE.

And the verse then states (Vayikra25:48,49) "...One of his brothers shall redeem him. Or his uncle or his cousin, or a family relative ..Or if he obtains the means HE SHALL REDEEM HIMSELF."

There are some glaring questions:

- With the various options of how he should have been redeemed, surely the first option should be for him to try and redeem himself?
- And where is the father in the options?

Rashi points out that this section is speaking about spiritual decline, to the point where the Jew sells himself to be a servant to a Gentile, and even helps him look after his 'idols'.

How could he fall so low? It starts when he separates and forgets about his Father in Heaven (that is why father is missing from the options)

However the Jew has only fallen into a state of spiritual sleep, and Rashi indicates that it would be entirely impossible for him to actually get to the point of worshipping the idols of the Gentile. Because when his faith is tested, his soul will awake from its sleep.

But a prisoner cannot free himself from prison easily, and therefore help is needed from others initially.

However, ultimately it is only the person himself, who can reveal his inner self, THAT HE IS A SERVANT OF HASHEM FOREVER. (that is why he is put as the last option in the verse)

Rambam

This week we have been learning the Rambam's laws of Personality Development (Hilchot Deot)

He explains how each person has certain character traits, but one does not have to be imprisoned by these. If one wants to improve undesirable traits, one has to practice going to the opposite extreme, aiming to reach a middle path between these extremes. Or even going beyond the middle.

Repeated performance will make these good temperaments a fixed part of one's personality.

And also Rambam states later in the Laws of Teshuvah, (Chap 5) that we are unique in Creation, in that we have free choice to fully control our destiny.

Our actions are in our own hands, and we are fully free to go in any direction that we choose, bearing the consequences.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a recommitment to Torah on Shavuot.

PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh, Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 7 June 2024 · Shabbos 8 Jun 2024 · ב' סיון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Meyer and Malky on the engagement of Esther. This is amazing news BH! Wishing the marriage to take place beshaah tova umatzlachas (at a good time) with much celebration! (Meyer is my brother in law, and Rahel's brother)

This week I learned a short Maamer of the Rebbe from 1989, about PREPARATION FOR SHAVUOT which I would like try and summarize and share.

The Ten Commandments given at Sinai on Shavuot starts "Anochi Hashem Elokechah ..who took you out of Egypt....

The I of Anochi expresses the Essence of Hashem at a very high level, which is appropriate for the Giving of Torah.

But why "Who took you out of Egypt." Surely it would have been more appropriate to link the Giving of Torah to the "Creation of the World"?

To strengthen the argument, it is known from the Inner Teachings of Torah that the Creation of the World is from nothing to something, from the power of the very Essence of Hashem, and is renewing itself every moment of every day.

In the same way Torah which was given from the Essence of Hashem is also an ongoing process. (The verse speaks about the Giving of Torah in the

present tense) As our Sages have taught that Torah should be to us as new, every day.

The taking us out of Egypt does not match up to these all- powerful powers of Creation. So why is it given such importance?

In short, the answer to this question is that Torah was given to Yisrael. The purpose of Torah is for people.

We need to go through the difficulties of life (the slavery of Egypt)) and despite difficulties, fulfill Hashems will practically, down here on earth.

Before Matan Torah we were all united together as a Nation as we stood at Har Sinai, and we declared, with submissiveness, WE WILL DO (Hashem's Will) and only afterwards we will TRY TO UNDERSTAND.

The whole world was quiet and in awe.

Therefore the practical preparation we need to do for Shavuot is:

- Express the unity of the Jewish People by going to shul to hear the reading of the 10 Commandments. The word areivim used to describe this unity also has the meaning of sweetness. - a sweet unity.
- Think about, and bring to action "We will do, and then we will try to understand" Torah and Mitzvos
- Relive the awe experienced at the original Giving of Torah, and that each year our understanding of the above concepts should grow and have a new and real continued freshness.
- Make resolutions to increase our learning of both Nigleh (Oral Law) and Chassidus (hidden dimension of Torah)
- In the same way that Moshe handed down and shared Torah, we should share our knowledge with others.
- In the same way that the whole world was affected by the Giving of Torah, we should also strengthen another of the Pillars of the world, which is the giving of Tzedakah (Charity)

- Also linked to Shavuot in addition to Moshe Rabeinu, is David HaMelech (Psalms) and the Baal Shem Tov (hidden Dimension of Torah)

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh, and wishing everyone a meaningful Yom Tov, with the re -acceptance of Torah with Joy

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

THE BURNING CANDLE

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 29 May 2025 · Shabbos 31 May 2025 · ד' סיון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba (Ravin and Annette) on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you many more happy and healthy years together with much nachas from all your children and grandchildren BEH!

Mazal Tov to Sara Glick on her birthday on the same day. Wishing you a very happy year Sara with much continued achievement!

This Sunday night is Shavuos, and we usually give each other Gut Yomtov wishes and add that we should 'Receive the Torah anew with Joy and Inwardness.'

It is interesting that tomorrow we are finishing the first Section of Tanya, which is a central book of Chassidus, the Pnimius or Inwardness of Torah.

So I thought that it would be nice to share (in a very summarised form) the theme of the last 3 chapters of Likutei Amarim Tanya, Chaps 50-53, which is very much explaining the greatness of Torah and its physical application.

And connected, and highly recommended - please try and listen to the interview with Elisheva Martinetti who is staying with us at the moment, together with her family - see link at end of Dvar Torah.

The Shechina represents the channel through which Divine energy flows to the world.

This energy itself is too powerful for the world to bear, and therefore a garment or screen is needed to conceal this light.

This garment is the Torah which issues from the Supernal Wisdom.

As this wisdom came down by progressive descents from World to World, the Shechinah came too, extending a level of light to each World

The Written Law, Gemara, Mishnah, Halachah all derive at these various levels of World.

At the time of the First Temple, the Shechinah dwelled in the Ark with the Tablets containing the Ten Commandments in the Holy of Holies.

In the Second Temple there was a lesser level of Holiness.

Since the Destruction of the Second Temple, The Holy One Blessed Be He has only the 4 cubits of Halachah (Jewish Law) to dwell - a description of the space occupied by a person - (Gemara Brachot p8a)

And even if 1 Jew sits and engages in Torah Study, the Shechinah is with him!

The Shechinah descends into the level of action ie the 613 Mitzvot and the practical halachot.

This is beautifully compared in the Zohar as follows: "The Supernal Light that is kindled on a Jew's head, namely the Shechinah, requires oil, and these are the good deeds, namely the 613 Mitzvot, which derive from His Wisdom. Thereby the light of the Shechinah can cling to the wick, ie the vivifying soul in the body, which is metaphorically called a 'wick'...

This 'fire' needs constant daily feeding with Torah Study and good deeds.

In light of the above explanation, it just becomes so much more obvious to me, the magnitude of Rambam's work, Mishneh Torah, which includes the whole of Torah in practical format.

We can all join in with this learning of either 1 chapter per day over 3 years, or 3 chapters per day over 1 year, or just to learn his work Sefer HaMitzvot. Translations into English are available.

For those who have extra time, we have an interesting family staying with us from Milan. They came to London for the birth of their fourth child. The mother and father are both converts. She is from China, and coincidentally, Chabad.org featured an interview with her this week!

https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/6878531/jewish/A-Chinese-Converts-Global-Odyssey-of-Faith.htm

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov

Wishing all to renew our receiving of Torah this Shavuos, with Joy and Inwardness

Bamidbar ↑ Bamidbar · Contents · By date במדבר

THE BOUNDARY THAT SET ME FREE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 14 May 2026 · Shabbos 16 May 2026 · כ"ט אייר תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

This year marks the 250th year of American Independence.

In honour of this, the American Jewish community has been invited to observe a National Shabbos, this coming Shabbos. (May 15th)

Shabbat 250 marks the first time in American history that a sitting President has invited the Jewish community to observe a dedicated Shabbos.

This coming Shabbos, just before before Shavuos is also called Shabbos Achdus - Shabbos of Unity, a phrase coined by the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

40 years ago (6th June 1986) the Rebbe suggested that this particular Shabbos should become a *global* Shabbat of Unity, in preparation for Shavuos. Ie When Jews of all backgrounds, all over the world, could unite in a spirit of love, in the days preceding Shavuos.

Shavuos, as mentioned by Rashi, is when the Jewish People accepted the Torah "as one man with one heart."

In recognition of this amazing upcoming Shabbos I am attaching a beautiful article that I saw this week by Michal Oshman titled " THE BOUNDARY THAT SET ME FREE"

She has been a CEO for a number of high profile companies and has become well known in the Jewish world, a remarkable personality – Enjoy the read!

Wishing everyone an amazing Shabbos, connected to Jews all over the world, uniting in love, in preparation for the receiving of our Torah on Shavuos

נשא

Nasso

Bamidbar 4:21 · parsha 2 of 10 in Bamidbar · 35 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS 865
2017 / 5777 — ETERNAL BOND - YESHAYEH 867
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION, GRADUATION, ETHICS OF THE FATHERS 869
2019 / 5779 — RAMBAM 872
2020 / 5780 — TIMES OF TURMOIL? 876
2021 / 5781 — HANDS AND BLESSING 878
2022 / 5782 — CONNECTIONS 880
2023 / 5783 — DEVELOPING OUR INTELLECT 882
2024 / 5784 — WHAT WE GIVE BELONGS TO US 884
2025 / 5785 — CHOICE 886
2026 / 5786 — TORAH TEACHER, MENTOR AND FRIEND 888

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 June 2016 · Shabbos 18 Jun 2016 · י"ב סיון תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had a nice Shavuos.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday today.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for their upcoming Anniversary of their engagement at the Ohel

We wish Mommy long life for Meme's Yohrtzeit today.

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos.

Mazal Tov to Chava on graduating from her first year in Seminary. Well done!

I also heard that Rivky and Hirshy got good marks in their exams. BH and well done!

Last week and this week the theme of FORGIVENESS came up a number of times.

There is a very nice weekly publication which I get called Lemaan Yishmeu which featured Forgiveness, and it also came up in this weeks Hayom Yom.

Hayom Yom

'My father (I presume this means the Rebbe Rashab) wrote in a letter - Cherish criticism, for it will place you on the true heights.'

Leman Yishmeu

Rava said: 'If someone is forgiving, all his aveiros are forgiven.'

Rashi explains that since a person is not so particular with the faults of others, Hashem is not so particular with him. - Talmud Rosh Hashana p17.

The Ramak would say that suffering from insult provides the most effective atonement, more than can be attained by all other kinds of Teshuva. If people would realize this, they would even ask others to insult and embarrass them!' - Kol Bochim.

Our Chachamim teach: 'Those who are insulted but do not insult in return, who bear their disgrace but do not retort, who act with love and who rejoice in their own suffering, - concerning them it is written 'Those who love Him shall be as the sun when it comes out in its might.' That is they will merit the revelation of the Shechina.' - Talmud Shabbos p 88.

The Rebbe writes in a letter that the appropriate way to respond to a verbal attack is by acting as if it was not noticed.

And even more, the Rebbe says in another letter, that the one who has been embarrassed should realise that it is he who has caused his friend to do an aveira!! And he should therefore take on additional measures of observance to prevent this happening again! (besides not attacking back)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and to forgive at least one person in our hearts.

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

ETERNAL BOND - YESHAYEH

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 2 June 2017 · Shabbos 3 Jun 2017 · ט' סיון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had a nice Shavuos.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming birthday next week. You should continue giving much nachas to your parents and us BH

We wish Mommy long life for the Yohrtzeit of Meme next week, and a safe trip to Tunisia. Her neshamah should have an aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina for the upcoming pidyan haben for Pesach Yeshayeh. This is a big celebration and our thoughts will be with you.

In fact I was thinking about Yeshayeh this week, when the Prophet Yeshayeh came up in a sicha I was learning on this week's Parsha - Nasso!

And so I was excited to share this with the Family in the upcoming week of his pidyan haben.

The sicha compares the marriage between husband and wife, and the marriage between Hashem and the Jewish People, in discussing the theme of the sotah, which appears in this week's Sedra.

A sotah is a wife who is suspected by her husband as 'having turned aside' from him.

This is one meaning of the root of the word sotah. Another meaning is derived from the Gemara where it connects the meaning to the word shtus - foolishness. Ie a person will only perform a sin, and 'turn aside' when he is overcome by a 'spirit of foolishness'.

It is also interesting that Lubavitch have a minhag to learn Gemorra Sotah between Pesach and Shavuos, because there are 49 pages in this Gemorra and 49 days between Pesach and Shavuos (ie 1 page per day).

The Gemara links the Laws of the sotah to ourselves, in that the sotah had to temporarily separate from her husband.

In the same way when we do sins through a spirit of foolishness, this causes us to be temporarily separated from Hashem. And then the person may despair that Hashem has abandoned him because of his poor behaviour.

However YISHAYEH states that Hashem tells the Jewish People 'With what divorce document have I sent your mother away?' ie Hashem reassures us that no such divorce has occurred , and never will. Ie OUR MARRIAGE TO HASHEM IS ETERNAL.

That is why the Gemara links even our minor acts of foolishness to the sotah, (which is potentially a severe transgression) because even these minor acts which we may think are unimportant, will tend to tear us away from Hashem, and an isha kesheirah - suitable wife - does the will of her husband.

And so the Gemara comes to teach us to remember the pasuk about the sotah, to try and always fulfil the will of Hashem, (even the minor acts), and if a spirit of foolishness overcomes us, not to despair, because our connection to Hashem can never be permanently severed.

And once we overcome our foolishness we will in addition receive Hashem's brochos, just like the sotah received when she was proved to be innocent.

And each of our individual redemptions will serve as a preparation for the greater geulah of Klal Yisrael.

Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov for Yeshayeh

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

EDUCATION, GRADUATION, ETHICS OF THE FATHERS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 May 2018 · Shabbos 26 May 2018 · י"ב סיון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had a wonderful Shavuos.

Wishing Mommy long life for her mother, Meme, whose yohrtzeit is today. We wish Meme's Neshamah to have an aliyah. It is with good memories that we remember her visits to London. I was given an aliyah in shul this morning because of her, and was happy to have had that re- connection.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her 7th birthday, also today! Esther was named after Meme. Wishing you much happiness and growth Esther Miriam, and it is so nice to have you near to us in Stamford Hill!

And another Mazal Tov to the Stamford Hill Davidoffs Shmuly and Devorah Leah, on the anniversary of their engagement this coming week.

And then we have some GRADUATIONS, very much connected with our theme this week.

Mazal Tov Rivky on her Valedictorian graduation ie with distinction! Well done Rivky, especially considering all your other commitments!

Mazal Tov Dovi on his graduation from School this coming week, and heading for Yeshiva next year. I believe this was also with much distinction BH! And you and Daddy are now heading off to a school trip to EYisrael. Mazal Tov Levys!

Every week on Shabbos since Pesach, we have been reading one chapter of Pirkei Avot.

The first 5 chapters are on morals and ethics, and the 6th chapter is about acquiring Torah, and is always read before Shavuos. And it was this Perek that we just read, and I heard a very nice shiur connected to CHINUCH (EDUCATION), based on one of the sayings in this chapter.

The verse was speaking about the 2 Tablets, where the writing was ENGRAVED into and through the stone...'do not read CHARUT (engraved) but CHEIRUT (FREEDOM), because you do not find freedom except through toiling in Torah...' (v2)

In a few conversations that the Rebbe had with some people, without going into details, the Rebbe points out that the goal of Education is for the child (or adult) to emerge INDEPENDENT and free from external and internal coercions, and with sound foundations.

Ie the graduate should emerge with 3 Cs:

1. Clarity
2. Conviction
3. Confidence.

And be able to resist external and internal pressures of the world, with their own strength, which clash with their clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong.

Rabbi Lipskier points out that that the above 3 qualities come about when the educational institution, together with the home, are both pointing in the same direction, ie clarifying what is right and wrong and making it clear for the child which team he belongs to.

To clarify, confusion comes about when there is a split, and the student is getting mixed messages from 2 worlds, the world around him and the world of truth, and trying to live in 2 worlds. Or when the school and home are giving different messages to the student, of which team he belongs to.

And in the process, the home should clarify what is allowed into the home and what is not. What belongs outside should stay there.

And this is what is meant by the verse in Pirkei Avot:

When the principles of what is right and wrong are engraved through and through into our and our children's being, (charut), we will find true freedom (cheirut). This will give us the clarity, conviction and confidence to act with Independence.

And this comes about through our toil and dedication to Torah and the Truth.

Gut Shabbos to all, and success in all areas of Education.

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

RAMBAM

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 June 2019 · Shabbos 15 Jun 2019 · י״ב סיון תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of Meme. We were very fond of Meme who was a gutte neshamah. Her neshamah should have an aliyah Happy birthday to Esther Miriam on her 8th birthday today BH. Have a wonderful year filled with many mitzvos and joy. Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary next week. Your year should be filled with lots of simchos and nachas. Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing an important exam in his Nursing course. Michayil el chayil Hirshy. I was amazed at the medical knowledge that you are amassing BH. And last but not least, hot news from Pesach and Chanie, who have closed on the sale of a beautiful home in Long-beach. This should be with much mazal and brocha for your whole Family BEH. MAZAL TOV.

Shavuos is only 2 days Yom Tov but we are still within the Shavuos zone of Matan Torah until the 12th of Sivan, in 2 days time. So we are very much still in 'high gear' with TORAH STUDY.

And so I thought that I would dedicate this week to one of the TORAH giants of our People, the RAMBAM, (Reb Moshe ben Maimon - Maimonides) who has enscribed at his tombstone in Teveria 'From Mosheh to Mosheh there has not arisen another as Mosheh'. This has especially also been encouraged by Uncle Chanan jumping in 'a bit early' last week advertising my Rambam project I have been working on since 23/12/03, which started out as an innocent sitting down together with Hirshy and Zalmy to learn a chapter a day of Rambam's Mishneh Torah, and that is when I decided to summarise

each chapter in English! (hand written). Ie to explain what he 'blasted' onto our group.

But first, more about Rambam.
I am sure everyone has seen the huge volumes of 5 Books of Moses, Talmud (Babylonian and Jerusalem), Mishnayos, Shulchan Aruchs, books of Commentaries ad infinitum, Customs, Philosophy etc etc. of Judaism Besides the massive volume, Torah is filled with multiple variety of views of different Sages on each subject. So how is one supposed to navigate through this forest in one lifetime, AND KNOW HOW TO CARRY OUT WHAT HASHEM IS EXPECTING US TO DO?! And it is a mitzva upon us to study the entire Torah!

And this was the first brilliant thing that the Rambam did in his Mishneh Torah (he lived 1135 to 1204) He compiled the entire Oral Law, including deriving the 613 mitzvot from the Written Law, plus decrees from the time of Mosheh Rabeinu, plus Rabbinic Law, plus Cutoms, and set it out in the most magnificent ordered fashion in the Mishneh Torah in a concise form. And in a fashion that it was a Book of Laws that scholars or simple people alike, COULD CARRY OUT PHYSICALLY, IE A BOOK OF HALACHAH In his own words he did this work so that 'a person will not need another text at all with regard to any Jewish Law. A person should first study the Written Law (5 Books of MOSES), and then study this text, and comprehend the entire Oral Law from it, without having to study any other text between the two.' And now it became a possibility for everyone to 'study the entire Torah in a life-time.'

As we all know the Rambam was also the Physician in the Turkish Court, an Astronomer and a Philosopher! All in a life which included persecution from the Muslims! How was this possible? As one works through the Mishneh Torah one gets a glimpse of these Masteries in the full spectrum of Torah, human anatomy, medicine, animal anatomies, botany, astronomy, philosophy etc

The Rambam has always been known as a reference for Torah Scholars, but in 1984, the Lubavitcher Rebbe did something very new and interesting which no one had ever thought of doing before! He called on every man, woman and child to study The Mishneh Torah!

He suggested 3 tracks ie 3 options:

1. 3 chapters a day over 1 year (there are 1000 chapters in Mishneh Torah)
2. 1 chapter a day over 3 years
3. Just learning the mitzvos (of the 613) which come up in the 3 chapters per day track from another Book of the Rambam - Sefer Hamitzvos.

And so as I now started summarising these 1000 perakim, I kept getting newer and better ideas, and the summaries developed into a series as follows:

1. Concise Summary - Its aim is 2-fold

1. Because the summary of each chapter is so short, it allows us to see the Rambam's magnificent framework, and where each of the 613 mitzvos have been placed
2. Because the mitzvos have been marked with an icon, it is easy, even for children, to follow the 3rd track as recommended by the Rebbe It is this Book which has just been published and is now available on Amazon and other outlets (it is only about 400 pages, and not 4000 as Chanan mentioned!)

1. Comprehensive Summary - This uses the exact framework as the Concise Summary, but there is much more explanation of each chapter. It is in 8 volumes and is on the verge of completion, but not yet available. This is the main work

1. Key Facts Summary - Here there are no longer the 1000 chapters, but rather summaries of each of the 83 sets of halochas. It is more in story form and draws out the philosophy aspects which the Rambam includes - Not yet published but complete

1. Tabular - The main purpose here was to provide hyper linking within Rambam (Reminders) - not yet published but complete

1. Index - This has been published and is also available on Amazon.

So the purpose of this English set of summaries was to help make Mishneh Torah more accessible for my Family, extended Family, and anyone else who is interested, including myself.

Our website has developing nicely at the same time as each series is being produced at https/rambampress.com.

Gut Shabbos to all, and success in learning kol HaTorah (the whole of Torah) which is in reach BH

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

TIMES OF TURMOIL?

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 June 2020 · Shabbos 6 Jun 2020 · י"ד סיון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her 9th birthday this week. Wishing you a wonderful year Esther Miriam with lots of music and new explorations BEH.

We wish Mommy long life for Meme whose Yohrtzeit was this week. We have fond memories of Meme! Her neshama should have an Aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you an exciting year with lots of new developments BEH.

Mazal tov to Avi on the engagement of his brother Eli. Wishing you many simchos!

We are living in times of much turmoil - wars, hatreds, confusions, low morality, right and left clashing, power struggles, poverty and the very wealthy, epidemics etc.

The Zohar predicts:

'So will the Redemption for klal Yisrael occur, when the sun of the Redemption is about to shine upon them.

They will be burdened with crisis after crisis, and darkness after darkness.

And while they are in that state, the light of Hashem will shine upon them.' - Bereishis Vov:Alef

The Maharal adds, that in order for the new state to be born, the old state needs to first dissolve.

Before Mosheh Rabeinu passed away, he was shown all the future generations in a vision.

He was utterly over-awed when he saw our spiritually impoverished generation whose understanding of G-dliness was close to nothing.

Why?

Because even in this state, AND WITH ALL THE DIFFICULTIES, we continue keeping Torah and Mitzvos, and davening with joy, all with a simple EMUNA and BITACHON.

This weeks Sedra Naso, gives us a good understanding of the value of these actions.

In the posuk (5:9) the Torah tells us to give Tzedakah to the Kohen, and ends by saying 'and it shall be his.'

And the next verse says 'all his holy things shall be his.'

The simple meaning of 'shall be his' is that the Priest will have the tithes and Holy things. But Rashi explains this very differently as follows:

What we give (and the Mitzvos we do) belong to us, and are forever. 'Shall be his' is referring to us. They are permanent and eternal. The rest can be lost and destroyed.

And through this giving we actually will become rich.

How much more so when we are living in difficult times, there is much hidden opportunity for our actions.

With all our current turmoil, does it not look like we are getting very close to Mashiach?

Gut Shabbos to all.

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

HANDS AND BLESSING

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 May 2021 · Shabbos 22 May 2021 · י"א סיון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and that everyone had a nice Yomtov.

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you to continue developing nicely in both gashmius and ruchnius and with much joy! You bring us all much nachas.

We wish Mommy long life on the Yohrtzeit of Meme, also on Shabbos. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. We all remember Meme with much fondness.

Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi for the move to their new home. Wishing you to continue moving michayil el chayil in both gashmius and ruchnius.

In this week's Sedra, Naso, we learn about the Priestly Blessing, and I saw an interesting dvar Torah from the Rebbe's father Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, and it also demonstrates how precise Torah is with everything.

It says in Shulchan Aruch HaRav that the Kohanim should raise their HANDS to shoulder level for the Priestly Blessing, and that they should raise their right hand a little higher than their left. (Orach Chaim 128:20)

The Zohar explains that "when the Kohanim spread their FINGERS down here on earth it arouses the Shechinah above to descend and rest on the Jewish People. There are other instances when this applies, and this is the reason for Lulav and Shofar being done with the FINGERS. (Vol 3 145a)

Questions:

1. Why is the right hand raised higher than the left?
2. What is the connection to the Mitzvos of lulav and shofar and fingers?

3. Rosh Hashanah (shofar) comes before Sukkos, (lulav) and so why does the Zohar mention lulav before shofar?

Answer to 1 and 3:

The right hand symbolises chesed (kindness) and the left, gevurah (restraint and judgement).

The Zohar comments on the verse in Shir Hashirim 'His left hand was under my head, His right arm embraced me', saying that this hints at the Festivals of Tishrei where the left hand refers to Rosh Hashanah, a time of Judgement, and the embrace of the right arm refers to Sukkos, an outpouring of of joy and revealed kindness.

And just as with the Priestly blessing, which is to draw down G-d's kindness into the world (right side) and therefore the right hand is dominant, so too the Zohar mentions lulav (kindness and right) before shofar (judgement and left)

What has lulav and shofar to do with hands? - answer to 2 above

- The halachic measures to do with these mitzvos all are described with a tefach (the width of a hand)
- There are 3 verses in the Priestly Blessing, 3 sounds to the shofar, and 3 wavings of lulav in each direction
- Gematria. Lulav is 68, shofar is 586 which adds up to 654. The Priestly blessing introduction 'koh tevarechu' has gematria 653+1. So they are equal

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and much blessing

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

CONNECTIONS

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 June 2022 · Shabbos 11 Jun 2022 · י"ב סיון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had an enjoyable Shavuos!

Mazal Tov to Dovber on his opsherin. He looks like a little man now BH! It looked a beautiful simchah. Well done for all the hard work Mendel and Freida!

Mazal Tov to Claude and joy on the birth of a grand- daughter. Wishing you many simchos and much nachas!

In this week's Sedra Naso, we have the DEDICATION OF THE MISHKAN (Tabernacle), directly following the section of the Priestly blessing which ends with the blessing of PEACE. (end of Chap6, and start of chap 7)

The Baal Haturim makes an interesting commentary about this.

He links this connection to the Chashmonaim (Maccabees) in the Chanukah story, who also rededicated the Temple.

And points out the reason that the 2 themes of Mishkan and Peace are juxtaposed is because, in the merit of the Mishkan (or Temple) there will be peace.

He also shows how David HaMelech does the same connection in Psalms 29 and
30. Psalm 29 ends 'Hashem will give strength to His People, Hashem will bless His Nation with Peace.' And Psalm 30 starts ' A psalm, a song, for the dedication of the Temple of David.'!!

The Dedication of the Mishkan by Mosheh included each of the Heads (Nasi) of the 12 Tribes presenting their Offering on each of the 12 days of the

dedication. This started on the first of Nissan, in the second year after leaving Mitzraim.

So every year, as a reminder, we say this section of Torah (called The Nasi) for the first 12 days of Nissan, after shacharit.

And this same Torah reading is always read on Chanukah!

All so neatly CONNECTED BH!

Wishing everyone a Shabbat Shalom, and the imminent rebuilding of the Third Temple.

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

DEVELOPING OUR INTELLECT

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 June 2023 · Shabbos 3 Jun 2023 · י״ד סיון תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again to Esther Miriam on the beautiful Basmitzvah celebration she had this week. Wishing you much success in your new adult life Esther!

Mazal Tov for the Anniversary of Reuven and Chana Lieba. Wishing you many more Happy and Healthy years together with much nachas from all your Family

And another Anniversary - Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha later in the week. Wishing you also many more Happy and Healthy years together with continued growth and achievements with your whole Family.

Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday tomorrow. Looks like yours and Aarons birthdays are 1 week apart. Anyway you should both have a wonderful year!

And Mazal Tov for all those who have Graduation parties!

Shavuos extends for 7 days after the Yom Tov (a bit like Chol Hamoed of Pesach and Sukkos), and today is the last of these days. As such we are still in the theme of receiving the Torah.

In connection with this I wanted to share an interesting concept I learnt about this week in the book Likutei Dibburim of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson (Vol 2 p256)

He has been discussing what he heard from his father about the heights that every Jew is capable of reaching with their OWN INTELLECTUAL LABOUR.

This may need considerable exertion, to concentrate one's mortal mind to try and grasp a G-dly concept in a mode of actual sense perception.

Following is one short extract:

"Businessmen think that that they know the meaning of exertion and distraction. If a businessman loses a nights sleep, he thinks that this is the ultimate in exertion and distraction.

But even a person of quite mediocre talents, realizes that toiling with ideas is incomparably more demanding than the other kind of toil.

But when, with G-d's help, one's labors yield a true and deep grasp of the concept at hand, the resultant delight and joy of one's knowledge, is incomparably greater than the delight and joy of the businessman.

When with G-d's help, one thoroughly grasps, and soundly integrates, an intellectual proposition in Chassidus, then even although the concept is SPIRITUAL, and the human mind is MATERIAL by comparison, that concept is nevertheless apprehended by SENSE PERCEPTION.

This means that one sees the G-dly concept that one has understood, like a person gazing upon a picture of unusual beauty.

As every little line (of the picture) sinks deep into his eye, he becomes utterly enchanted out of sheer delight....."

Gut Shabbos to all and wishing continued success and delight with Torah study.

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

WHAT WE GIVE BELONGS TO US

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 14 June 2024 · Shabbos 15 Jun 2024 · ט' סיון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and have had a happy Shavuot!

We wish Channa a refuah shleimah after her operation today. BH she is doing well.

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you both many more happy and healthy years together and many simchos in your Family!

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday next week. Wishing you much continued growth and achievements Esther and a wonderful year BEH!

We wish Mommy long life for Meme's Yohrtzeit next week. We were all very fond of Meme, and we wish her Neshama to have an Aliyah. Wishing only many simchos in the future.

I would just like to share a nice story that I heard, relating to this week's Sedra, Nasso, on the passage (5:10) which says "Ish es kadoshav lo yihiyeh.". The simple translation is "Everyone's holy things shall belong to him, (ie he can give to any Priest of his choice), whatever a man gives to the Priest shall be his. (ie the Priest's)"

But there is a deeper meaning to this verse, as Rashi explains, and how the following story which I heard, illustrates:

There was a kalif (king) in one of the Muslim countries, who had a very important Jewish advisor, who was also very wealthy.

Some of the King's associates were jealous of him and told the king that he was stealing money.

The king knew that the advisor was worth 250,000 gold dinars and he decided to test him by asking him how much he was WORTH. Upon which the advisor answered 25,000 gold dinars.

Upon hearing this the King now suspected that his associates had been telling the truth, and that the advisor had indeed been stealing.

The king therefore confiscated all his wealth and threw him in prison.

Many months later the king decided to release him from prison, understanding that really he was a good man, but at the same time he enquired of him to explain why he had lied to the king.

The Jew replied that he had not lied to the king, and explained that if the king would have asked how much money he HAD IN HIS POSSESSION, he would have said 250,000 gold dinars.

But the king asked me how much I was WORTH. I therefore answered 25,000 gold dinars, because this is what I have given to CHARITY.

To prove my point, you confiscated all my wealth, and it disappeared, but the Tzedakah that I gave of 25,000 gold dinars (and all the other Mitzvot that I do) IS WHAT I AM WORTH AND THIS CAN NEVER BE TAKEN FROM ME FOREVER!

Gut Shabbos to all!

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

CHOICE

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 June 2025 · Shabbos 7 Jun 2025 · י״א סיון תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and that Shavuos was beautiful for all.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for yechezkiel ben Ester

Mazal Tov to Tracy Pollock on her upcoming birthday. I hope all is going well with you and your Family Tracy, and wishing you a wonderful year!

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday tonight. It was such a nice kiddush on Shavuos for your birthday. Wishing you continued beautiful achievements in both gashmius and ruchnius, giving your parents much nachas BEH!

And also tomorrow is the Yohrtzeit of Meme, Rahel's mother ah. The kiddush on Shavuos was also in her honour, kindly sponsored by Shmuly and Devorah Leah. Meme is kindly remembered by all of us, and we wish her neshamah to have an Aliyah.

I saw an interesting short DvarTorah in yesterday's Hayom Yom (8th of Sivan), based on a pasuk from Shlomo Hamelech's Shir Hashirim, where the world is described as ginat egoz (a garden of nuts) - 6:11

The Hebrew word ginat has the dual meaning of 'garden', and 'meeting place.'

And the Hebrew word egoz has the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word cheit meaning 'sin'.

This is explained as follows:

The physical Universe is a mixture.

It is a meeting place where G-d meets together (as it were) with man, the select of all creatures.

Yet it is also a garden of nuts where there is the potential for sin.

Hashem gives man FREE CHOICE, the capacity to choose freely, that man may choose for him or her - self a path in life.

Gut Shabbos to all

Nasso ↑ Nasso · Contents · By date נשא

TORAH TEACHER, MENTOR AND FRIEND

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 May 2026 · Shabbos 30 May 2026 · י״ד סיון תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shlemah to Yechezkiel ben Ester

We have just returned from a wonderful week in California where we spent a packed week in the new home of Avi and Penina, celebrating (in chronological order) Shavuos, Shalom zachar for their new son, Shabbos, the bris of their son Yisrael Meir, the honour of Sandek, and last but not least the beautiful Batmitzvah party of Nechama Ester Levy. A big thank you to our hosts and all the family in California – Mazal Tov!

We wish long life to Mommy (Rahel) for the yohrtzeit of Meme which was this week. It was so nice to hear, in Nechama's Basmitzvah speech, how she linked and related to her 2 namesakes ie Meme (Esther) and our mother, Nechama – See her speech attached. Meme's neshamah should have an aliya.

Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick on his birthday yesterday. Wishing you a wonderful year Aaron! It was nice to see pictures of you and your Family holidaying with your in-laws BH!

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam who also had a birthday this week. Wishing you a year of much continued success in both material and Spiritual Esther, and to continue giving much nachas to your parents BEH!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha for their Anniversary at the end of next week. Wishing you many continued happy and healthy years together with much nachas from your beautiful Family BEH!

This weeks is Chap 1 of Pirkei Avot and I saw an interesting explanation on Mishnah 6:

"...Yehoshua ben Perachya said: 'Make for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend, and judge every person meritoriously."

· A teacher

Even a person who does not need a teacher to learn Torah, and could be like the greatest man of his generation, like the author of this Mishnah, should force himself to accept a teacher. *By humbling ourselves before a human master, we draw upon ourselves a sense of obedience towards the Divine Master (The Rebbe in Biurim)*

· A friend

Every person needs a friend who acts as a counsellor and a guide to whom one can reveal one's inner feelings.

When you love, do not love by your standards, but love by your friend's standards. When both friends follow this rule, each will seek to satisfy the desire of the other, and they will enjoy a fruitful friendship (Rambam)

· Judge every person meritoriously

o If one can interpret another person's deeds as positive, do so

o Even if the deed is certainly bad, one can still judge the person favourably by recognising that it is his particular circumstances that caused him to sin. (Tanya Chap 30)

o *Furthermore, not only can these acts be accommodated, they can even be seen as merits*! Each person is fighting this huge inner battle, and deep down recognises what is right and wrong, and the fact that these temptations are placed in front of them, demonstrates that he / she has the spiritual resources to overcome them. Because man's challenges are commensurate with their moral strength (Bamidbar Rabbah 12:3)

Gut Shabbos to all

בהעלותך

Beha'aloscha

Bamidbar 8:1 · parsha 3 of 10 in Bamidbar · 36 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — SUMMER 892
2017 / 5777 — DEDICATION 894
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION CONTINUED - PREVENTION 897
2019 / 5779 — FATHERS 899
2020 / 5780 — SOULS ON FIRE 901
2021 / 5781 — A LITTLE BEND 904
2022 / 5782 — OUR PRIVILEGED GENERATION 906
2023 / 5783 — HEALING 908
2024 / 5784 — RESUME OF A PROPHET 910
2025 / 5785 — BITTERNESS TO SWEET, DARKNESS TO LIGHT 912
2026 / 5786 — HUMILITY, ANTIDOTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM 915

SUMMER

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 June 2016 · Shabbos 25 Jun 2016 · י"ט סיון תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary tomorrow.

And another Anniversary, their first, Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida. Wow it seems like more than 1 year ago!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming Birthday next week.

This is the time of year when School and College results start to appear, and we all go on holiday or Summer Camps, in some way or another.

Shmuel is running his Summer Camp in California, Chava is Head Counsellor in Pennsylvania Camp, I know Dovi is going on a sleep over Camp, and Batsheva is visiting Baty in Sydney etc.

Enjoy!!

Connected to the Holiday period, I saw a short Vort from the Rebbe about this as follows:

When people notified The Rebbe of their vacation plans, The Rebbe would often give a bracha that it should bring about the desired result ie strengthening the body.

As the Rebbe Rashab expressed it 'How precious is the Jewish body, for which so much Torah was given.'

At the same time, care must be taken, that one does not arrive at a situation in which the strength of the body weakens the Neshama. - Igros kodesh.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Summer.

5 minutes of Rambam per week. Hilchot Bechoros Chaps 5-8, and Hilchos Shegagos Chaps 1-3. PAGE 7

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lYiYbJRR8ZYU3FEzbBJdZq9soOXZeYGi6c-QCok2e s94/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

DEDICATION

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 June 2017 · Shabbos 10 Jun 2017 · ט"ז סיון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you many more Happy years together.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on your birthday next week. Are you going to be in London for your birthday? Wishing you continuing success in all the good things you are doing.

Mazal Tov again to Avi and Penina for the pidyan haben this week which I heard was beautiful BH. Nice to see a picture of Brian and Sharon there! Wishing you much nachas.

In this week's Sedra Behaalosecha, Hashem instructs Mosheh to tell Aaron, that whenever he lights the lamps of the Menorah, he should HOLD THE FIRE TO THE WICK UNTIL IT REMAINED BURNING STEADILY ON IT'S OWN.

Spiritually this means, that when we light the flame of our Soul (or the Soul of another),we should not just deliver some quick inspiration and then move on.

We should rather remain near, nurturing the Soul's flame, until it becomes a steady and self-reliant glow (Likutei Sichos Vol 2 p316)

A connected story from this past week

For the past few months or maybe even a year we had some seagulls moving into our street and living on top of the chimney of a house opposite us.

I love the sounds of seagulls and watching them, I think because it reminds of being by the sea-side.

Anyway, last week, on the second day of Shavuos, we were coming back from shul and we saw this amazing sight - a baby seagull which looks like it had just recently been hatched was sitting on top of a van which was parked in front of the 'house of the seagulls' - It had probably fallen out of it's nest.

Now mommy seagull was frantic because lots of people walk up and down Lewestón Place all day and all night, for those who know Stamford Hill.

She was either sitting with the baby on top of the van, or swooping down on people she was suspicious of and making a huge racket.

Daddy seagull was sitting on top of the chimney warily watching out at all that was going on, and then also keeping guard when mommy seagull would go and look for food.

Of course she was also feeding her cute little spotted baby.

This was in the day - the whole day she was active.

When night came along, and as mentioned many people walk past the whole night, she continued with her guarding. I don't think she slept the whole night, and many times during the night, I heard squawkings. It seems that seagulls can't pick up their babies and so junior remained on top of the van!

Now all of our neighbours, who of course wanted to help, could not do anything , because we would have been attacked if we would try and touch the baby, and I personally was wondering what was going to happen the next day when the van owner comes to run his business? (the van owners were non-Jewish workers)

Friday morning, sure enough, I am on my way to shul, and there is a huge commotion in the sky.

Mommy and daddy seagull have called up reserves and there are about 6 seagulls squawking and attack diving people at the van. There are 2 bald

headed workers inside the van, and another 2 bald headed workers ducking down under a hedge by the pavement with tool-boxes over their heads to protect themselves from the swooping seagulls!

I think the 2 workers on the pavement must have put the baby in a nice cardboard box with a flap to allow access, and placed this box on a ledge above the front door of the seagull's home.

And so when I came back from shul, I saw mommy seagull happily sitting next to her baby by this box caring for it BH!

Another humorous point was that on Shabbos there are many children in our street visiting their families etc and of course everyone was interested and looking up at the box and dancing around over there. And mommy and daddy seagull were up on the chimney watching warily.

But when anyone with a bald head walked past the house, the squawking and swooping attacks started up again!

SO I SUPPOSE WE CAN DEFINITELY ALSO LEARN ABOUT DEDICATION EVEN FROM SEAGULLS.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

EDUCATION CONTINUED - PREVENTION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 May 2018 · Shabbos 2 Jun 2018 · י"ט סיון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary tomorrow.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba for their Anniversary on Shabbos

And on the same day is Sara's birthday! So Boston is very much on the horizon now with celebrations this Shabbos and we are sure busily preparing for Sara's wedding week after next! One simcha should lead to another for your Family, and for the whole extended Family, especially for all who are still waiting to find their bashert.

And then there is another Anniversary coming up next week and that is Mendel and Freida. Mazal Tov. And also Mazal Tov to Mendel on the marriage of his brother Laivi this week. Again one simcha should lead to many more BEH!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a great year in gashmiyus and ruchnius Zalmy.

Wishing safe trips for all those who are travelling, Shmuel and Dovi in EY, Pesach in California, Batsheva in California etc

As we continue with our subject of CHINUCH - EDUCATION, it did come to mind this week,that there are probably many more quiet graduations going on than the few that we knew about last week!

For example Mommy mentioned to me that she had heard that Renee and Roy's grandson graduated.

So Mazal Tov to the Cobbs and everyone else who has graduated this year!

We have re-started reading Pirkei Avos again (Ethics of the Fathers) - we read a chapter every Shabbos all the way through to Sukkos.

And so this week is related to Chapter 1 which we read last Shabbos.

I listened to a very interesting shiur from Rabbi Lipskier on EDUCATION in relation to this first perek of Pirkei Avos.

He is a young speaker and as such does not speak that well, but the messages he brings out are very powerful.

I am therefore attaching it (it is only half an hour!), as I think it may be of interest to all the doctors in the Family, BH, to all parents with children, and for ourselves as adults.

The verses that he focuses on are:

1. V6 '..make for yourself a mentor or Rav, and find (purchase) for yourself a good friend..'
2. V10 '..Love work, hate high positions, and stay clear of politics.....' (translation will be clarified in the shiur)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/1b8_kCtqDTw?rel=0&autoplay=1> https://www.youtube.com/embed/1b8_kCtqDTw?rel=0&autoplay=1

Enjoy and wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and success with PREVENTION and EDUCATION!

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

FATHERS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 June 2019 · Shabbos 22 Jun 2019 · י"ט סיון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mariasha and Hirshy on their Anniversary tomorrow. Wishing you many more happy years together with much achievement.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida who also have their Anniversary next week. And in addition they have the Pidyan Haben for Dovber BEH. Wishing you a beautiful week of celebration, and many more celebrations together in the future!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy for your birthday this coming week, and for completing your year and exams at University. Wishing you hatzlochah with the results, and continued growth and development, with joy.

What has been foremost about this week has been GRATITUDE.

There were lots of good expressions of gratitude and love on father's day, and what has in particular come past me is the GRATITUDE TO HASHEM, OUR FATHER, which we express by thanking Him, through BROCHOS for all He gives us.

In relation to the above, I kept seeing a poster this week with the following points:

1. Don't take life for granted. Give thanks to Hashem (Ezra 10:11)
2. Our Sages teach us that all brochos (blessings) have the ability to protect us from illness, and ensure our continued good health. This is especially true of the brocha 'asher yatzar' (see text below), which was written to praise

Hashem for His marvellous creation - THE HUMAN BODY (Sefer Seder Hayom)

The poster went on to say that if we would only stop for a moment to really think about the wonderous and miraculous nature of the human body, we would clearly see the work of G-d.

As the posuk says ' Through my body I see the Creator' (Job 19:26)

And so all the prescribed brochos that have been handed down to us by the Sages (and some which are direct from Torah), are a great opportunity to EXPRESS OUR LOVE AND GRATITUDE TO HASHEM OUR FATHER, AND WITH MUCH JOY.

The following halachos relating to brochos are therefore important:

1. It is forbidden to do any manner of work while reciting a brocha.
2. It is preferable to look in and read the brocha rather than reciting it by heart.
3. Brochos should not be said as a matter of habit, flippantly, or without proper concentration.
4. Rather we should direct our feelings towards Hashem, thanking Him for the goodness He has bestowed.

The particular Blessing that was addressed was as follows:

'Blessed are you Lord our G-d, King of the Universe, who has formed man in wisdom, and created within him numerous apertures and cavities. It is revealed and known before the Throne of Your Glory, that if but one of them were to be blocked, or one of them were to be opened, it would be impossible to exist even for a short while.

Blessed are You, Lord, who heals all flesh and performs wonders.'

The brocha is said each time we complete our daily bodily needs, after washing hands.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

SOULS ON FIRE

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 June 2020 · Shabbos 13 Jun 2020 · כ"א סיון תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy whose birthday is tonight! Wishing you much hatzlochah Zalmy, with your studies, your worldly pursuits, and your spiritual ones. It should be that they become indistinguishable from each other, all with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary this coming week. Wishing you continued growth together with much joy and nachas.

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary also next week. Wishing you much continued happiness together, and making many simchos this year!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his graduation. Keep going from strength to strength Shlomo!

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy, Hirshy and Batsheva for their half marathon and full marathon cycling to raise funds for Friendship Circle. Tizkeh lemitzvos!

This week's Sedra Behaalosechah speaks about the lighting of the Menorah and the journeying of Bnei Yisrael to their destination, among other items.

Mommy and I saw an interesting Zoom this week called 'From Rapper to Rabbi' which was the frank story of Motti Flikstein (Mat) a Russian boy living in America describing his LIFE JOURNEY.

I think his story very much reflects this week's Sedra, and I will try and give it over in a very brief fashion.

He was 'one of the boys', and was into partying, drugs, rapping, long afro hairstyle, and totally not interested in Judaism and even opposed.

He went to University (Brandeis) and on top of all his popularity, was also doing well in his studies, and running a little business of selling drugs as well!

He said that he had everything anyone could ever wish for in University, and was feeling on top of the world, and yet there was a little emptiness inside him which he could not understand.

Somehow or another he once landed up at a Chabad family for Shabbos, and he explained his experience in a very comical way.

He remembers putting on this little suede kapel on top of his big afro hairstyle, and he said that he felt as if he had just landed on mars. He could not work out what he was doing in such a place - the women standing in front of candles waving their hands about, kiddush in this strange language, washing hands in a special way, and then no one speaking, the challah being covered so as not to be embarrassed! (an embarrassed challah!?) etc etc

And then all the singing ay yayay, ay yayay, and waving hands and banging the table.

Anyway, after feeling like he was on mars, there was something else that he noticed. Deep inside of himself was a little thought of 'maybe one day I could also be at the head of my table at home with a wife and family like this one on a Shabbos.'

And another thought he had was, 'People do not realise what is going on inside another person. Here you have someone with such a hard outside, full of all kind of masks, and yet inside THERE WAS THIS HIDDEN ASPECT, UNKNOWN TO ALL.'

This is the INNER FIRE.

Then there was event after event which let that fire of Mat, flare, in the same way as Aharon lit the Menorah (Rashi says He kindled the flame until the flame rose of its own accord.)

He is now a Chabad Rabbi in Delaware with a beautiful family of his own. - see attached!

On Wednesday of this week's Hayom Yom, the Rebbe says:

'In this era, close to Mashiach, every Jew is obligated to seek out the welfare of his fellow Jew, whether he be an elder or a youth - and to arouse him to teshuvah - so that he will not leave the fold of the Jewish People, who, with the help of Hashem, will merit the complete redemption.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

A LITTLE BEND

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 May 2021 · Shabbos 29 May 2021 · י"ח סיון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his birthday next week. Wishing you to keep growing in all areas Zalmy with much happiness. And good luck for your exams!

Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday next week. Wishing you and your Family a great year Sara. Love to all.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary on the same day as Sara's birthday. Wishing you a year of many celebrations.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you an exciting year and with much growth and happiness.

And another Anniversary! Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida who also have an Anniversary next week! Wishing you a wonderful year with much happiness.

We should add to the Anniversaries by news of many more weddings for all!

I saw 2 nice articles about HUMILITY this week, and I was wondering what their connection was to the week's theme. I came to the conclusion that it was connected to Aharon in this week's Sedra of Behaalosecha.

Aharon is famous for his tremendous love of all his fellow Jews, and his pursuit of peace, and as will be seen from the next 2 stories, this is an essential element of HUMILITY.

From Keter Shem Tov - Baal Shem Tov

A passenger dozed off as his wagon climbed a steep mountain, and rolled across a large plateau.

He awoke but refused to believe that he was on top of a mountain - it looked flat, and he did not experience the climb.

When the plateau ended, and the winding descent began, he realised that he must have been on a mountain after all.

The mountain represents conceit. We cannot recognise our own arrogance, because we were born there with a natural dose of arrogance, raising ourselves consciously or unconsciously, above others.

Through life, by actively working on lowering ourselves with genuine humility before others, by recognising the supreme greatness of our Creator, which makes all humans equally insignificant, we begin to recognise our mountain for what it is.

We must descend all the way to the valley, by developing a genuinely humble heart.

Sefer Hasichos - tav resh tzadi vav p47

The Rebbe Rashab once described a painting he had seen, depicting a field of grain stalks on a sun drenched day, in the midst of which, a little bird stood perched on one of the stalks.

Many professional artists who viewed this painting were awed by its life-like projection.

Along came a farmer who took one look at the artwork and said " Its all good, the fields, the grain....but the little bird standing on the stalk is unrealistic. For when a bird stands on grain, even though it is small and light, its weight needs to somewhat bend the stalk on which it stands. Yet in this painting, the stalk is standing as straight as all the others!"

The Rebbe Rashab concluded with the lesson, "Everything could be first rate, as if it was alive, BUT IF THE BEND IS MISSING, then it is all unrealistic. It is missing emes.."(Truth)

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos!

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

OUR PRIVILEGED GENERATION

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 June 2022 · Shabbos 18 Jun 2022 · י"ט סיון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Renee Cobb is struggling with a difficult health issue. Could we all say Tehillim or keep her in our prayers - Rivkah bas Sarah Zlata should have a refuah shleimah!

We have a few Anniversary celebrations this week:

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi. Wishing you many more happy and healthy years together, and continued wedding celebrations.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha. Wishing you continued growth and development with much nachas from your children, and with joy.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida. Wishing you much nachas together from your growing Family and much new development BEH.

And Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming birthday. Zalmy has been accepted into a Law School in LA to continue his studies BEH. Well done Zalmy for this wonderful achievement, and wishing you a year with much success, achievement and happiness.

And featuring a member of the Family this week which came to my attention, is Binyamin Mordechai Davidoff, who achieved 110% for his Chumash Test!

Well done Binyomin, and well done Shmuly and Devorah Leah with your chinuch efforts! This is very much in line with our email theme this week of hard work.

In this weeks Sedra Behaalosecha (12:3) it says that 'the man Mosheh was very humble, more so than any man on the face of the earth.'

The Alte Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, explained that Mosheh felt humble, especially in seeing himself in comparison to our generation, the last generation before Mashiach (he saw this with his vision of prophecy).

Because despite the extreme darkness that would reign immediately preceding the Final Redemption, Mosheh Rabeinu foresaw and was humbled by the self-sacrifice that our generation would show, to keep the Jewish faith alive, even in the most difficult circumstances. (The Rebbe Purim 5747)

And in this week's Pirkei Avos Chap 2 Mishna 15:

'R Tarfon said: The day is short, the work is vast, the workmen are lazy, the reward is great, and the Master is pressing.'

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

HEALING

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 June 2023 · Shabbos 10 Jun 2023 · כ"א סיון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff Senior (but still young in years!) on his birthday tonight. Wishing you an exciting, eventful year Zalmy in both material and spiritual, and with joy and good health.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you many more wonderful years together with much Chassidishe nachas from all your children!

I am not familiar with all the graduations, but I know that Mendel Levy had his last week and is now on a trip to EY with his class. Abd that Shlomo Levy's is next week. Mazal Tov! And to all those who I have not yet heard about.

And wishing Shmuel Levy a wonderful trip with Mendel's class in EY

The theme of HEALING came up in a few places this week and I wanted to share these:

- In this weeks Sedra Behaaloschah, (V12:9) Miriam gets 'leprosy' for speaking not well about her brother Mosheh. Mosheh then prays to Hashem and asks Him to heal her. This takes 7 days and the whole of Klal Yisrael wait for her, before travelling further on their journeys.
- Hayom Yom of 16th Sivan this week:

The Sages of early generations - who have been likened to angels - have already determined that the healing of the soul is like the healing of the body:

The crucial first step is to identify the location of the illness,

- Is it is caused by the crassness, grossness and corruption of his physical body ?
- Or by a failing in his soul-powers, the person being inclined to undesirable traits like arrogance or falsehood and the like?
- Or, the source of the malady may be habit – faulty education, or unwholesome environments which brought on bad habits?

Without ascertaining the specific site of the illness, it is impossible to embark on a cure.

However, one can embark on an orderly path of proper conduct in all matters, ie what to do and what to avoid. To "do good" in terms of observing mitzvot, designating times for Torah-study and acquiring good character traits. And also to "turn away from evil."

Most urgent of all, however, is that the 'patient' make himself aware of two things:

- to know that he is ill, and desire most fervently to be cured of his malady.
- to know that he can be cured, with hope and absolute trust. That, with G-d's help, he will indeed be cured of his sickness

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos!

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

RESUME OF A PROPHET

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 June 2024 · Shabbos 22 Jun 2024 · ט"ז סיון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Claude Comaroff has been in hospital. He is the husband of Joy. We all wish you a Refuah shleimah, Claude. (Yechezkiel ben Ester).

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you many more happy years together with much achievement and growth, and with ample parnassah!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff senior on his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Zalmy together with Nechama Dina, going from strength to strength with much happiness BEH.

I learnt something interesting from this week's Sedra Behaaloscha.

It was about PROPHECY.

V 11:25 mentions that Mosheh had the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, and Hashem transferred some of this onto the 70 Elders. When the spirit rested upon them, they prophesized..

V12:3 states that "The great man Mosheh was extremely HUMBLE.."

The Sicha of this week from Vol 23 of Likkutei Sichas, discusses these subjects and I will try and summarise :

Prophecy is discussed in 2 places in the Talmud, in Shabbos and in Nedarim.

In each of these places the Gemorra mentions the qualities needed by a person to merit prophecy. Each of these sources takes a slightly different view but

they speak about the qualities of STRENGTH, WEALTH, WISDOM AND HUMILITY, based on the above verses in our Sedra.

Rambam, however, who draws out the Halachah (Laws) from the Talmud, places the Laws of Prophecy in an interesting section in his Mishneh Torah, and does not focus exactly on those qualities as mentioned. Why not?

He places these Laws in the section dealing with the Foundation of our Faith, which is based on Knowledge.

The very first Mitzvah in this Section is "To Know that there is a G-d"

And he states: "Prophecy is bestowed only upon an exceptionally wise person of strong character, whose natural inclinations never overcome him. Instead, with his mind, he overcomes his natural inclinations..He must possess very broad mental acuity."

Through the Prophets, Hashem reveals His secrets, and this is done through the INTELLECT of the Prophets. Thereby, they transcend the level of other wise men.

Some Prophets retained a permanent state of prophecy like Moshe (the greatest of the Prophets), Yeshayahu, Yirmiyahu etc, and some were given this state temporarily.

(It is also a Mitzvah to test the Prophet as the Rambam explains in Chap 10 of these Laws)

Therefore this KNOWLEDGE that we have of Hashem revealing His secret, and his overt interaction with the world, is an essential extension of our knowledge of HASHEMS EXISTENCE, which is part of the FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH.

(And, even although the Prophets do need to have the special qualities as mentioned in Gemorra, the Rambam only focusses on the above essential characteristics for this reason)

Gut Shabbos to all!

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

BITTERNESS TO SWEET, DARKNESS TO LIGHT

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 June 2025 · Shabbos 14 Jun 2025 · י"ח סיון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

A big Mazal Tov to Hy Fisher, Naomi's father, who has just celebrated his 99th birthday BH! We have such great respect for your achievements Hy, and wishing you many more active years till 120!

And Naomi and Chanan (Ashley) also feature for themselves this week. Mazal Tov on your Anniversary! Wishing you many more healthy and happy years together with much happiness from all of your Family!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos. Wishing you both much continued success in everything that you do, all with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you also much continued success together and with much happiness!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff senior on his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much success and new achievements Zalmy. I saw a vort this week, that the opposite of old is not young. It is new. To be continually learning and seeing new avenues of possibility.

Mazal Tov to Pam Koval on her birthday this week!

I learnt a short but deep Maamer of the Rebbe(from 1981) this week about the Menorah which is discussed in this week's Sedra Behaalosecha, based on this week's Haftarah speaking about the vision of Zechariah:

He saw a gold Candelabrum (Menorah) with a large bowl above it from which 7 tubes emerged, feeding oil into the 7 lamps of the Menorah.

Near it were 2 olive trees, one to the right of the bowl and one to the left....

I will try and summarise how the Rebbe explained this.

- The Menorah with its 7 branches, all beaten together from bottom to top with one piece of gold, represents our individuality, but all united together with one Father. All the different parts of the Menorah, from the lowest to the highest were all equally united within the one whole.
- There are 7 levels of Service, 7 Emotional Attributes, and we have had 7 Shepherds (Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov etc) who have transmitted G-dliness to us through the ages.
- The function of the Menorah in the Temple was to spread light outward to the whole world.
- Each of us individually has been compared to a small menorah. The imagery is that we are the candle dish. And in this dish is the oil and the wick, which represent Torah and Mitzvot. And with this we play our role in spreading light to the world.
- Zechariah saw the Jewish people as golden even in the time of exile, even in the time everything is so difficult, and even although our standards are so low. (2 other prophets had described the Menorah in exile as silver dross, and impure silver)
- Olives are bitter, but when we crush them, we produce oil which produces light, and we can therewith transform the darkness to light.
- Our work (avodah means to make a change) in the dark exile, before the coming of Mashiach is to work with our 7 emotions. Not to be deterred by the difficulty of the work (the bitterness), and to use force against our negative emotions (iskafiah and ishafchah), to bring about sweetness from the bitterness and light from the darkness.
- The conquering of the 10 Nations in Eretz Yisrael, refers individually to our 7 emotional attributes plus 3 intellectual. The 3 'Nations' on the East

side of the Jordan (the '3 intellectual attributes') will only be conquered with the Coming of Mashiach, and this will bring about a much greater light to the world.

This is why Zechariah saw the Jewish Nation as a GoldenMenorah, even through the dark exile, due to the hard and bitter battle that we are voluntarily engaging!

Gut Shabbos to all, and with much light!

Beha'aloscha ↑ Beha'aloscha · Contents · By date בהעלותך

HUMILITY, ANTIDOTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 June 2026 · Shabbos 6 Jun 2026 · כ״א סיון תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

BH Yechezkiel ben Ester's health is stable. Michayil el Chayil!

MAZAL TOV TO DR HY FISHER WHO IS CELEBRATING HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY NEXT WEEK!! What an amazing achievement Hy. We all wish you continued happy and constructive years with continued good health! Also wishing Mazal Tov to Naomi (Davidoff) and the whole Fisher Family! BH

With great respect we wish Ariel Bassin much success with his move this week to join the IDF as a Lone Soldier. We are so proud of you Ariel! Am Yisroel Chai!

Mazal Tov to Tracy Pollock for her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Tracy and sending love to the rest of your Family

Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff (Snr) on his birthday tonight! Wishing you a year of much continued development and successes Zalmy together with your growing Family BH

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida (Kehaty) on their upcoming Anniversary next week! Wishing you many continued happy and healthy years together, and to have a bigger home for your Family BEH.

And Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his beautiful Siddur Party this week!

Kevin (Marks) has sent us an updated version of our Family Tree including all the new births etc. Please keep him updated. Thank you Kevin!

In this week's Sedra Behaalotcha, it says in V12:3 that "the man Mosheh was more humble than anyone on the face of the earth", and I saw an interesting article from Rabbi Eliezer Shemtov on this subject:

The point he makes is that HUMILITY IS A POWERFUL ANTIDOTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM!?

When one possesses extraordinary gifts, there are 2 kinds of response

· " I am greater and more important than others"

This may lead to arrogance, and a feeling of being distanced from those who have less.

· "I was entrusted with something more valuable than others"

This attitude leads to a profound sense of responsibility from oneself, and towards others. And it leads to HUMILITY.

Humility says, don't compare oneself to others.

Hashem judges not how much one does, but how much effort one puts in, to fulfill one's own mission. "Am I better today than I was yesterday? Am I performing to my true potential?

And if I encounter someone who seems inferior to me, am I recognizing that perhaps their very constraints make their effort far greater value than mine?"

Keeping this in mind helps us respect every person that we encounter*, including, and especially, ourselves*

Gut Shabbos to all

שלח

Shelach

Bamidbar 13:1 · parsha 4 of 10 in Bamidbar · 37 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — EYE SPY.....? 918
2017 / 5777 — IMPOSSIBLE? 920
2018 / 5778 — ANOTHER FACET OF EDUCATION 923
2019 / 5779 — 40 YEARS 925
2020 / 5780 — WORK ON FAITH 929
2021 / 5781 — WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT 932
2022 / 5782 — EFFORT AND OPTIMISM 934
2023 / 5783 — TESHUVAH 936
2024 / 5784 — NEVER TOO LATE FOR TESHUVAH 939
2025 / 5785 — AN OPPORTUNE TIME 941
2026 / 5786 — MITZVOS BEYOND UNDERSTANDING 944

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

EYE SPY.....?

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 1 July 2016 · Shabbos 2 Jul 2016 · כ"ו סיון תשע"ו

Dear Family

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you many more happy ones together.

And on the same day is Mendels birthday (Davidoff). Mazal Tov Mendel, and Shmuly and Devorah Leah!

This weeks Parsha is Shelach, and one of the main themes is about the SPIES which Moshe sent to spy out the Land of Israel prior to entering.

The word for SPYING in Hebrew is yaturu, or taturu depending on the grammar.

The parsha gives a long account of these events whereby the 10 of the 12 spies give a bad report to the People about what they saw, and frightens them off from going into Eretz Yisrael.

And because of this Hashem gives the punishment to wander in the desert for 40 years etc.

But what I found interesting is that at the end of the parsha, the same word taturu comes up again, but is now used in a different context ie DO NOT STRAY AFTER YOUR HEART AND YOUR EYES.

Rashi however explains the connection as follows 'This ie taturu, is similar to spying the land. The heart and eyes are the body's spies, bringing it sins. The eyes see, the heart lusts, and the body sins.'

But the other thing I found very interesting is that in relation to 'straying after the eyes', TZITZIT is juxtaposed (placed next to it) and discussed??!!

Again Rashi explains that the word tzitzit is connected to the word metzitz which means WATCHING. Ie when you see the tzitzis you will remember all the 613 mitzvos (Rashi explains how tzitzis is connected to 613). - this being the positive side of looking

How intricately are the Hebrew words and Torah intertwined with the Truth!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and strength to overcome all our challenges with the help of Hashem.

5 minutes of Rambam per week are Hilchos Shegagos Chaps 3 - 10 on PAGE 8

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lYiYbJRR8ZYU3FEzbBJdZq9soOXZeYGi6c-QCok2e s94/edit

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18LCdtnMoOFsfxkxHjcW3nyVIjV-D3hX5S6oFAycC -cA/edit

IMPOSSIBLE?

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 June 2017 · Shabbos 17 Jun 2017 · כ"ג סיון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary tonight. Wishing you many more happy years together in good health. Enjoy your trip in Eretz Yisrael as leaders for Birth-right!

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi who also have an Anniversary in this coming week. You should celebrate many more in good health and making many celebrations with your Family.

And another Anniversary - Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on your Anniversary next week. Wishing you both much happiness together.

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel on his third birthday next week and upcoming opsher. Wishing Shmuly and Devorah much nachas from him and all the other children.

Talking about all these celebrations, it is now the time of year when college results come out and BEH we will have nice results to announce.

And I am also aware that there are other members of our Family ie Uncles, Aunts, Brothers, Cousins who are also having celebrations which we are not hearing about.

So it would be very nice to hear about these from Renee, Roy, Brian, Sharon, Kerry Lee, all nephews and nieces, extended Families etc.

Let us all hear about all your celebrations.

Wishing the whole Family many simchos and much good news, and soon!

IT IS ALL POSSIBLE!

THIS WEEKS Sedra is Shelach, and one of the themes is that Moshe sends out 12 spies to the Land of Canaan.

Hashem had already promised Bnei Yisrael that they will conquer the Land, but 10 of the spies come back feeling very fearful because of the giants that they saw there, and spread this fear to the Nation. IT LOOKED IMPOSSIBLE!

Only Caleb and Yehoshua (the other 2 spies) stayed strong and insisted that the Land could be conquered as Hashem had commanded.

I find it interesting that it is now the 50th Anniversary of the 6 Day War in Israel, and myself and our generation actually experienced and lived through those times.

Just imagine, the second world war had just finished in 1945, we had just come out of a terrible holocaust, and the State of Israel was established in 1948, a young fledgling Country terribly wounded.

It was now 1967, less than 20 years later, and Egypt, Jordan, Syria plus other Arab countries started massing their armies together, totally surrounding Israel and announcing to the world that their intention was to totally destroy the Jewish State.

In addition Russia was supporting and arming these countries, and America did not want to tangle with Russia, and so withdrew from the arena.

Israel was left totally alone, and a tremendous fear spread across the world. I remember what it felt like, and we were far away from it all in sunny SA.

Jews from all over started volunteering to go and join the army in Israel, and I have vague memories that Roy was one of them!

Even Eshkol the Prime Minister, when he addressed the Nation was shattered and spread the fear even more.

At a Lag Baomer Parade though at the same time, The Rebbe spoke with tremendous optimism and predicted a major victory for Israel with Peace, and he initiated the Tefillin campaign which reached out to thousands of Jews.

And as we all now know, AN OPEN MIRACLE OCCURRED and Israel, who was 'hopelessly' outnumbered, were victorious, with the help of Hashem.

The Rebbe pointed out in a Sicha (vol 23 p112) that we should take care to recognise all the Divine miracles we have witnessed throughout Jewish history, and in our own personal lives. Only then will we be capable of fulfilling our Divine mission of making the world into G-d's home

Yehoshua and Caleb were awarded for holding strong to their allegiance to Hashem, and many people showed their allegiance in wars by putting their lives at risk and joining the army, for which we are so indebted.

But Hashem has also given all of us the opportunity to show our allegiance to him every day, and with even tiny actions.

This could be by putting a coin in a Charity box, lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov candles, putting on tefillin, learning His Laws and Torah etc.

AND THE IMPOSSIBLE CAN BE POSSIBLE.

Gut Shabbos to all.

ANOTHER FACET OF EDUCATION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 June 2018 · Shabbos 9 Jun 2018 · כ"ו סיון תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV FOR THE UPCOMING WEDDING OF SARA TO AARON GLICK NEXT WEEK! Wishing you much happiness together, and you should build an eternal Jewish home. One simcha should lead to another in your Families, and in our whole extended Family.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary this week. Wishing you to progress from strength to strength with much joy together.

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week. We love you Mendel.

And we wish long life to all the Fisher Family on the Yohrtzeit of Naomi's mother Rosalie, in the coming week. We remember her with fond memories, even as far back as visiting at their house in NJ at the time of your wedding, Naomi. You should have only simchos in the future.

Safe trips for all who are travelling!

For the last 2 weeks we have been looking at a number of aspects of education which were generally focusing on our children or ourselves or others, from the OUTSIDE INWARDS. Ie we are instructing and kind of imposing on ourselves and our children.

There is another aspect to education which is from the INSIDE OUTWARDS.

I saw some very interesting views of The Rebbe on this in last weeks 'Mashiach Day by Day'

In Torah we have, opposing each other the strict views of Beis Shamai and the more lenient views of Beis Hilel.

And mostly Torah judges according to the more lenient view of Beis Hilel.

But it is said that in the time of Mashiach we will be going according to Beis Shamai.

In relation to Education, if we impose extreme standards on someone who is lacking the appropriate sensitivity, such as a young child, it is wrong, and the child may feel stifled, and might rebel.

By being sensitive to the child's level, their growth can be real and natural.

And by internalising Torah's Teachings, we change starting from the INSIDE OUTWARDS.

When Mashiach comes, even although our increased Spiritual sensitivity will lead us to be more careful and strict in Torah Law, (according to Beis Shamai), it will also lead us to more flexibility and freedom.

The example given is that one cannot educate children in the use of cars, fire, knives etc because it would be dangerous for them. But when they become mature enough to take all the necessary precautions, then they can safely benefit from these items.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos, and especially a very Happy one in Boston, followed by a beautiful Chassanah! Mazal Tov!

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

40 YEARS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 June 2019 · Shabbos 29 Jun 2019 · כ"ו סיון תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Pidyan Haben which took place today. BH I was able to see the event on Video call. Wishing you much nachas from Dovber, and much happiness together.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Have a wonderful year in your new home with much new growth and development, and with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week. Go Mendel. Keep up all your good work! Have a happy birthday.

And we cant forget that this coming week is also the Yohrtzeit of Rosalie Fisher AH, Naomi's mother. Wishing you and all your Family long life Naomi.

It was so interesting for me to see that this weeks Sedra Shlach was discussing the 40 YEAR PERIOD that Bnei Yisrael would have to spend in the desert, due to the 40 DAYS that the spies spent in Eretz Yisrael.

And I thought that there must be a connection between this and the 40th ANNIVERSARY which Mommy and I are celebrating this week (English date was yesterday, and Hebrew date is next Shabbos)

Our past 40 years has been such a beautiful period BH, with so much activity and brocha, and with such a beautiful Family BH.

And I came to the conclusion, and it truly feels like this, THAT OUR 40 YEARS HAS FELT LIKE 40 DAYS!!

We should now, BEH, move onto the next stage of our lives for the next 40 years!

The Rebbe explains in a maamer the difference between the spies of Mosheh in this week's Sedra, and the spies of Yehoshua, which we read about in this week's Haftorah.

What actually happened was that the spies of Mosheh came back after 40 days, giving a bad report about Eretz Yisrael, causing the People to feel demoralised and fearful. Therefore Hashem decreed that Bnei Yisrael should be 'punished', and delayed from entering Eretz Yisrael by wandering in the desert for 40 years.

With Yehoshua, he was poised to enter Eretz Yisrael on the East bank of the Jordan, and he sent 2 spies to Jericho only. They brought back a good report which raised the morale of the People, and they then successfully entered Eretz Yisrael, and conquered first Jericho, and then the rest of the Land

The explanation that the Rebbe gives is basically showing the difference between the work of a Tzadik and the work of a Beinoni, and the POWER OF GARMENTS.

The instruction to Moshe was that he should send spies ie if he sees it fit to send (so it was in the hands of Mosheh the Tzadik). Also he was told to spy out the whole land of the 7 Nations who were living there.

The command to Yehoshua was an unqualified command, and therefore applies to everyone, and these spies were only sent to Jericho. (This refers to the work of a Beinoni, which applies to everyone)

To explain, very few people can be a Tzadik straight away, because it is a very high level, but everyone can be a Beinoni first.

The Beinoni is explained by Tanya as someone who spends his whole life battling with his 2 inner opposing forces, always trying to let his G-dly force overcome his animal instincts.

The 7 Nations Mosheh had to conquer, represents man's 7 Emotional attributes, and as it states in Bereishis Rabbah, 'Tzadikim alone are in control of their hearts.'

Jericho represents the GARMENTS OF THE SOUL - Thought, Speech and Action - Jericho expressing the root reiach - scent. As it states in Zohar 'in the scent of your garments.' And because garments are external, they can be utilised by everyone.

Also Jericho was described as the 'lock of the Land.' Ie once Jericho is conquered, the rest of the Land can be conquered.

And this work of conquering Jericho, through the correct use of our Thought, Speech and Deed, can be done by everyone ie through the service of the Beinoni, and using mitzvos (external and physical)

So the analogy of the battle of Moshe and the battle of Yehoshua can be applied to us as individuals

Every person is commanded to scout out, or to examine, our thought, speech and deeds to make sure that they are entirely devoted to Hashem.

And the reason that thought, speech and deed are accessible to man, as opposed to the emotions, is because they are GARMENTS to the soul and external.

And garments, even though they are external, have the power to grant him additional beauty and splendour, and raise him beyond his natural height. And this is because the source of garments transcends the person wearing them. (The opposite is also true that by wearing poor garments, this can give one a descent that exceeds natural lowness!)

And in practical, spiritual terms, the garments of the soul are referring to mitzvos which have the power to raise man way higher than his own capacity.

And the primary service of man in the process of 'unlocking the Land' is to 'turn away from evil and do good', in actual PHYSICAL PRACTICE in thought, speech and deed.

From this victory, we can now turn our attention to conquering the 'rest of the Land' our 7 emotional attributes.

But how can we do this if we are not a Tzadik?

Because before we are born we 'make an oath that we should be a Tzadik and not a rasha.' (Gemorra end of perek beis of Nida). And therefore it must be possible.

And in the future Hashem 'will expand our borders' by conquering also the 3 Nations of Keini, Knizi and Kadmoni (which represent our 3 Intelectual Attributes) with the coming of Mashiach.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

WORK ON FAITH

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 June 2020 · Shabbos 20 Jun 2020 · כ"ח סיון תש"פ

Text says "this week's Sedra Vayishlach", but the content (the spies) is Shelach, the calendar parsha; kept under Shelach.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary on Shabbos. Wishing you much happiness together and nachas from the children.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday, also this Shabbos. We love you Mendel. Keep growing in all areas!

It is also the Anniversary of Mommy and I, next week.

Then there are some Yohrtzeits:

The Rebbe

Our dear father Pesach ben Zalman

And Rosalie Fisher. We wish long life to all.

The order of events in this week's Sedra Vayishlach teaches us many lessons.

Bnei Yisrael have just come out of Mitzrayim, and have had a first-hand view of all the miracles that Hashem has done for them inside Mitzrayim, the splitting of the sea allowing them through on dry land, and then the miracles in the desert with a cloud leading them by day, a pillar of fire by night, manna falling down as food, water coming out of the rock etc

And now Hashem promises them that He is going to take them into Eretz Yisrael, and He says to Mosheh 'If you wish, send spies into the Land to ex-

plore it before entering.' And Rashi says that the People had requested this from Mosheh..

And the spies found giants in the Land, and said, 'We viewed ourselves as locusts, and so did they indeed view us.'

Then, on returning to the encampment after 40 days, 10 of the 12 spies stirred up a huge revolution of the entire community to turn them against going to Eretz Yisrael, and to return to Egypt. This was a very severe transgression.

Why did they lose faith!?

The other 2 spies Yehoshuah and Calev tried to calm and and reassure the people, but to no avail.

Hashem becomes extremely angry, and the result is that 10 of the spies die, Yehoshuah and Calev get rewarded, and all of Bnei Yisrael have to wander in the desert for 40 years. During this time all men currently over 20 will gradually die every Tisha Beav and will not enter EY.

Then the men regret their lack of faith and want to push ahead and go straight into EY to correct their mistake, against the instruction of Mosheh. Hashem is not with them and they are slaughtered by the Amaleki and Cnaani.

And straight after this , in the midst of the ongoing punishments, Hashem is already saying, 'When you come into your Homeland (in 40 years time)... This is what you should do..

The lessons :

1. Even when everything around one looks difficult, and even 'impossible', we should know that everything is still possible, and Hashem can and will help.

Rabeinu Bachaye in Chovev Levavos writes that BITACHON (FAITH), is complete peace of mind, in which a person knows that he can rely on Hashem and trust in Him. When a person contemplates how Hashem loves

him, cares for him, is able to fulfil his needs, and knows what is best for him. And how Hashem alone monitors his life and does good even to those who are undeserving. Then he will feel FULL BITACHON IN HIM.

The Rebbe said that this needs toil to strengthen this belief in our everyday lives.

2. How we see ourselves is how others will see us. If we see ourselves as 'grasshoppers', that is how we will be perceived.

And similarly, if we have a positive view of ourselves, this will generate a positive response

3. Stand up for what is right even when the masses are doing the opposite.
4. Obeying Hashems instructions offers us protection
5. Hashem will never abandon us, even with all of our mistakes and rebellion.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 June 2021 · Shabbos 5 Jun 2021 · כ"ה סיון תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you both much continued success with everything that you do, in both gashmius and ruchnius, and especially with the chinuch of your children. And with much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week. Have a great year Mendel and continue with all the good work you are doing! You give us all much nachas.

We wish long life to Naomi on the Yohrtzeit of her mother next week. We have fond memories of Rosalie, and when this time comes around every year, we realise how she is missed. Wishing you only happy occasions in the future.

Last week I saw and shared a story from The Baal Shem Tov on how important it is to be extremely humble, and this week I saw another article, also from the Baal Shem Tov, about how EXCESSIVE HUMILITY may not be good. (Keter Shem Tov)

So I thought I would share this also, to address the balance.

The theme of the article was "More than we look to Hashem, Hashem looks eagerly to us."

Therefore if we have excessive humility we may believe that we are too insignificant to damage or improve the heavens or the earth.

This leads to anarchy.

Rather we must recognise that we bond with G-d himself with each positive deed that we do.

Therefore we are able to draw down Divine light to all the worlds through our prayer and study (and deeds), and in truth even the angels are sustained from our efforts.

If we would recognise our power, we would throw ourselves into G-d's service with tremendous joy.

We would be in awe of our good fortune.

We would be scrupulous with our every movement and word.

In Tehillim 68:14 the word shefatayim is used - borders

This is related to the word sefatayim - lips.

Hashem waits and watches our lips, eager to kiss them when we pronounce words of Torah and prayer with love and awe!

Who can contemplate this thought without trembling?

The great and awesome King of the Universe is waiting and watching the lips of a truly lowly human!! - Keter Shem Tov

We are an important element of Creation, and WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

EFFORT AND OPTIMISM

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 23 June 2022 · Shabbos 25 Jun 2022 · כ"ו סיון תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and we continue to wish a refuah shleimah for Renee (Rivkah bas Sarah Zlata)

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you both continued achievements in both the material and spiritual with much joy, and nachas from the children.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff whose birthday is on the same day. Have a wonderful successful year Mendel. Enjoy the kiddush on Shabbos BEH!

We wish long life to Naomi and the Fisher Family on the yohrtzeit of their mother this coming week. I am sure she is still missed by all. Wishing you only simchos in the future.

Two short lessons emerged this week from the Sedra Beshalach, and from Hayom Yom, which are connected.

In the Sedra we learn how angry Hashem was with our behaviour and lack of trust, and how He decreed that we would have to wander in the desert for the next 40 years on our way to Eretz Yisrael, and that all the males between 20 and 60, who were convening against Hashem, would die each year on Tisha BeAv in this 40 year period. (excluding Yehoshua and Kalev)

And yet, directly after this decree and juxtaposed, Hashem goes on to say to Mosheh 'Speak to Bnei Yisrael ... When you come to your homeland that I am giving you..'!

Straight away, amongst all the upset and challenges, there is new optimism and forgiveness!

Rashi says that 'He hereby gave the good news that they would enter the Land.'

The Hayom Yom for tomorrow (25th Sivan) from The Rebbe, brings a verse from Mishlei(12:25) - A worry in a man's heart yashchena.

Our Sages (Gemorra Yoma) offer 2 meanings for this Hebrew word yashchena.

- From the root yasichenah (yasiach data - forget or turn one's mind away from the worry) ie If a man has a worry in his heart he should turn his mind away from it. OR
- From the root yesichenah, (siach - to talk or discuss one's problem with others)

The Tzemach Tzedek comments that the 'others' mentioned, refers to those who are completely united with him, and who empathize with him.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Chodesh with good efforts.

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

TESHUVAH

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 June 2023 · Shabbos 17 Jun 2023 · כ"ח סיון תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well.

Mazal Tov on your birthday next week in Australia Sid. I hope you are doing well. Wishing you a wonderful year with good health.

Mazal Tov to Pam Koval on your birthday next week. I hope all is well with you and your Family. Wishing you a wonderful year with happiness, and good health

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week. Keep growing and developing in all areas Mendel and with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on your upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you many more happy years together with many simchos in the Family

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on your upcoming Anniversary. We can at least celebrate with Chani this year. But wishing you both many happy and healthy years together, with much achievement.

Wishing Naomi and her Family long life for the yohrtzeit of her mother Rosalie. Her Neshamah should have an Aliyah. Her memory is still so clear in our minds. Wishing you only simchos in the future.

The main theme this week has definitely been, from all sides, TESHUVAH (Return, and Correction of past mistakes).

We are currently learning all the Laws of Teshuvah in Rambam each day this week, and this week's Sedra, Shlach, also speaks much about this theme.

Because there was so much material and discussion, I would like to just select a few points to share, only one below, and the rest as a PS, attached, for those who have more time.

The generation that came out of Mitzraim and saw the Receiving of Torah at Har Sinai, brings about a glaring question with regard to their rebellious behavior.

How was it possible for this generation to have had all these doubts and complaints against Hashem, after having seen all His miracles with their own eyes!?

As related by Rabbi Gordon, from the Rebbe, It says in Zohar, that the generation that will precede Mashiach, and merit to see Mashiach, will be the reincarnation of this generation that wandered in the desert.

Their TESHUVAH (with correction of these sins) will bring about Mashiach.

And as we are very close to Mashiach, this generation is very likely referring to ourselves, and the work that we need to do!

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos!

Attached to this letter

His "Teshuvah extra points" (Word document)

> PS A few more points of interest from this week on TESHUVAH
>
> Hashem has just reached the 'end of his patience' (14:26 – 14:45) and decrees the punishment of wandering in the desert for 40 years, and that none of the men between 20 and 60 will reach Eretz Yisrael. And yet straight away, in the very next breath (15:1) there is OPTIMISM AND FORGIVEVENESS from Hashem – ".....When you come to your homeland that I am giving to you....." Already instructing Bnei Yisrael about the Offerings that should be

made when they arrive in EY in 40 years time. (ie sinning, , consequences, teshuvah and forgiveness)

Rambam (Teshuvah Chap5:1) – Freewill is granted to all men and women. If one desires to turn himself to the path of good and be righteous, the choice is his. Should one desire to turn to the path of evil, and be wicked, the choice is his.....There is no one who compels him, sentences him, or leads him, towards either of these two paths.....Accordingly, it is the sinner himself who causes his own loss.....”

Rambam Teshuvah 3:4 – “...Throughout the year a person should always look at himself as equally balanced between merit and demerit, and the whole world as equally balanced between merit and demerit. If he performs one sin, he tips his balance, and that of the entire world to the side of guilt, and brings damage to himself. On the other hand, if he performs one Mitzva, he tips his balance, and that of the entire world, to the side of merit, and brings deliverance to himself and others....”

Rambam Teshuva 7:4 - ...”Our Sages declared: In the place where BAALEI TESHUVAH stand, even the completely righteous are not able to stand.

The level of Baalei Teshuvah transcends the level of those who never sinned at all, because Baalei Teshuvah have overcome their evil inclinations.”

Love to all!

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

NEVER TOO LATE FOR TESHUVAH

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 June 2024 · Shabbos 29 Jun 2024 · כ"ג סיון תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah to Claude. Hope things are improving Claude.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary tonight. Wishing you both many more happy years together with much growth, and developing all the good things that you do!

I heard an interesting Dvar Toah from Rabbi Gordon on this weeks Parsha, Shlach, as follows:

We learnt previously about all the miracles that Bnei Yisrael saw and experienced, before, at, and after Har Sinai.

Yet, soon thereafter, we see all the times that Bnei Yisrael were rebelling against Hashem, complaining, being insolent, speaking negatively about Eretz Yisrael, acting immorally etc.

And we think to ourselves, "How could this be? How could they have been so foolish, time and time again, testing Hashem 10 times, after having seen with their own eyes, the greatness and the miracles!?

The price for those actions had to be paid and there were consequences, and people lost their lives.

But TESHUVAH IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE, AND IT IS NEVER TOO LATE.

And the Zohar tells us that the generation before Mashiach will be a re-incarnation of that generation which had to wander for 40 years in the Wilderness.

And it is us who are this generation, as the Rebbe has pointed out that we are the generation before Mashiach.

Therefore it is our responsibility to correct what that previous generation could not do.

We need to recognise that Eretz Yisrael, which Hashem promised to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov belongs to us, and be proud, strong, consistent and devoted, battling against our Negative Inclinations.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

AN OPPORTUNE TIME

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 June 2025 · Shabbos 21 Jun 2025 · כ"ה סיון תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you many more happy and successful years together with much joy and nachas from your Family BEH!

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much success in all areas Mendel with much joy!

Today, 23rd of Sivan, is a special day which is not so well known , but has been promoted by the Rebbe on a number of occasions.

It is said that it is a day when one can freely ask from Hashem to fulfil all ones needs, and because it is still daytime in the US and other places, I wanted to get the email out early, with some attachments explaining it's source, so that as many people as possible could benefit.

And for those where the day has already gone past, it is never too late to show gratitude to Hashem for all the miracles He is constantly doing for us individually, and generally for the whole of Am Yisrael, and to ask for all of our needs.

See below and attached

Gut Shabbos to all!

The Day You Can Ask For Anything

<https://anash.org/category/news> News

כ"ב סיון ה'תשפ"ה - June 18, 2025

In 5743, the Rebbe spoke about the date of 23 Sivan, and said that in line with what happened on this day during the Purim story, Hashem grants any request on this auspicious day.

By Anash.org staff

In the farbrengen of Parshas Shlach 5743 (1983), the Rebbe addressed the date of 23 Sivan.

The Rebbe said: "The Megilla relates that on this day, the 23rd of Sivan, after the hanging of Haman, 'V'yikaru sofrei haMelech- the scribes of the King were called', and they wrote whatever Mordecai commanded.

"Mordechai drafted a royal decree giving the Jews the license to defend themselves and kill all who rise up against them to kill them, nullifying the previous decree of annihilation.

"The decree was dispatched to all 127 provinces of Achashverosh's empire. (Book of Esther, chapter 8). This led to the Jewish people knowing how to defeat their enemies on the 13th of Adar which was then followed by the celebration of Purim.

"Everything from the Torah is eternal, repeating itself each year. This abovementioned decree of Mordechai also repeats itself every 23rd of Sivan. Today the scribes are being called again to draft a royal decree, the 'scribes' being the scribes of Hashem, who is called Achashverosh, being that acharis v'reishis shelo, all belongs to him.

"The sofrim write whatever Mordecai asks. Every Jew is like Mordecai who doesn't bow to anything against the Torah.

"On this day, the 23rd of Sivan, every Jew, even though they are in galus as Mordecai was, and even though there is a darkness, as there was during the decree of Haman, nevertheless, every Jew has the power to accomplish what

he wants, the same way Mordecai accomplished. We can request what we want and our will granted by Hashem Himself."

As the world shakes from one event after the next, the Rebbe's holy words reverberate today more than ever. May we utilize the special day to daven for everything we need, and especially the one real solution, the coming of Moshiach.

Shelach ↑ Shelach · Contents · By date שלח

MITZVOS BEYOND UNDERSTANDING

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 June 2026 · Shabbos 13 Jun 2026 · כ"ח סיון תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you to have many more happy and healthy years together, and continued celebrations BEH!

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary this Shabbos. Wishing you much continued achievement together with much growth in gashmius and ruchnius, all with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you much success in your studies Mendel and preparation for your Barmitzvah BEH, all with much happiness.

We wish long life to Naomi and all the Fisher Family for the yohrtzeit of her mother Rosalie, which is next week. Her neshamah should have an aliyah. We remember her so well with good feelings.

Mazal Tov on the Graduation of Shlomo Levy. Wishing you a great year Shlomo. I believe that you are heading to Melbourne. Wishing you continued happiness with your Yeshiva life and all your activities!

Mazal Tov on the Graduation of Mendel Levy. Well done Mendel! Keep up the good work in both gashmius and ruchnius!

In this week's Sedra Shlach, we learn about Tzitzis (15:39)

Even though Tzitzis are worn by men, the lesson of Tzitzis is for both men and women.

And I saw the following teaching of the Rebbe from Likutei Sichos vol 2 p324-325:

Rashi comments that the Tzitzis (ritual fringes) reminds us of all the Mitzvos, because the numerical value of Tzitzis is 600, plus 8 strings plus 5 knots = 613 (ie the 613 Commandments).

But this is just the fringes.

Why does the Mitzvah also require that we attach the fringe to a garment? It means that there is more to remembering the Mitzvos than a mere total of 613.

Unlike the food that we eat, which becomes absorbed into our flesh and blood, the clothing that we wear is external and separate from our bodies.

Clothing is therefore a metaphor for that which transcends our understanding, and cannot be absorbed by the human mind.

Therefore when fringes extend from a garment, they symbolise that all 613 Mitzvos stem from G-d's will, which utterly transcends human understanding.

And likewise our commitment to their observance must transcend reason.

Gut Shabbos to all!

קרח

Korach

Bamidbar 16:1 · parsha 5 of 10 in Bamidbar · 38 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — SOULS ON FIRE 947
2017 / 5777 — BITTER - SWEET 950
2018 / 5778 — CLINICAL 952
2019 / 5779 — INNER JOY 955
2020 / 5780 — GIMMEL (THIRD) of TAMMUZ AND RAMBAM 958
2021 / 5781 — CONQUEST 961
2022 / 5782 — CLIMBING MOUNTAINS 964
2023 / 5783 — A COMMON PREDICAMENT 967
2024 / 5784 — JOY AND TRAGEDY, WEALTH AND POVERTY 970
2025 / 5785 — LOVE AND LIGHT 973
2026 / 5786 — IMPOSSIBLE? 975

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

SOULS ON FIRE

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 July 2016 · Shabbos 9 Jul 2016 · ג' תמוז תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

This coming Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of my father A'H, who is also the father of Chanan and Reuven.

Wishing you both long life, and the Neshama should have an Aliya.

There are more events that took place this week, and I tried to find a link between them as far as possible.

I saw them all under the heading SOULS ON FIRE.

Souls on Fire is the name of a book written by Elie Wiesel AH who passed away this week.

This book was one of the Books which stirred my interest or curiosity into Judaism in the days when I was far away and disconnected.

At that time it gave me the feeling that there was an interesting Chassidic world, hidden deep within the world that I knew. And many events subsequent to that all guided the Path which Hashem helped me along.

And so I am grateful to Elie Wiesel for this.

In 1994, we had an interesting guest come to our home for Shabbos. He and a friend were back-packing through Europe, and they had contacted Lubavitch for accommodation while in London.

We were given the opportunity to be the hosts. Anyone remember them?

At that time they were not frum, and Yosef (one of the guests) was studying under Elie Wiesel in Boston.

I told him my story about Souls on Fire, and that I had lost my original copy, and that it was out of print.

He then, on his return to Boston, got me a signed copy from Elie Wiesel!!

See the letter he wrote to me, (attached) which I received together with a signed copy of Souls on Fire.

A few years later, someone approached me in Shul on Shabbos with a beard and hat and kapota, holding the hands of 2 little boys.

He looked at me with a smile on his face as if he knew me, but for the life of me I could not recognise him.

Yes you guessed it. This was Yosef, ANOTHER SOUL ON FIRE!!

Gimmel Tammuz on Shabbos is also the Yohrtzeit of the Rebbe.

And during this week, on 28 Sivan, was when the Rebbe first arrived in USA. I think this was 1941.

Many Chassidim mark this day as a Yom Tov, because this is the day that the Rebbe started to transform America and the world, SETTING THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF SOULS ON FIRE.

I saw my father AH a few months before he passed away when we were visiting SA.

He wasn't well, and I don't think he had ever put on Tefillin in his life.

I suggested to him to start putting on Tefillin, in the same way as he was taking the pills to make him better, and he agreed.

He cried when he put them on.

What made him cry?, and why did he put them on every day thereafter until his passing? May I suggest that THE LATENT NESHAMA WAS TOUCHED.

And Pesach and Chani's Wedding Anniversary was on 28th Sivan.

And Menachem Mendel Davidoff's birthday this week was on 28th Sivan.

Anyone notice the connection of his name to that day!

And Mommy and Daddy Anniversary also this week.

For those interested in History I am also attaching below, a fascinating article recording the Rebbe's arrival in New York, an interview with Elie Wiesel describing the Rebbe, and another fascinating story of the connection between Elie Wiesel and the father of 10 children who was killed by terrorists this week -Rabbi Michael (Miki) Mark AH

http://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/2623573/jewish/The-Story-of-the-Serpa-Pinto.htm/sc/wa_share/mobile/false

http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=41199
<http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=41199&alias=i-miss-the-rebbe-terribly>
&alias=i-miss-the-rebbe-terribly

http://www.jpost.com/Not-Just-News/The-strange-case-of-the-mezuzah-Eli-Wiesel-and-Rabbi-Miki-Mark-459658

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Don't forget Rambam 5 minutes per week.

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

BITTER - SWEET

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 June 2017 · Shabbos 24 Jun 2017 · ל' סיון תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

This time of year, at the end of Sivan, always has this feeling of BITTER-SWEET.

The 1st of Tammuz is Mommy and I Anniversary, and then the 3rd of Tammuz is Daddy's Yohrtzeit (Pesach ben Breina AH)

The 3rd of Tammuz is also the Rebbe's Yohrtzeit. And the Yohrtzeit of Shmueli Bassin's grandfather AH.

And then there are many other events around this ie Today is when the Rebbe and his wife arrived in New York. Today is also the wedding Anniversary of Pesach and Chanie, and the birthday of Menachem Mendel Davidoff. We have just come back from celebrating his opsher (first haircut at 3 years old)

And this is the time when all our studious members of the Family are finishing exams and celebrating.

So Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie.

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel. The opsher celebration was beautiful BH.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on getting excellent results for his 'pre-requisites' to do Nursing. Good luck for your application to Nursing School in August! Well done Hirshy.

Mazal Tov to Chava who has just finished her Seminary year in New York, and is now travelling to SA to be a Leader at their Winter Camps, and preparing to do Mathematics next year BEH.

I hope to post more results as they come through, and let's hear also results from others who are studying!

This week's Sedra Korach also has an element of Bitter- Sweet.

It is always sad when there is rebellion and fighting and friction between people, and in this week's Sedra, Korach and a group of his followers incites a rebellion against Mosheh Rabeinu. Mosheh tries patiently many peaceful moves to avert the rebellion but all warnings are ignored, and as predicted by Mosheh Hashem opens up the earth where they were swallowed up alive.

So what is the SWEET side to this story?

I saw a Hayom Yom this week from the Rebbe that there was a blessing contained in 'They went down to the pit alive'

They did Teshuvah. For Teshuvah can only be effective while one is alive. This then was the blessing, that even in the pit they will live, and will be able to do Teshuvah.

And I did have a real LOL this week.

For those who find reading long articles and books difficult, you will surely find this Book easy to read.

Please see attached - the book only costs $7.99 and can be purchased on Amazon. It is currently one of Amazons best sellers!

By the way I don't think that this book is a joke. I think it has been brilliantly researched!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and the ability to see how even the bitter parts of our life, are also sweet (and a laugh can help).

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

CLINICAL

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 June 2018 · Shabbos 16 Jun 2018 · ג׳ תמוז תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and settling down from the beautiful Family reunion at Sara and Aaron's wedding in Boston BH. Mazal Tov again!

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you many happy years together with continued growth and development. It was so nice to be with you at your home again.

And the Anniversary of Mommy and I.

Mazal Tov Hirshy on your graduation! You should keep going from strength to strength!

This Shabbos we have 3 yohrtzeits. Ie the yohrtzeit of our Rebbe - The Lubavitcher Rebbe, our (Chanan, Reuven and my) father, and the grand-father of Shmueli Bassin in Australia. - Gimmel Tammuz.

The CLINICAL theme of this week very much reflected off the wedding of Sara and Aaron this week, and relates to the above yohrtzeits.

One of the dreams of my father AH, was that Chanan, Reuven and I should one day make a CLINIC together.

We did all qualify as doctors and went on our different journeys, and that clinic did not quite materialise, but I am sure his 'presence' at the wedding would have given him much joy, to see us together, and how extensive have become the Medical connections in our family and extended family BH!

And as Aaron's brother joked in his speech, that 10% of the US cardiologists were at the wedding. (plus all the other specialists, dentists etc, and how about all the ones who could not make it to the chasanah)

The Rebbe had 2 strokes and he was hospitalised once at Sinai and once at Bet Yisrael (I may have the names wrong?)

I always knew that Eddie Fisher was one of the cardiologists on the team that was treating the Rebbe after his first stroke (Eddie is Naomi's brother, who is Ashley's wife, and this is a whole long story in itself, not for today)

But at the wedding this week, I had a major surprise to find out that we had another distant relative on the team treating the Rebbe after his second stroke.

This was Burt (cant remember his surname) who is a brother-in-law of Bruce and Gila Kriegel, (Bruce is Annette Davidoff's brother) who I met at the wedding and with whom I had a nice chat , together with David Kriegel (a dermatologist)

In short - Wow! Such a big Family reunion, with so many connections and inter-connections, beyond our understanding, but giving us the scent at least, of something beautiful and beyond.

Thank you also Brian for visiting the grave of our father when you were in SA recently. Whenever we meet they are always short and sweet!

And to end with a short dvar Torah which I saw in Hayom Yom of this week, authored by The Rebbe.

The Alte Rebbe responded as follows to a young genius famed for his intellectual gifts - 'Spiritual and physical are antithetical in their very essence. A superior quality in the physical is a deficiency in the spiritual.

In material matters, one who is satisfied with his lot, is an individual of the highest quality. A person possessing this trait, will, through avoda, attain the highest levels.

In spiritual matters, however, to be satisfied with one's lot is the worst deficiency....'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and many more simchos where we can be together.

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

INNER JOY

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 July 2019 · Shabbos 6 Jul 2019 · ג' תמוז תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This Shabbos is Gimel Tamuz, which is the Yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and also our father Pesach ben Zalman

I wish our Family long life and the neshamah should have an aliyah.

Mommy and I would like to thank all the children who sent us beautiful notes for our wedding Anniversary which was today.

I have personally read each note over a few times. They are so beautiful, and will be kept and cherished! Thank you!

And of course also for the dinner and all the decorations and participations that took place.

Mommy and I are also proud of the way each of the children, in their own way, is developing and becoming INDEPENDANT.

I bring this point up because it is a nice introduction to the Maamar from the Rebbe which is being learnt this week.

It is discussing the difference between the 2 terms used for the 12 Tribes ie SHEVET and MATOS.

And the reference is from the Sedra Matos which comes up in a few weeks time.

Both shevet and matos refer to a branch of a tree.

Shevet is while it is still attached to the tree and is wet and supple, and matos is a stick which has been detached and is now hard and dry.

While children are still at home and dependant on their parents, this is the level of shevet.

When they move away from the home and become independent, this is the level of matos.

Similarly, before each of us comes down to earth, our neshamah is still attached above and receiving nurture - level of shevet.

But then we are born, and become independent down on earth - level of matos.

What is the point of the neshamah coming down to this low level on earth from its lofty level above?

This is because down here the neshamah has the opportunity to reach even higher than before.

To explain the Rebbe uses mainly the example of food.

On earth the neshamah comes up against many temptations and indulgences which it has to contend with.

For example it could get caught up with indulging in eating for wrong reasons, and too much etc, and the neshamah senses that it is wrong and starts to feel uncomfortable and restricted, as if in prison, and wants to scream out for help.

Through contemplation t5he person realises how coarse the physicality has made him, and covered him over.

The person has become cold to G-dliness and has no enthusiasm to learn Torah or do Mitzvos.

It is like 2 people with their backs to each other (the person and the neshamah) and far away from each other.

But then when they make the move to turn towards each other and face each other face to face, this brings about a tremendous JOY AND CLOSENESS and sets off a great new energy.

Practically, man is at a much higher level than the level of vegetable and animal.

But food also has an element which is beyond man, because it enlivens him.

And when man realises his predicament and draws himself away from the indulgences of eating, it is as if he puts himself lower than the food.

And through this effort of lowering himself, he reaches a much higher level, because 'anyone who lowers himself (or herself) in this manner, Hashem Himself comes to raise him to a very high level, where spiritual and physical are all the same to him.

This frees the neshamah from its feeling of restriction and brings about MUCH JOY

And it is known that '1 hour of TESHUVAH in this world is greater than all the life in the World to Come.'

And that 'the Baal Teshuvah can reach a level greater than Tzadikim.'

And that is why we have the opportunity on earth to reach a greater level than before descending.

The Rebbe mentions even a further point about JOY, and that is, that the Mitzvah of Teshuvah does not have to be with difficulty and screaming.

As with all Mitzvos, it can also be done with JOY.

Gut Shabbos, and we should all be together soon with our beloved departed ones with the coming of Mashiach

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

GIMMEL (THIRD) of TAMMUZ AND RAMBAM

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 June 2020 · Shabbos 27 Jun 2020 · ה' תמוז תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Today is the auspicious day of Gimmel Tammuz (3rd of Tammuz) which is the Yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and it is also the Yohrtzeit of our dear father.

It is so touching for me to see these 2 yohrtzeit candles standing next to each other on the mantle-piece in our home BH!

Thank you to the many members of the Family who gave Tzedaka today for this occasion and may Hashem's blessings come from this!

I would like to link these 2 yohrtzeits, with the Studying of Rambam, from an interesting Dvar Torah I heard this week.

The learning of Rambam was very close to the Rebbe's heart and he set up cycles so that all Jews can learn it together, either 3 chapters a day over 1 year, or 1 chapter a day over 3 years.

When I wrote my summaries of Rambam, I dedicated this work to our parents AH.

Daddy was niftar 1983.

The Rebbe started the Rambam campaign 1984.

The first siyum HaRambam (end of first cycle) was Yud Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday.

The siyum this year is in 2 week's time on 17th Tammuz (9th July), which concludes the 39th cycle.

And so the 40th Cycle starts on the 10th July 20

AND TAKE A GUESS WHEN THIS CYCLE ENDS NEXT YEAR?

Yes, Gimmel Tammuz!

The first cycle ended on the Rebbe's birthday, and the upcoming 40th cycle, with all the significance of the no. 40, ends on Gimmel Tammuz next year, the Rebbe's yohrtzeit!

This is going to be a significant year of learning!

Besides giving us the opportunity to learn the whole breadth of Torah through the Rambam, we also have the opportunity to link to a campaign very close to the Rebbe's heart, every day.

I am attaching here the link on our website to download the whole set of Studying Rambam series for free, using the Discount Code RAMBAM - <https://rambampress.com/pdf-downloads/> https://rambampress.com/pdf-downloads/. Through this Rambam can be on our mobile devices and PCs.

And, Batsheva is in the process of completing the Study Schedule for the next 3 years, using English dates, and giving exact page numbers in our books, to improve ease of location. - <https://rambampress.com/daily-study/> https://rambampress.com/daily-study/

It says in Pirkei Avos that 40 years old is for bina - understanding

So lets make a resolution today, on Gimmel Tammuz, that we will participate in this upcoming 40th cycle of learning Mishneh Torah, and that by next Gimmel Tammuz, our understanding of Torah and life will be significantly enhanced.

It should be that this siyum will take place in Yerushalayim where the whole of Bnei Yisrael will be celebrating together with our loved , departed ones.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

CONQUEST

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 10 June 2021 · Shabbos 12 Jun 2021 · ב' תמוז תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This time of year always has a bitter sweet taste in that it is our Anniversary (tonight - 2nd Tammuz) and the Yohrtzeit of our dear father ah and dear Rebbe is on 3rd Tammuz. Their neshamos should have an Aliyah.

An interesting theme came to my mind this week after learning the Maamer from the Rebbe called 'Vayishlach Yehoshua' together with Chava, on 28th Sivan a few days ago

The Rebbe said this Maamer on 28th Sivan 1976 in relation to his arrival in the USA on that day in 1941. (It only came to light many years later that this was the day that The Rebbe arrived with his wife in New York, coming out of war-torn Europe)

The theme of the Maamer is the CONQUEST of Eretz Yisrael by Yehoshuah, and how every individual can achieve conquest in our own personal lives.

The arrival of the Rebbe in US set off a huge transformation of Judaism in America and thereafter throughout the world. And on a smaller individual scale , the arrival of Dad and his brothers (Uncle Dave and Uncle Morris) together with their mother, to SA, set off the growth of our Family - all starting from an almost penniless situation in a foreign land. This is the ability that we as Jews have had to get used to over the centuries, and have achieved, with the help of Hashem, to a remarkable degree.

But more interestingly, is how the Maamer describes how we can CONQUER OUR OWN DIFFICULT NATURES. It was actually also interesting how this week's Tanya was so relevant to the Maamer.

The Maamer was short and I am going to try to only share its brief outline.

How did Yehoshuah conquer EY? He was commanded to send spies, (different to Moshe's spies) and he sent them only to Jericho! (again different to Mosheh)

Jericho was the key to unlock the conquest of the whole Land, and therefore all the 7 Nations living in the Land gathered there to fight (Tanchuma Behaalosechah).

Conquering the Land in a spiritual sense means that every Jew must conquer all the faculties of his body and animal soul (Canaan) and transform them to G-dliness (Eretz Yisrael) - Divine soul.

And so why Jericho?

The word Jericho derives from the root reiach, which means scent. And scent is alluded to in the Zohar as relating to GARMENTS (3:186a)

Jericho therefore represents the 3 garments of our soul - Thought, Speech and Action, and the 7 Nations represent man's 7 Emotional faculties. (The other 3 Nations Keni, Kenisi and Kadmoni represent man's 3 Intellectual faculties)

So Yehoshuah is saying, Go and spy out (investigate) what is going on with your thought, speech and actions (are they devoted to Hashem?). This is an area which is within the capability of every Jew to operate. We cannot deal with Emotions because this is mainly, only within the reach of Tzadikim.

(That is why, with Moshe, where the spies were sent to the whole Land, Hashem said 'I am not commanding you to do this')

Tanya showed this to us in perspective in this week shiur (Shaar Hayichud.. Chap 9) as follows:

The life force in Physicality is as nothing in comparison to the life force in the letters of Speech, which in turn is as nothing in comparison to the life force in the letters of Thought, which in turn is as nothing in comparison to the life force and level of the Emotions from which this Thought is derived, which in turn is as nothing to the life force and level and degree of the 3 Intellectual Attributes, (Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge), the source of the Emotive attributes. And the Holy One Blessed be He is elevated and exalted by infinite myriads of degrees more than Wisdom (the highest of the Intellectual faculties) in relation to the life force in Action (- which is a 5 degree elevation)

And yet the key to conquering this whole Land lies in our hands by conquering our Jericho, our thought, speech and action. This is because Torah and Mitzvos which we use in the process, are the GARMENTS of the Divine Soul. (as opp

GARMENTS AND CLOTHING BRING PRESTIGE TO A PERSON AND RAISE HIM TO AN EXALTED STATURE BEYOND HIS STATUS AND CHARACTER

An Example

One of the notes in the Maamer was as follows: 'The Alte Rebbe was once puzzled by the fact that a certain BUSINESSMAN who had passed away, was immediately ushered into Gan Eden. Later the matter became clear to him that this individual possessed lofty garments, since he was fluent in Torah and Mishneh which he would review in his mind whenever he was free of his business affairs day and night. He would also dispense large sums of money for charity secretly and with self-sacrifice, even to his enemies and antagonists....'

Gut Shabbos to all

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

CLIMBING MOUNTAINS

2022 / 5782

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 June 2022 · Shabbos 2 Jul 2022 · ג' תמוז תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I have heard that Renee's health is improving BH but she still needs our prayers. Love from all of us.

This Shabbos is Gimmel Tammuz, which is the yohrtzeit of The Rebbe and my father AH. (I believe that one has to put one's spiritual teacher first) - see below for their mention.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on having started putting on Tefillin 2 months before his Barmitzvah. Well done Mendel and for saying the Maamar so well BH!

Mazel Tov to Batsheva on her magnificent achievement in reaching the top of mount Kilimanjaro for the charity Gift. And I'm sure that she greatly appreciates all those who sponsored her! Thank you. And thank you Batsheva for providing the theme of this week's email.

CLIMBING MOUNTAINS, both physically and spiritually, came up in many forms this week. I would like to address each one individually, but they are all connected.

Sedra Korach

In a sicha from the Rebbe from Shabbos Parshas Korach 5750, the Rebbe explains how, even although Korach was a wicked person, we can learn positive lessons from him. (And the whole Sedra was named after him!)

- Even though he was an ordinary person, his desire was to be the High Priest and to attain the holiness of the 'Holy of Holies'.
- The second lesson is that even although we have been granted the ultimate gift to strive for holiness (to be a High Priest), by using our talents and skills, we also have free choice to act wisely or foolishly in the process.

As Rambam writes in the last halachah of Shmitah and Yovel:

'Not only the tribe of Levi, but any one of the inhabitants of the world whose spirit inspires him and he resolves in his mind to set himself apart (from worldly pursuits) and stand before God to serve Him and minister to Him, and to know God, (and he then acts on his resolution) proceeding in a morally upright manner, as God made him, and he discards the yoke of the many reckonings which people seek, he will attain the holiness of the Holy of Holies ...and Hashem will provide...'

The Rebbe

The Rebbe taught us to advance every day in all areas, and there was no limit to this advance . Even after passing on from this world, the traditional wish is that the neshamah should have an aliyah i.e. continue advancing higher.

Daddy

My father and his brothers set up our families from very poor beginnings as refugees to SA from Lithuania, to give us all, more than ample opportunity to climb the 'mountain of life'. In fact our home was at the base of a small mountain called 'the koppie', and I used to love climbing this ridge often. (which was part of our journey of life - such good memories). His neshama should have an aliyah. Thank you Daddy from all of us.

Mashiach Day by Day

In today's message, the Rebbe speaks about human potential, and that we, as human beings, have G-dly potential way beyond what we can imagine.

Batsheva

And coming back to Batsheva, you have certainly proven, that man (and woman!) have the potential to do things way beyond our imagination! See attached photo!

Gut Chodesh and Gut Shabbos to all

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

A COMMON PREDICAMENT

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 June 2023 · Shabbos 24 Jun 2023 · ה' תמוז תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy who was chosen to be the valedictorian of his graduating class at Yeshivah. We are so proud of you Shlomo, and the speech that you made BH. Michayil el chayil

This week, and actually, today, Gimmel Tammuz, we have 2 yohrtzeits.

Ie our Rebbe, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and our father ah, Pesach ben Zalman.

I would therefore like to share some thoughts linking these 2 yohrtzeits, and also to connect this to an article I saw from this coming week's Pirkei Avot.

A COMMON PREDICAMENT that we find ourselves in with life, when we fall behind in certain areas, is to feel despondent.

This despondency makes us feel that any efforts that we could put in, would be inadequate, and have no effect. And we therefore refrain from taking any action at all.

However there is a solution.

The Rebbe and his wife moved from France, when Germany invaded in June 1940, and travelled to Niece, then Marseille, then to Lisbon where they got onto the SS Serpa Pinto ship with other refugees , to reach New York in 1941.

At this time America was a melting pot that had consumed hordes of European Jews with the lure of secularism. And this was not made easier by the challenges of earning a livelihood in a new country.

Much opportunity was available, and Jews moved away from their Traditional Jewish life. This was also due to a lack of Jewish infrastructure.

The Rebbe recognized these problems, and, undeterred, he set to work straight away, at first under the leadership of the Previous Rebbe, and after 1950, as the leader.

There are thousands of stories of miracles performed by the Rebbe, and yet when we read or watch or listen to the Rebbe giving instructions to people, there is no aura of a miracle worker - MOSLY JUST CLEAR INSTRUCTION TO PERFORM A SIMPLE MITZVAH, AND TO REKINDLE JUDAISM.

70 or so years down the line his achievements are astounding! And still growing with the impetus he set up! Judaism is alive and well and flourishing BH

In Chap 4 of Pirkei Avot (4:2) it says "Ben Azzai said: Run to do even a simple Mitzvah, and flee from a transgression. For one Mitzvah brings about another, and one transgression brings about another ...."

This 'running' is referring to enthusiasm, but the Rebbe explained in Biurim (Chinuch 15), that even if a person is in a state of limited understanding, they should still 'run' to do the Mitzvah, since the act of 'running' will bring him closer to 'running naturally.'

Each act, even a minor Mitzvah, connects us with the Infinite One!

I had the privilege to be with my father a few weeks before he passed away.

He also had come out of war torn Europe to a secular South Africa, and had to fight for survival at a very young age and without a father.

He was not noticeably observant, and I would say that he had never put on tefillin. He certainly didn't have his own pair.

I suggested to him to put on tefillin.

He could easily have said no with the following excuses, 'I haven't done this my whole life, I am not well, what is such an act going to help anyway, after I take them off I will be the same as I was before..etc.

BUT HE HAD THE COURAGE AND STRENGTH TO SAY YES. I bought him a pair and he cried when he put them on.

He spent 10 minutes of his day, every weekday, putting on tefillin for the last few weeks of his life.

Gut Shabbos to all

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

JOY AND TRAGEDY, WEALTH AND POVERTY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 4 July 2024 · Shabbos 6 Jul 2024 · ל׳ סיון תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Wishing Claude a Refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary today. Wishing you many more happy and successful years together with much continued growth in both material and spiritual!

It is also the Anniversary of Mommy and I on Rosh Chodesh Tammuz BH!

Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff in Australia on his birthday tomorrow. Hope all is well with you Sid, and wishing you a Happy and Healthy year!

Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff whose birthday is today. Wishing you a great year Mendel with much growth and achievement with your studies, development of middos and with much joy!

Our father's Yohrtzeit is on the same day as The Rebbe's, on Gimmel Tammuz. We are making a kiddush in shul this Shabbos for these 2 events. The Rebbe's fervent wish of Mashiach Now, should be fulfilled, when we will all be together again.

We also wish long life to Naomi and all the Fisher Family on the Yohrtzeit of her mother tomorrow. Her Neshamah should have an Aliyah.

The above seems to reflect the atmosphere of Tammuz, a mixture of emotions, JOY AND TRAGEDY.

The Frierdike Rebbe was released from his imprisonment on 12th - 13th Tammuz. The Rebbe was niftar on 3rd of Tammuz. Then we start the 3 Weeks of Mourning on the 17th of Tammuz. And we have our personal simchos and losses of Family. And then it is also known that the days of fasting and mourning in our Exile, will be transformed to days of Joy in the Future!

Along the same lines as those above, and therefore I felt that it was connected, I also came across a Dvar Torah from Pirkei Avot from this week (Chapter 4). (We read 1 chapter per week during the Summer.)

The theme here is about WEALTH AND POVERTY

Chap 4:9 says:

Rabbi Yonatan said: Whoever fulfills the Torah in poverty, will in the end fulfil it in wealth. Whoever neglects the Torah out of wealth, will in the end neglect it out of poverty."

Some explanations:

- Despite his pressing need to earn a living, he sets aside time to study (Meiri)
- Also refers to intellectual and spiritual poverty. "When a person fulfills Torah, even when there is lack of inspiration, he is promised that in the end he will fulfil it amid spiritual light and inspiration." (R. Avraham of Slonim - Mimaayanot Hanetzach)
- Also refers to the oppression of the Evil Inclination. "When a person fulfills Torah even under the oppression of the Evil Inclination, he will ultimately be freed of his negative tendencies. He will be able to serve Hashem on a level similar to the heights that we will achieve in the Future when we will be like angels, and like Adam before the sin." (Midrash Shmuel)

And the Rebbe states that just recognizing our spiritual poverty, enables us to achieve spiritual wealth.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

LOVE AND LIGHT

2025 / 5785

Gut Chodesh, Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 June 2025 · Shabbos 28 Jun 2025 · ב' תמוז תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

This upcoming week is always a mixture of emotions.

The 3rd of Tammuz is the yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and on the same day many years previously, it was the day when his father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe, was released from imprisonment in Russia.

The yohrtzeit of my father is also on the 3rd of Tammuz, and the Anniversary of Rahel and I is on the 1st of Tammuz.

In trying to find a connection between these events this week, I thought that the most appropriate theme that came up was LOVE FOR A FELLOW JEW

This was noticed in the Sedra (Korach) where we see how Mosheh Rabeinu went out of his way extraordinarily, in a last ditch effort to get Dasan and Aviram to repent, and prevent their confrontation and rebellion. (16:25)

And then this theme of Ahavat Yisrael came up in 2 Hayom Yom's which I would like to share.

Hayom Yom 28th Sivan

The Tzemach Tzedek..When one helps a Jew make a living, even to earn a mere 70 kopkes when he is selling a calf, the gates of all heavenly palaces are open for him..

The Rebbe Maharash added, "Though ideally one should know the path to the heavenly palaces, this is not crucial. What is of fundamental importance is to help another person wholeheartedly and with warmth - to take pleasure in doing a fellow Jew a favour."

Hayom Yom 2nd Tammuz

The Alte Rebbe writes in his siddur, that before the morning prayers, it is appropriate to say, "I hereby undertake to fulfil the Commandment of Love your fellow as yourself."

This implies that fulfilling the Mitzvah of Ahavas Yisrael is the gateway through which a person is enabled to enter and stand before G-d in prayer.

And in the merit of this Mitzvah one's prayers are accepted.

The efforts made by the Rebbe and Frierdike Rebbe, for Ahavas Yisrael, reaching out to every single Jew regardless of their standing, transcends all human understanding,

The love between my father ah and his brothers ah towards each other and towards their parents, creating an empire from nothing, was magnificent. When I say that I never heard even one harsh word between them, it is not an exaggeration.

And of course an Anniversary is a time to renew one's love for each other.

May we all try to follow the Mitzvah of Ahavat Yisrael and bring more light to our lives, and the world.

Gut Chodesh and gut Shabbos to all

Korach ↑ Korach · Contents · By date קרח

IMPOSSIBLE?

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 June 2026 · Shabbos 20 Jun 2026 · ה' תמוז תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) and Naomi on their Anniversary today. Wishing you many beautiful years together!

Today is also the Wedding of Talya and Michael! Congratulations and wishing you all a very happy celebration and much happiness!

In addition, today is Daddy's Yahrzeit -Percy Pesach ben Zalman ah. Wishing all long life! Daddy,s neshamah should have an aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Kevin Ossey on his birthday next week. Wishing you much success Kevin in both the material and Spiritual. Thank you for all the work that you are putting into our Family Tree!

Today, Gimmel Tammuz, is also the Yohrtzeit of our dear Rebbe, the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

The month of Tammuz, as is reflected by today's events, often has this mixture of dark and light, sweet and bitter, but I saw a very interesting editorial, in relation to Gimmel Tammuz, which I would like to share.

The Rebbe taught us that the events of a particular day, reveal the unique energy and message embedded in that day, and 2 significant events in Jewish history are associated with Gimmel Tammuz:

· Joshua's conquest of Eretz Yisrael. As the Jewish people were in the process of conquering EY, daylight was running out, and the day needed to be longer to complete the task. At Joshua's request to Hashem, the sun stood still, (for approximately a day), allowing them to finish the work entrusted to them by

Hashem. The miracle was not an end in itself, but was granted to be able to fulfil a mission. (Joshua 10:13)

· Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson's death sentence for his courageous efforts to preserve Judaism in Russia, was commuted to exile on this day in 1927. The Rebbe explained that this was the start of the process which would lead to an unprecedented resurgence of Torah and Jewish life

Although separated by thousands of years, these 2 events share a striking theme.

In both cases, a mission that appeared to be impossible, was given new life

· In Joshua's time more DAYLIGHT was granted to complete his task

· In 1927, what appeared to be a monumental threat to Jewish life under Soviet oppression, became the beginning of a remarkable revival. The Rebbe took over from the Frierdike Rebbe when he passed on in 1950, and continued his work until he passed on in 1994.

It has been 32 years since the passing of the Rebbe on Gimmel Tammuz 1994, and yet his teachings and directives continue to inspire people across the globe, *both Jewish and non-Jewish alike*

From Chabad centres on very continent, to individuals discovering greater meaning and purpose to their lives, 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 in an exponential manner, for our mission to come to completion with the Coming of Mashiach and our Redemption!

May we be inspired by the Rebbe's unwavering belief that each of us has the ability to bring more light, purpose, kindness and G-dliness into the world, and overcoming our own difficulties *even when things may SEEM TO BE IMPOSSIBLE*

The Rebbe passed on, Gimmel Tammuz, and so did our father.

I feel extremely honoured for our connection to this great day!

May it be a blessing for our whole and extended Family.

Gut Shabbos to all!

חקת

Chukas

Bamidbar 19:1 · parsha 6 of 10 in Bamidbar · 39 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — HAPPINESS 979
2017 / 5777 — DIVINE PROVIDENCE 981
2018 / 5778 — CORRECTION 984
2019 / 5779 — HISTORY AND EGO 986
2020 / 5780 — MYSTERY 990
2021 / 5781 — ONE G-D AND TWO WORLDS 993
2022 / 5782 — PURIFYING WATERS OF KNOWLEDGE 995
2023 / 5783 — TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES 998
2024 / 5784 — PEACE IN THE HOME 1000
2025 / 5785 — SWEET WELL WATER 1002
2026 / 5786 — CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY 1004

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

HAPPINESS

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 July 2016 · Shabbos 16 Jul 2016 · י' תמוז תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli on their Anniversary. Wishing you many more happy and healthy ones.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her upcoming birthday.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy for getting excellent results for his end of year . You should go michayil el chayil!

Freida and Mendel are taking over a Shlichus position for 7 weeks in Hawai next week. We wish you success with this and to enjoy it.

Mazal Tov to Channah for getting her Hygiene Certificate for her Cooking business. Wishing you much success Channah!

As it is end of year let's hear also if there are any more results from our cousins and anyone I have left out?

The main 'vort that was running through my week was on HAPPINESS. From a few angles.

One of them was from the Zohar as follows:

It says in the Zohar that sadness blocks the channels through which Hashem would pour down his Blessings to us.

And The Rebbe said that it is a Mitzva to spread this vort to those around us.

In other words to use all different techniques to block out sadness if it tries to gain entry, and to replace immediately with HAPPINESS.

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos

RAMBAM 5 Minutes per week - Sefer Korbonos P 10, last 3 Chaps of Mechusrei Kappara, and then the 4 Chaps of Temura - which brings us to the end of Sefer Korbanos!

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lYiYbJRR8ZYU3FEzbBJdZq9soOXZeYGi6c-QCok2e s94/edit

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 June 2017 · Shabbos 1 Jul 2017 · ז' תמוז תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly for qualifying as a Dental Therapist. We are all so happy for you that you succeeded after putting in so much effort BH. Wishing you much further success in your career Shmuly, and the bringing up of your Family etc!

Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli for your upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you much happiness and success together.

I believe Freida and Mendel are back from their Birthright trip as leaders. What a nice achievement BH.

Mazal Tov again to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for the main Opsher event for Mendel this Sunday. We are already seeing him with a kappel and tzitzis, and we now look forward to seeing him with short hair BEH

An interesting event occurred this week which is also linked to a section of Torah that I have been learning.

In last week's email, I mentioned that Chava was heading to Jhb. SA to be a leader in the Lubavitch Winter Camp.

I then got a nice surprise email from Kerry Lee, saying that her daughter is registered on this camp! The last time I remember seeing you Kerry Lee, was when you were about 9 years old, and I was in SA with some of our family, and you came with us on this steam train ride to Magaliesberg mountains - I bet a lot of our children remember this with fond memories. I think Rivky won this trip for us by writing an essay competition while we were in SA at

one of the super-markets! - and now Chava, who probably wasn't even born yet, is going to cross paths again with you and your daughter!!

Some people call this a COINCIDENCE, some say 'ISN'T IT A SMALL WORLD', but Judaism calls it HAShGACHA PRATIS - DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

This period in the month of Tammuz is connected to the liberation from prison of The Frierdike Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, about which there is so much to talk about, but there will not be space for it this week.

However, I have been learning one of his Maamorim this week, 'Hateh elokai oznecha', and there was a section discussing DIVINE PROVIDENCE, so I thought it would be nice to share what I learned.

The Frierdike Rebbe explains that at very high levels of spirituality, spiritual and material are equal.

And this also applies to Divine Providence ie the engagement and care of Hashem with the highest spiritual beings, is exactly the same as His engagement and care for the very, very lowest of physical items, PROVIDING every creation very precisely, with exactly what it needs.

Therefore this applies not only to spiritual beings who have only very fine form and no matter, but also to man (who has speech, intellect etc), animals (who can move from place to place), plants (who have visible life but cannot move from place to place), and the inanimate (which also has life, but this is highly concealed within heavy matter).

The Baal Shem Tov explains that everything that occurs in Creation is for a specific purpose, and he brings the following example:

Hashem has certain reasons to need to effect certain movements, and it is in the middle of summer, and there is an intense heat. Suddenly there arises a

big wind which blows leaves off a tree, and whips up straw from the roof and from the grain, and these get swept across the earth from place to place.

And then the wind stops as if it had never existed.

And it was the intention of this wind, which arose from Hashem, to effect the movement of these leaves and straw and grain, to a certain and specific place.

AND IF THIS APPLIES TO PIECES OF STRAW, HOW MUCH MORE SO DOES IT APPLY TO HUMAN BEINGS, AND HOW MUCH MORE SO TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE WHO ARE A NATION CLOSE TO HASHEM! - that everything that happens to us, and everything that what we see and hear, is directly connected to the intention of Hashem in relation to ourselves.

Various sources from Hallel and Tehillim were cited.

And when we will take time to think deeply into this matter, how Hashem provides food for all his creatures, even tiny animals, there will develop within us a bitachon, a trust, that how much more so will it apply to us, and that we do not need to over-confuse our minds with all kinds of schemes to make our livings.

However we do need to create a 'vessel' ie set up a business, for the blessings to be fulfilled. And this business does need to be framed and based on the principles of Torah. ie We do also need to work.

We can therefore, thereafter, have a clear mind to pray to Hashem with a full heart and set aside times to learn His Torah, because the food for our Soul should be as important to us, as the food for our body.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

CORRECTION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 June 2018 · Shabbos 23 Jun 2018 · י' תמוז תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli for their Anniversary on Shabbos. Wishing you continued success and growth in Australia with much happiness. Hope we can see you all again. It has been a long time.

Mazal Tov to Eliana whose birthday is next week. Have a wonderful year Eliana. We love you.

Last week Froma mentioned that it would be nice to see a summarised Family tree of the close family, and so Batsheva put one together quickly, which I have attached. Thanks Batsheva!

And for those who are interested in a very extended Family tree, Rahel, over the years, had set one up on the web-site Geni. Be in touch with her to gain access and further input. It is worth looking at!

I saw an interesting extract of a sicha from the Rebbe on this week's parsha, Chukas.

The parsha spans a period of more than 40 years, from the Red Heifer (before the sin of the spies), then through 40 years of wandering in the desert as a punishment for the sin of the spies, and ending with the death of Aron and Miriam, and the sending of more spies(?), and conquering of Sichon and Og.

This begs 2 questions:

1. Why did Torah choose to backtrack to a time before the sin of the spies, and then suddenly jump forward to the end of the Jewish Peoples journey in the desert?

2. After the previous error and tragedy of the decision to send spies when Hashem had already promised to give us the Land, and then in addition the spies gave a bad report on the Land, why was Moshe again sending spies to Yaazer?! And to amplify this question further, after conquering the Land of Sichon and Og (in the West Bank) the Jewish People settled in these cities of the Amori etc, without entering the Land of Israel. Does this not resemble the same mistake and attitude of the previous spies!?

In truth however, the very opposite was the case

The Jewish People of the second generation SOUGHT TO CORRECT THE SIN OF THE PREVIOUS GENERATION BY SHOWING ADDITIONAL ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE CONQUEST OF THE LAND. (this answers the first question)

With regard to the second question, the second generation did not only survey the Land, they also conquered and captured its villages.

And, while Hashem had told them that they were going to conquer the Land of the Seven Nations (Canaan - Israel - East of Jordan), they never-the-less desired to settle also West of the Jordan, because they knew that these were part of the extended borders of the Land of Israel which was promised to Avraham.

This deep love and enthusiasm demonstrated by the second generation also reflects the name of the parsha Chukas, which means ENGRAVED. Ie this love had totally permeated their hearts and mind to bring about a TRUE CORRECTION, and restoration of their previous spiritual level.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

HISTORY AND EGO

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 July 2019 · Shabbos 13 Jul 2019 · י׳ תמוז תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli on your upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you a successful year with much nachas from your children.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week. You are turning 6 Eliana, and you are already such a big girl BH. A big hug from all of us and wishing you a happy year!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his Law exams for this year with such good results. Wishing you to go from strength to strength Zalmy. Well done!

In this week's Sedra Chukas, the 40 years that Bnei Yisrael had spent in the desert was now coming to an end, and they were about to enter Eretz Yisrael.

They were travelling Northwards on the East side of the Jordan. (see map attached)

The Emori Nation under leadership of Sichon, had captured territory from Moav and Amon between the 2 rivers of Arnon and Yabok.

In the Sedra, Bnei Yisrael request from Sichon, king of the Emori, permission to pass through his land, but Sichon refused, and went out to confront Yisrael.

A battle ensued and Sichon was executed and Yisrael conquered all their territory, all the way up to Amon on the N side of the river Yabok. So the territory they captured, used to belong to Amon before Sichon conquered them.

(Yisrael then battled further with Og king of Bashan etc)

The Haftorah for this week, occurs 300 years later, and is kind of a continuation of the battle that occurred in our Sedra.

The story here is about Yiftach the son of Gilead, who was a mighty Israeli warrior.

He was an outcast in his family because he had been born through a prostitute, and he fled to the land of Tov. Here he built up an army.

A few years later, the Ammonites were preparing to attack Yisrael, and so the elders of Gilead went to the land of Tov to get Yiftach to come and fight for them.

Of course Yiftach was not happy to comply, but when they promised him that he could be their leader, he agreed and returned with his army.

He then sent a message to the king of Ammon and asked, why are you attacking us?

And we hear the same old familiar dialogue and lies that we still are hearing today. And Yiftach answers ' If you believe this land is yours why have you waited for 300 years before trying to recover it?'

A divine spirit descended on Yiftach and he made a vow to Hashem, that if Hashem makes him successful in the war, (he was thinking of offering a sacrifice), he would offer to Hashem the first thing he sees coming out of his house when he returns!

Yiftach was victorious in the battle conquering 20 cities.

But guess who was the first to approach him when he returned home? (This is a continuation of the Haftarah)

His daughter!!

Now there is a way to annul vows in halacha, and the Priest wanted Yiftach to come to him to perform the procedure.

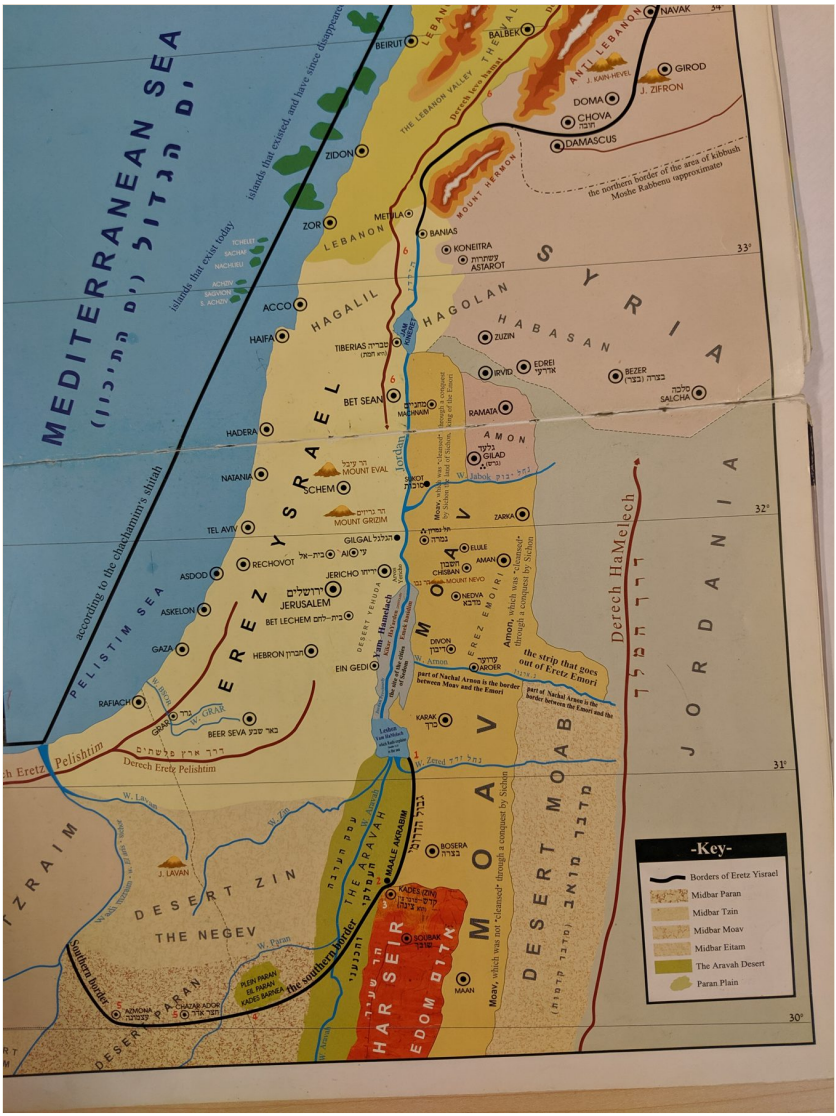
BUT YIFTACH REFUSED, SAYING THAT HE WAS THE LEADER OF ISRAEL, AND THE PRIEST HAS TO COME TO HIM!

This did not happen and his daughter was exiled to a forest where she had to live in solitary confinement for the rest of her life, being only allowed visits from her friends a few days each year!

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing us success in conquering our difficult egos!

Attached to this letter

Map of the route north on the east of the Jordan (photo)


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ים התיכון
islands that exist today
islands that existed, and have since disappeared
according to the chachamim's shitah
PELISTIM SEA
BEIRUT
BALBEK
NAVAK
ANTI LEBANON
J. KAIN-HEVEL
GIROD
J. ZIFRON
DOMA
CHOVA
DAMASCUS
ZIDON
ZOR
METULA
BANIAS
LEBANON
THE LEBANON VALLEY
MOUNT HERMON
the northern border of the area of kibbush Moshe Rabbenu (approximate)
KONEITRA
ASTAROT
ACCO
HAGALIL
HAGOLAN
SYRIA
HABASAN
HAIFA
TIBERIAS
Jordan
ZUZIN
IRVID
EDREI
BEZER
SALCHA
BET SEAN
MADHMAN
RAMATA
HADERA
AMON
GILAD
Jordan
NATANIA
MOUNT EVAL
SHCHEM
SHKOT
MOUNT GRIZIM
Moav, which was "cleansed" through a conquest by Sichon
TEL AVIV
ZARKA
GILGAL
AI
ELULE
AMAN
ASDOD
RECHOVOT
JERICHO
CHISBAN
MOUNT NEVO
ISRAEL
JERUSALEM
NEBVA
ASKELON
BET LECHEM
Jam Hamelech
Nachal Arnon
MOAV
EREZ EMORI
Amon, which was "cleansed" through a conquest by Sichon
GAZA
HEBRON
EIN GEDI
DIVON
ARO'ER
the strip that goes out of Eretz Emori
RAFIACH
part of Nachal Arnon is the border between Moav and the Emori
part of Nachal Arnon is the border between the Emori and the Moav
KARAK
BEER SEVA
Derech Eretz Pelishtim
Derech HaMelech
JORDANIA
Zered
J. LAVAN
BOSERA
MAALE AKRABIM
DESERT ZIN
THE NEGEV
Southern Border
the southern border
KADES (ZIN)
SOUSAKH
HAR SEIR
EDOM
MAAN
Moav, which was not "cleansed" through a conquest by Sichon
DESERT MOAB
-Key-
Borders of Eretz Yisrael
Midbar Paran
Midbar Tain
Midbar Moav
Midbar Eitam
The Aravah Desert
Paran Plain

Chukas, Balak ↑ Chukas, Balak · Contents · By date חקת - בלק

MYSTERY

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 July 2020 · Shabbos 4 Jul 2020 · י"ב תמוז תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Adam on the birth of a son named Eliezer Amram. This is such wonderful news and we wish you many simchos with much nachas from him and all your children

And of course we wish the same Mazal Tov to great-grandparents, Renee and Roy, great-uncle, Brian.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week. Keep up your amazing progress Eliana. We love you.

Mazal Tov again to Shlomo, who now had his official Graduation Ceremony. So proud of you, and wishing you success in Yeshivah next year!

And of course wishing Mazal Tov to the deserving parents Shmuel and Rivky. Lechaim!

Bnei Yisrael are now in Trans Jordan waiting to cross into Eretz Yisrael, and this is where they now remain for the next 15 Sedras, till the end of the Chumash

This Sedra Balak, continuing also into the next 2 Sedras, is full of many mysteries and questions, which I find so interesting.

I would like to share only one aspect of these many questions from a sicha of the Rebbe, which also reveals an important practical lesson.

The following questions arise:

1. At this stage, prior to entry into the land shouldn't Torah be discussing all the practical aspects needed for entry ie how to conquer, borders, how to settle, all the new laws needed for agriculture etc. But instead we now have this drama story of Balak and Bilam, who are both virulent haters of Bnei Yisrael (Balak more than Bilam) who are out to destroy us totally?
2. The whole story of how Balak the king of Moab hires the magician Bilam to curse Bnei Yisrael was this behind the scenes. How was this plot known to us?
3. What comes up in this Sedra (through Bilam!) is the voicing of Torah's most explicit hint to the coming of Mashiach? Why bring up Mashiach at this stage?
4. And if Torah wanted to let us know about Mashiach at this stage, why did it need to be through this big drama of Bilam and Balak?
5. And why should a whole Sedra be named after such a wicked person?
6. And if we were going to name the Sedra after a wicked person, why not Bilam, around which the whole story revolved (Balak's role was just to hire Bilam)?

To answer the first 3 questions, there is a strong theme of PROPHECY AND MASHIACH running through the Sedra.

The fact that Torah records something happening outside of our Nation proves that Moshe had prophecy. And prophecy was also emanating from the mouth of Bilam, the greatest prophet of the gentile nations.

And Torah wanted to introduce to us the concept of Mashiach before entering EY. Because Hashem does not want us to serve Him just by obeying His commands, but rather in an inspired way, with a vision which aligns with Hashems own vision.

So why did this have to be done through such evil people, and on top of that why name the whole Sedra after Balak?

This is because the era of Mashiach will result in the annihilation and transformation of evil.

It is therefore now self-evident why the prophesy of this era had to emanate from the mouth of the idolatrous anti-Semite - Bilam

And why was the Sedra therefore not named Bilam?

Because Balak was the greater anti-semite. He was the initiator to destroy. Bilam would have not emerged if not for Balak.

And, surprise surprise, Balak is actually a direct ancestor of Mashiach. This is because Ruth, the Moabite convert, was a descendant of Balak. And King David, the progenitor of Mashiach, was a great grandson of Ruth!

How does this relate to us.

Balak also means 'cut off' or 'dead'

It sometimes happens, that when we are on the verge of something new and big, it is preceded by feelings of dejection.

We feel we are worthless or cut off, and our life feels terrible.

At such times, we must remember that this 'Balak' state that we are in, is the progenitor of break-through and 'Mashiach'.

What we need to do is renew our connection to our ultimate goal by adopting Hashem's dream as our own, rise above ourselves, and from there play our own unique role in the world.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

ONE G-D AND TWO WORLDS

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 June 2021 · Shabbos 19 Jun 2021 · ט' תמוז תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their wedding Anniversary tomorrow. Wishing you a great year together, with many simchos BEH!

Mazal Tov to Eliana who has a birthday next week. Wishing you to continue with all your good work Eliana, giving your parents much nachas.

This week's Parsha is Chukas, teaching us among other things, the Laws of the Red Heffer, and we are also in the period celebrating the birthday of the Frierdike Rebbe, and his release from Soviet prison in 1927.

In relation to these events I saw 2 short but powerful messages which I wanted to share.

The Frierdike Rebbe

In 1927 in Leningrad, the Soviet officials viciously cracked down on any form of religion, and of course they plotted to bring an end to all observance of Torah and Mitzvot.

Many Rabbis fled the country or kept a low profile except the Frierdike Rebbe who decided single-handedly to fight the Soviet regime. He organised an underground network of chedarim, mikvaot etc , and dispatched hundreds of his Chassidim to be teachers, Rabbis shochtim and mohalim throughout the USSR. He was relentless. If one teacher was arrested he would immediately send a replacement.

He was arrested on 15th Sivan 1927, and taken to the Shpalerne prison, reserved for the most dangerous criminals, and notoriously scary. Even while in

jail, he was undaunted by his captors, and refused to co-operate with them in any way.

Once a frustrated officer pulled out a gun and sarcastically said "This toy has succeeded in opening many mouths which would not speak!"

The Frierdike Rebbe calmly answered, "That toy can open the mouth of one who has many gods and one world. I however am not frightened by your toy, for I have but one G-d and two worlds!"

He was sentenced to death by firing squad, but with prayers and world-wide efforts was released on 12th Tammuz of that year.

This is but one attribute of the Frierdike Rebbe who we are celebrating, and who then proceeded with his job of reigniting Judaism throughout the world together with his son-in-law, The Rebbe.

Chukas

To purify a person who had become impure by contact with a corpse, "Have them bring a completely red cow which has no blemish on it, and has never had a yoke upon it ..." (Numbers 9:2)

The laws relating to this purification are complex, and it is very difficult to find such a red cow, but basically once found there was a procedure to use its ashes etc to sprinkle on an impure person to bring about purification.

Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak of Lublin has an interesting explanation of the above verse, as follows:

"If a person considers himself perfect without finding the smallest trace of fault, this is a sign that he has never borne a yoke - the yoke of Heaven.

He who accepts the yoke of Torah is always cognizant of how far he is from perfection."

Gut Shabbos to all

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

PURIFYING WATERS OF KNOWLEDGE

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 July 2022 · Shabbos 9 Jul 2022 · י׳ תמוז תשפ״ב

Dear Family

I hope every one is well, and that Renee's health is improving

Mazal Tov to Eliana whose birthday is next week. So happy that you and your Mommy are here with us visiting BH. Wishing you a wonderful year with lots of achievements in both secular and kodesh!

We welcome Sara (nee Davidoff) and Aaron Glick to the Family group! So happy that you have joined, and it brings back good memories of having been with you all on our recent trip to Boston. Please feel free to contribute and let us know all news and achievements from your Family.

In this week's Sedra Chukas, we learn about the process of purification from impurity, using the ashes of the Red Heifer.

These Laws fall into the category called Chukim which are beyond our understanding [the other categories of Jewish Laws are Edim (eg keeping of the Festivals), and Mishpatim (civil and criminal law)]

And interestingly, for all who are learning 1 chapter per day of Rambam's Mishneh Torah, we learnt the same theme in the last chapter of the Book of Purity this week ie the laws relating to Mikvaot (Ritual bathing).

I would like to share the concluding halachah (law) of Mikvaot, and the whole Book of Purity:

Rambam

"It is a clear and apparent matter that the concepts of purity and impurity are Scriptural decrees and they are not matters determined by a person's understanding, and they are included in the category of chukim.

Similarly, immersion in a mikveh to remove one's impurity is included in the category of chukim. Because impurity is not mud or filth that can be washed away with water.

Instead, the immersion in the mikvah is a Scriptural decree and depends on the focusing and intent of one's heart. Therefore our Sages said: "When one immersed, but did not intend to purify himself," it is as if he did not immerse.

In the same way that one who focuses his heart on purifying himself becomes purified once he immerses in a mikveh, even though there was no change in his body, similarly, one who focuses his heart on purifying his soul from the impurities of the soul, which are negative thoughts and not good character traits, becomes purified when he resolves within his heart to distance himself from such counsel and immerse his soul in the WATERS OF KNOWLEDGE. And Ezekiel 36:25 states: "I will pour over you pure water and you will be purified from all your impurities and from all your false deities, I will purify you."

Pirkei Avot

And a cute, connected story linked to this week's Pirkei Avot (5:21), and the above - "Ben Bag Bag said 'Delve and delve into it (the Torah) for everything is in it...'

"A king once built a beautiful palace. He hired 4 painters and instructed each one to paint one of 4 walls in the banquet hall over the course of a year. The painter of the most beautiful wall would receive the greatest reward.

Three of the four painters worked diligently to paint their walls. The fourth idled about all year.

At the end of the year the fourth painter took a mirror like material and spread it across his wall, which was now 'most beautiful' since it reflected the beauty of the other walls.

The wise king instructed that a bag of gold be hung on each of the 3 walls as a reward for the three painters.

When the fourth protested, the king said 'What do you mean? There are 3 bags of gold hanging on your wall!..." (Likutei Batar Likutei citing Sichat Chulin shel Talmidei Chachamim)

Gut Shabbos to all!

Chukas, Balak ↑ Chukas, Balak · Contents · By date חקת - בלק

TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 June 2023 · Shabbos 1 Jul 2023 · י"ב תמוז תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Eliana. Wishing you a Happy Birthday for next week Eliana. I hope you had a nice trip back home from London, and wishing you a year with much achievement!

This week's Sedra is Chukas and Balak.

At the end of Chukas, Bnei Yisrael start the CONQUEST OF THE LAND by warring with Sichon and liberating Trans Jordan (21:24)

I found the interpretation of verse 21:27 interesting. It says 'Al ken yomru HAMOSHLIM boyu Cheshbon.....'

The simple translation and Rashi's explanation is that Sichon had sought the help of 'hamoshlim' (those who speak in parables ie Bilam) to capture the city of Cheshbon.

The Hebrew word 'hamoshlim' can have 2 meanings ie 'rulers' or 'those who speak in parables.'

The Hebrew word 'cheshbon' can also have 2 meanings ie 'the name of the city of Cheshbon' or 'an accounting.'

The verse is therefore not only describing the history of what occurred with the conquest, but it is also giving us a lesson on how we can TAKE CHARGE OF THAT PART OF OUR NATURE WHICH IS IMPULSIVE

The Baal HaTurim points this out and explains that the first 4 words of the verse 21:27 equals numerically 'Eleh hem hamoshlim beyitzram'. Ie THESE ARE THE ONES WHO RULE OVER THEIR NATURES.

Chassidus helps to explain this as follows: (As mentioned by Rabbi Gordon)

Hamoshlim, those who rule over their animalistic inclinations, boyu, come, cheshbon, and take an accounting of where you are up to, so as to CONQUER THE LAND (TAKE CONTROL OF YOURSELVES)

And similarly, it says in Pirkei Avot 4:1, "..Eizehu gibor (who is a mighty one)? Hakovesh es yitzro (He who conquers his inclinations)...UMOSHEL berucho (and RULES over his nature)...He is greater than one who conquers a city."

Gut Shabbos to all

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

PEACE IN THE HOME

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 July 2024 · Shabbos 13 Jul 2024 · ז׳ תמוז תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing Claude a refuah shleimah.

One of the themes that came up this week was PEACE (In relation to the passing of Aharon HaKohen in this week's Sedra, whose hallmark was making peace between Jews), and how this relates to refining ourselves:

- Our Sages say that whoever instills peace in his own Family is considered to have instilled peace amongst the entire Jewish Nation

Every person can influence his home

- Our Sages comment on the verse 21:18 in this week's Sedra Chukas "..and from the Wilderness to Matana." as follows:

Matana is the name of a place, but it also means 'a gift' in Hebrew.

So they explain the verse to mean: He who makes himself into a 'wilderness' ie he works on refining his character until his ego is as ownerless as a wilderness, will be truly worthy of receiving the precious 'gift' of the Torah.

- In the Maamar called Hechaltzu, which is a treatise on Love of a Fellow Jew from the Rebbe Rashab, this theme again came up:

A person who is in touch with the Holy side of himself will have an ingrained humility, which leads to an acceptance of others, which leads to PEACE

Whereas a person who is primarily influenced by the negative side of their nature, characterized by selfishness, will give rise to separation and division, with an ultimate result of baseless hatred towards a Fellow Jew.

It is known that Torah brings PEACE to the world.

This month features both the Frierdike Rebbe and The Rebbe

The Frierdike Rebbe instituted the daily study as laid out sections, of Chumash, Tanya and Tehillim, known by the acronym ChiTaT.

And the Rebbe added to this the programme of studying Rambam's Mishneh Torah daily, either 3 chapters per day over 1 year, or 1 chapter per day over 3 years. Children can also participate by learning Sefer HaMitzvos in parallel with the learning of the adults.

Wishing everyone a Good and Peaceful Shabbos

Chukas ↑ Chukas · Contents · By date חקת

SWEET WELL WATER

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 July 2025 · Shabbos 5 Jul 2025 · ט' תמוז תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you a year of good health and happiness Sid! I hope all going well with you and Elaine and Family in Melbourne!

Mazal Tov to Eliana Davidoff on her Batmitzvah Birthday next week. Wishing you much continued success in everything that you do Eliana, and to continue giving your parents much nachas! Also wishing you much joy with every Mitzvah that you can now do officially!

In this week's Sedra Chukas, I saw a short interesting Dvar Torah on the verse, "Then Israel were moved to recite this song - Arise o well...." (21:7)

Based on the works of the Rebbe, rising well-water signifies our aspiration for Divine consciousness.

Just as salty sea water is purified and made drinkable by passing through subterranean channels, so our focus and desires in life are purified by our soul's descent from Heaven into the materialism of this world.

The acute awareness of our distance from G-d, intensifies our yearning for Divine closeness, purging all foreign desires from our consciousness.

The intensity of this yearning elicits an equal Divine response, where Hashem answers our yearning by revealing His presence to us as we study His Torah.

Gut Shabbos to all

Chukas, Balak ↑ Chukas, Balak · Contents · By date חקת - בלק

CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 June 2026 · Shabbos 27 Jun 2026 · י"ב תמוז תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Eliana in both the material and Spiritual, with much happiness!

In this week's double Chumash portion Chukas Balak, we hear a lot about Bilam, who was a Gentile Prophet.

In verse 21:27 it says, “About this war, the allegorists (in Hebrew *hamoshlim)* said, ‘Enter Cheshbon (the name of a city)!’ May it be rebuilt and re-established.....”

And Rashi says that the allegorists refer principally to Bilam who spoke in parables.

Moshlim in Hebrew also has the meaning of ‘ruling over’

And cheshbon in Hebrew also has the meaning of ‘taking account’

And in relation to this, the Baal Haturim says that the numerical value of the first 4 words of the verse is equal to the words *Eleh hem hamoslim beyitzram * - These are those who rule over (*moshel)* their inclinations.

Chassidus enlarges on this and explains that the way to rule over one’s inclinations is through accounting (*cheshbon*).

Ie we need to set aside time every day to take account of our actions and inclinations, and keep making improvements.

In this way we ‘rebuild and re-establish the land’ ie WE TAKE CONTROL OF OUR 'LITTLE CITY'

As it also says in Pirkei Avot, *'Ezehu gibor –* Who is a mighty one? He who subdues his evil inclination, as it is said, 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that rules his spirit is greater than one who takes a city.' (Pirkei Avot 4:1)

Balak then hires Bilam to curse and destroy the Jewish People (which Bilam also wanted to do!) but instead what came out of his mouth were some of the greatest blessings for Am Yisrael in the form of parables, one of which is the prediction of the Coming of Mashiach – ' I see it but not now. I observe it but not in the near future. A star (King) will rise from Yaakov, and a ruler will be appointed from Yisrael. He will slay the leaders of Moav and penetrate all the children of Shes. Edom will be overrun .....and Yisrael will become prosperous.....(24:17 and on)

Gut Shabbos to all!

בלק

Balak

Bamidbar 22:2 · parsha 7 of 10 in Bamidbar · 40 of 54 in the Torah
8 letters

2016 / 5776 — IMPRISONMENT ? 1007
2017 / 5777 — OUR ENEMIES AND A SOLUTION 1010
2018 / 5778 — FINE BALANCE 1013
2019 / 5779 — KING 1016
2021 / 5781 — INTRIGUE 1018
2022 / 5782 — NOT TO BE FOOLED 1020
2024 / 5784 — ALONE BUT NOT LONELY 1023
2025 / 5785 — DYNAMICS OF OUR JOURNEYS 1025

2020: read together with Chukas, see MYSTERY

2023: read together with Chukas, see TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES

2026: read together with Chukas, see CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

IMPRISONMENT ?

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 July 2016 · Shabbos 23 Jul 2016 · י"ז תמוז תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope you are all well.

Welcome back from Australia Batsheva, and thank you Baty and Shmueli and Mrs Bassin for hosting.

This week we commemorated the release from Soviet prison of The Frierdike Rebbe in 1927.

The Stalin regime were known to have killed 20 million people, and many other people who were arrested at the same time as the Rebbe were killed.

Yet the Frierdike Rebbe was not only fearless with his imprisonment, but also made an absolute decision to not co operate at all with the prison officials.

Governments around the world rallied for his release, and even after he was granted freedom after his one month or so imprisonment, he refused to go in to the carriage because it would have meant travelling on Shabbos!

After his release the Frierdike Rebbe said a sicha on birkat hagomel.

This is a prayer said when a person has survived through 4 dangerous situations ie

1. Imprisonment - Chavush

2. Illness - Yissurim

3. Going over the seas - Yam

4. Going through a desert - Midbar.

The first letters of those 4 Hebrew words spell out CHAIM (life) and our Rabbis link this to the Pasuk 'Vechol HACHAIM YODUCHA sella'

The Frierdike Rebbe then goes on to show that besides the physical danger, each one of these areas has a Spiritual element ie

1. Imprisonment - the Yetzer Hara (evil Inclination) rules over the person and doesn't allow him or her to serve Hashem

2. Illness - The heart and head are blocked up ie the head cannot absorb or understand Torah, and the heart does not wish to come close to Hashem.

3. Seas - Person is drowning in the worries of business and the world, and disturbing him from keeping the Mitzvos.

4. Desert - Dryness with snakes and scorpions - person has no enthusiasm for anything Holy

AND THEN THE REBBE SAYS THAT ALL THESE ITEMS ACTUALLY COME FROM HASHEM!

AND WHY?

SO THAT THE PERSON, THROUGH THESE, SHOULD COME TO A HIGH LEVEL OF CLOSENESS AND SERVICE TO HASHEM. BECAUSE A JEW HAS THIS POWER TO OVERCOME.

Another very interesting point about Birkat Hagomel, and the beautiful integrated nature of all parts of Torah, is visible if we look at kapitel 107 (Psalm 107)

The kepitel starts HODU L'HASHEM.

If you then read through the kapitel you will find the word YODU come up 4 times.

And similarly the word YITZAKU (called out) comes up 4 times.

And within each of these 4 sections you will find a description of one of the 4 dangerous situations for which Birkat Hagomel is said!!!

And there is much more to it and deeper.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and success and joy with overcoming problems.

5 MINUTES OF RAMBAM PER WEEK - Sefer Tahara, Hilchos Tumas Meis, Chaps 1-7 - PAGE 3

https://docs.google.com/document/d/11HZfgZ_lp03yxfX9g1vYZbkseHUQzf7RaexeLEoU k0s/edit

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

OUR ENEMIES AND A SOLUTION

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 July 2017 · Shabbos 8 Jul 2017 · י"ד תמוז תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his first year of Law with very good results BH! Well done Zalmy!

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday tonight! We love you Eliana.

Today is also the birthday, and the day of redemption from prison, of the Frierdike Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson and is a day of great joy in the Chabad Calendar.

He had many ENEMIES through his life, but he stood up with complete fortitude to them all, and was instrumental in not only keeping Judaism alive through terrible trials of Communist Russia (Stalin), Hitler yimach shemam, imprisonment etc, but also causing Judaism to thrive against all odds.

In this week's sedra Balak, we come up against other ENEMIES of the Jewish People ie Balak King of Moab and the sorcerer Bilam, who he employed to help him destroy us.

Bilam was a very powerful person. In fact the Midrash states that in some aspects he was as powerful as Mosheh Rabeinu. (but on the side of Evil)

In an interesting sicha from The Rebbe, we see that there is a connection between Bilam and Amalek, another arch-enemy of the Jewish people. (Likutei Sichos Vol 2 p 338)

If you look at the first 2 Hebrew letters of Bilam and the first two letters of Amalek, it spells Bilam.

And similarly if you take the last 2 letters of Bilam and the last 2 letters of Amalek, it spells Amalek. Ie there is a strong connection between them:

בלעם – Has link to Jewish root in Lavan

עמלק – Has link to Jewish root in Eisav

However no matter how powerful Bilam was, and how deep their hatred was for the Jewish People, he states that he can only say what Hashem allows him to say in trying to curse us.

So he and Balak persist in attempting to search out the weak points in the relationship between Hashem and our People, and to listen out for the time when Hashems anger may arise against us according to our misdeeds, and to try and take advantage of those periods.

3 times Bilam tries to utter curses, but each time he has to be obedient to Hashem, and blessings come out of his mouth instead, according to Hashems instructions.

How do we counter our enemies?

In the same way that that the Hebrew letters of Bilam and Amalek are linked together, so are the Hebrew letters of Yirah and Ahavah.

Let's take a look:

יראה – Fear of Hashem and their implications of refraining from doing aveiros.

אהבה – Love of Hashem and their implication of fulfilling the positive mitzvos.

Of the 2 qualities Yirah is more essential and that is why it comes first.

The parallel between the above 4 Hebrew words is not only an exciting coincidence, but is a result of a deeper connection that exists between these forces of Good and Evil.

The Rebbe goes on to analyse these 4 forces more deeply, but the practical lesson that comes out for ourselves (because our external enemies have also our own INTERNAL ENEMY counterparts within ourselves) is, that when we go out into the world to perform our mundane activities ie when we leave our Home of Torah and Mitzvos, we should build a fence.

A fence means a protection, in that we should establish fixed guidelines to ensure that our spirituality is not impacted by our mundane activities, and to establish a framework to be able to thrive in our new surroundings.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and looking forward to having Reuven and Chana Lieba with us.

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

FINE BALANCE

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 June 2018 · Shabbos 30 Jun 2018 · י״ז תמוז תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Pesach and Chanie are in Eretz Yisrael, and I heard that they at the Kotel at the same time when Prince Philip visited! I wonder who was the more important British citizen there that day! Yerushalayim should be speedily rebuilt in our days!

A theme that kept recurring this week was the trials and tribulations experienced by the Jewish people in general through history, and which also reflects in the individual life of each of us.

In this week's sedra, Balak, we see Balak employing Bilam to curse and destroy the Jewish People.

But Hashem was with us, protecting us, and instead forces Bilam to give us blessings of the highest order relating to our Final Redemption through MASHIACH!

However at the end of the sedra Balak and Bilam do manage to negotiate a weakness via the women of Moav and Midian, arousing the anger of Hashem and the death of twenty four thousand Jews.

Then the Daily Rambam was speaking about the Laws of a Gentile who wants to become a Jew (ger), and how the Bet Din speaks to him.

They inspect his background, ask him why he wants to convert?

They tell him that the Jews are afflicted, crushed, subjugated, strained, and suffering comes upon them.

They tell him the fundamentals of Faith, and the punishments that may come about through disobeying the Commands, but he is also told of the rewards for their observance.

We tell him that The World to Come is hidden away only for the righteous - they are the Jews.

The fact that you see Israel suffering difficulty in this world, reflects the good that is hidden away for them. Because if they will receive an abundance of good in this world, their hearts may become uplifted, and then err, and lose their reward of The World to Come.

And so how do we manoeuvre between all these 'contradictory' forces and emotions in our lives, of suffering, poverty, wealth, doing what is right, not erring, and understanding what lies behind it all?

I think a nice answer came in the Mashiach Day by Day of yesterday, which describes why it is Dovid Hamelech's dynasty from where MASHIACH will arrive.

Dovid exemplified 2 seemingly opposite qualities.

On the one hand he was the epitome of kingship, because he was naturally exalted and aloof.

On the other hand, Dovid was selected to be the king because of his humility and willingness to submit to Hashem's will.

He did not care about what others thought of him, or politics, or favours, due to his humility. He only did what was right and what would bring honour to Hashem. (and with much strength)

And his heir was King Solomon, which shows additional qualities of the dynasty. He had great wisdom, and in his era there was much peace and prosperity.

So it looks like the answer is a combination of humility, strength and wisdom! - lots of homework for us, but then we get it all BEH!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

KING

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 July 2019 · Shabbos 20 Jul 2019 · י"ז תמוז תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Devorah Leah, whose sister Chana had a baby girl in Virginia.

Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina who are making a kiddush this Shabbos for the birth of Tiferet. I believe that many members of the Family are going to spend Shabbos in Tarzana, and that Brian and Sharon will also be participating BH. Enjoy, and have a wonderful Shabbos. Only simchos for all members of the Family and extended Family.

This week's Sedra is Balak, and it is interesting that a Sedra named after a wicked person, is one of the main places where Torah informs us of the coming of MASHIACH!

Bilam (one of the greatest non-Jewish prophets) is hired by Balak to curse Bnei Yisrael, but he says that he cannot say anything which Hashem does not allow, and instead lands up blessing Bnei Yisrael with the highest of blessings.

In v24:17 he says 'I see..a star will rise from Yaakov, and a ruler will be appointed from Yisrael...who will slay the leaders of Moav etc.

And Rashi says this is referring to KING DAVID

Even although the coming of Mashiach is hidden in the words of Bilam, the Haftorah, which always is a reflection of the Sedra, speaks specifically about the coming of Mashiach (Micha 5:6 to 6:8)

And then I saw this week, something about the concept of KINGS which relates to us (Mashiach Day by Day)

When the Rambam describes that 'Mashiach will be a King from the House of David', it is not only only describing the fulfilment of the promise from Hashem, but it is also describing a necessary component of Mashiach ie from the qualities of David. Ie

1. He was the epitome of Kingship because he was naturally exalted and aloof
2. On the other hand he had tremendous HUMILITY and was willing to submit to G-d's Will

These qualities are inter-dependant.

David was so humble and self-effacing that he did not care what others thought of him.

He did not seek favours, was not empowered by his peers, and nor was he afraid to do what was right, or to do that which would bring honour to G-d.

Similarly with ourselves, when we worry only about what is right, and not what others think of us, WE BECOME KING OVER OURSELVES AND OUR SURROUNDINGS.

Redemption begins with a humble commitment to doing good.

Gut Shabbos to all

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

INTRIGUE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 June 2021 · Shabbos 26 Jun 2021 · ט"ז תמוז תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This week's Parsha is Balak which is a most fascinating one, full of mystery and intrigue around every verse, especially if one reads the commentaries.

Bilam (a high powered non-Jewish Prophet) and Balak (King of Moav) who were enemies, and evil people, get together because of their shared hatred of the Jewish People, to try and destroy them.

Bilam V23:7 and onwards starts trying to curse the Jewish People but instead there emerges blessings:

"Balak the king of Moav led me from Aram, from the Eastern mountains, saying, 'Come curse Yaakov for me and come and arouse G-d's rage against Yisrael.'

How can I curse whom G-d Himself has not cursed, and how can I arouse rage, when The Eternal Himself has not enraged. For from their origins I see them as firm as rocks, and perceive them emanating from the hills.....

May my soul die the death of their virtuous one's, and may my end be like theirs."

What I found so interesting here, besides everything else, was a commentary from the Baal Haaturim on this last verse, which shows us how precise and deep is Torah. The Hebrew word for 'virtuous ones' used is 'yesharim'.

The Baal HaTurim says that the numerical value of yesharim is equal to that of Avos Haolam (referring to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov). Now if you

take the last letter of each of their names (mem, kuf and beis) - 'and may my end be like theirs' - their numerical value adds up to Bilam!!

And later in the Parsha he also prophesies the coming of Mashiach!

Balak

Interestingly I also heard in a shiur this week that Rut the Moavite was a descendant of Balak through Eglon.

And Rut is the mother of the Davidic Dynasty, from which Mashiach will arise!

And so what is the rationale that Mashiach should arise from such an evil source?

The Gemorra answers that it is in the merit of these Sacrifices that Balak was performing in this weeks Sedra (6x7). Even although he was doing them to try and destroy Yisrael, they were never-the-less, sacrifices to Hashem!!

The message is that we should not under-estimate the power of good deeds even when they appear evil. How much more so, when they are done with good intention.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

NOT TO BE FOOLED

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 July 2022 · Shabbos 16 Jul 2022 · י״ז תמוז תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. And wishing Renee a continued refuah shleimah.

We welcome Ariel Jacobs to our email Family group. Ariel recently got married to Daniella ne Davidoff. So happy to have you with us Ariel! Please feel free to contribute, and supply us with achievements and simchos!

BH this week has been so intense and rich from so many angles.

Parshas Balak is rich and full of deep meaning.

Then we celebrated the Chassidic Yom Tov of the release of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson (The Frierdike Rebbe) - Yud Beis Tammuz, where we had a Chassidishe Farbreng with Rabbi Chay Amar from Florida, which was also rich and intense, and stirred us out of our daily habitual lifestyles.

And then the Sicha that I learnt from the Rebbe was likewise linked to these themes.

I will try and share this in summary.

Farbreng (Chassidic get-together)

Rabbi Amar based his expert delivery, on the meeting that the Frierdike Rebbe had with his father, the Rebbe Rashab, on his Barmitzvah. His father told him amongst other things ..'DO NOT FOOL YOURSELF, DO NOT FOOL OTHERS, AND DO NOT LET OTHERS FOOL YOU...'

This drew attention to ourselves, where we are mostly caught up in habitual thinking, preoccupation with ourselves and our businesses, how we use our time, and what we give importance to.

(Traditionally, at a Chassidishe farbreng there is admonition done out of a spirit of deep love and affection, to improve our ways - Hayom Yom 24th Tishrei)

Balak

The Sedra is rich in the concept of Mashiach, (Bilam trying to curse the Jewish People and ending up giving us the greatest blessings), the battle between a lifestyle where all our needs were met by miracles in the desert, and the upcoming lifestyle of moving in to Eretz Yisrael where we would now need to work for a living, (we were on the verge of entering EY), and the battle of life's seductions and temptations (Midianite women) etc

Sicha (Parshas Balak Likkutei Sichos Vol 18)

(Of course it is very interesting and important for us to know if we are fooling ourselves and what to do about it, and I think that the sicha of this week, goes a way to helping us in this direction.)

- As mentioned above Bnei Yisrael were about to enter from exile in the desert to freedom in our Land
- Micha in this week's Haftorah also prophesizes our emergence from exile "The remnant of Yaakov will be in the midst of many Nations.. They will not hope from man, nor expect from a mortal...And the blessings will come like dew, directly sent by G-d, which comes like raindrops upon vegetation, which no one hopes for.. The remnant of Jacob will be like a lion among the beasts of the forest..'
- The Rebbe then discusses the conflict of how much one devotes of one's life to the worldly way in both the physical and spiritual, and how much to devote to trust and miracle. Both have recognition in Torah, but when one tries to balance between the two, one comes into the realm of 'Two Nations will contend for the upper hand', and the battle can be challenging and tricky, trying to decide who we listen to, to guide our decisions.

Whereas the level of transcending worldliness and mortal reason, directed by humility and trust, leads to a different level of Service.

- This explains Micha's prophecy of the future Redemption, where we will be moving to a preparatory state of 'not placing our hope in man.' (and not giving primacy to physical concerns)
- This lesson is appropriate to ourselves, who are living in the last days of this bitter exile of a double and redoubled darkness. At this time, every individual's Service should have at least a foretaste of the level at which we will 'not place our hope in man.' Through such an approach, every individual will be redeemed from the worries and problems that disturb them. For when he engages in 'all that you do' only for the sake of fulfilling G-d's will, he will not be fazed or bothered by his worldly occupations..This individual redemption will also serve as the preparation for the all-encompassing Redemption led by Mashiach...

Wishing a Gut Shabbos to all!

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

ALONE BUT NOT LONELY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 July 2024 · Shabbos 20 Jul 2024 · י"ד תמוז תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday tonight, on same day as the release of the Frierdike Rebbe from imprisonment (Yud Bes and Yud Gimmel Tammuz). Wishing you a wonderful year Eliana, and to grow and develop all of your many beautiful qualities, and with much joy!

In this week's Sedra Balak, the powerful heathen prophet, Bilam, tries to curse the Jewish people at the request of Balak, the King of Moav.

But instead, the most amazing blessings ensue from Bilam, because he understands that Hashem will not allow the curses.

I saw an interesting editorial about the above, which I wanted to share:

One of the expressions that Bilam uses to describe Am Yisrael is, "A NATION THAT DWELLS ALONE" - Am levadad yishkon. (23:9)

There are different interpretations about what this means, but all are in agreement that it is a blessing and not a curse.

IT THEREFORE MEANS THAT THIS ALONE, DOES NOT MEAN LONELY!

Rather, distinctive, exceptional, and unique.

In 1972, the former Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin visited the Rebbe, to convey President Zalman Shazar's birthday wishes to the Rebbe on his 70th birthday (as Rabin was then Israel's Ambassador in Washington).

The Rebbe asked him if he did not feel alone among the 120 countries represented in Washington, quoting the above verse?

And he also asked if this loneliness comes about through our choice or is it forced upon us from the Nations of the world?

Through the conversation the Rebbe answered that it is both of the above.

On the one hand we choose to hold on to the Torah, our faith and our traditions - this has preserved us through millenia of persecution.

On the other hand external pressures have strengthened us, and in instances where a Jew may have been embarrassed by his Judaism and tried to hide it, there arose external elements that forced his Judaism upon him (or her).

We may be alone among the Nations, but we are not at all alone, because Hashem is with us, protecting us and guiding our destiny.

We have nothing to be ashamed of. Only pride in our distinctive Jewish values and way of life.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Balak ↑ Balak · Contents · By date בלק

DYNAMICS OF OUR JOURNEYS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 July 2025 · Shabbos 12 Jul 2025 · ט"ז תמוז תשפ"ה

Also re-sent on 2025-07-11.

Also re-sent on 2025-07-11.

Also re-sent on 2025-07-11.

Also re-sent on 2025-07-11.

Also re-sent on 2025-07-11.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying the summer (and winter) vacations.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Penina on receiving her Certification as a Personal Trainer! A lot of hard work and learning has gone into this achievement. Well done Penina and wishing you many more continued successes.

I am very happy to welcome Darryl Milner into our Family Group! Darryl is Janine's son from the Stein side of our Family and we were in contact this week after decades BH. Darryl is living in SA. I am attaching again the Family Tree which has been put together by Kevin Marks to refresh our memories of the Family connections and to introduce Darryl to everyone on the Group - the names marked in red are those on this email list. It would be great if you could be in touch with Kevin, Darryl, and update him with your details. I also noticed many people are missing on the Stein tag of the spreadsheet. Maybe you or your Mom or any Stein members could help with the updating. So happy to be in touch again.

Sedra Balak is so rich with lessons and drama, and I chose an insight from Rabbi Steinsaltz ah , plus a beautiful connected incident that I saw today.

Rabbi Steinsaltz (summarised)

Pirkei Avot compares the disciples of Bilam with the disciples of Avraham (5:19)

Bilam the evil one's disciples have "an envious eye, arrogant spirit and a wide soul "

Avraham's disciples have " a generous eye, an even spirit and a humble soul"

Torah, in our Sedra establishes Bilam as an extraordinary figure, whose prophecy and greatness compare to Mosheh Rabeinu himself (his prophecy contains profound visions reaching to the end of days), and he reached these heights through his own contemplations, similar to Job and Yitro.

So how did he get to be such a flawed character focused on self-centredness, wealth, honour and immorality?!

Rabbi Steinsaltz answers, that the difference between Bilam and Avraham lies in their approach to their journeys:

Bilam starts with looking at the world and asking "How could there be a G-d?"

Avraham starts with G-d and asks "How could there be a world?"

When faced with difficulties and situations which don't seem to make sense, Avraham demonstrates complete trust and willingness to be obedient, and even to sacrifice his worldview, emotions etc.

While Bilam remains focused only on his own interests.

Story

I think we can be proud of, and learn from the new generation of children which is emerging from our very chaotic world.

BH we often have grandchildren visiting us after school, and today Shneur Zalman came ringing at the door.

He loves sweets and snacks and knows exactly where all the goodies are kept. In particular he likes the milky ice creams in the freezer.

Bear in mind that he is 9 years old and cant wait to get to his ice cream.

The first thing he asked me when he enters the house was "Is 4 hours enough to wait for eating milky after meat. We had meat for lunch at 12 and it is now 4?"

I wasn't sure what to answer him, because we as adults wait 6 hours, and I was thinking that maybe one can be lenient for a child.

And because we have a guest staying with us who is a Rabbi, I sent Shneur Zalman to ask him.

The decision he made was to wait 6 hours.

And Shneur Zalman, a 9 year old child, complied, and was obedient to the Law of Torah and Hashem, contrary to his own interest, without even a protest!

Maybe this is what Bilam saw when he said "Hen am kelavi yakum -Here is a people that rises like a lion. See Rashi's interpretation 23:24 connecting this to Mitzvos, but the verse of course also refers to our amazing IDF (Onkelos)

Gut Shabbos to all!

פינחס

Pinchas

Bamidbar 25:10 · parsha 8 of 10 in Bamidbar · 41 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — LONLINESS? 1029
2017 / 5777 — A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE 1031
2018 / 5778 — THE POWER OF DIFFICULTY 1034
2019 / 5779 — STONES AND BRICKS 1037
2020 / 5780 — 'FROM MOSHE TO MOSHE THERE NEVER AROSE ONE AS MOSHE' 1040
2021 / 5781 — REPAIRING BREACHES 1042
2022 / 5782 — LASTING CHANGE 1044
2023 / 5783 — HISTORY OF PRAYER 1047
2024 / 5784 — LUNAR LESSON 1049
2025 / 5785 — LOVE AND HARMONY 1051
2026 / 5786 — MODESTY 1053

LONLINESS?

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 28 July 2016 · Shabbos 30 Jul 2016 · כ"ד תמוז תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you a successful Year!

We wish Renee Cobb a Refua Shleima. She recently had a big operation on her back - Rivka Bas Sarah Zlata

A short note caught my attention this week as follows:

In response to a woman who complained to the Rebbe that she was feeling lonely, The Rebbe wrote back, that SUCH THOUGHTS ARE FOREIGN TO A JEW, AS SHE / HE IS ALWAYS UNDER G-D'S CARE.

The Rebbe explained further that when The Previous Rebbe was in prison, the thought that he was not alone, and under G-d's constant supervision, allowed him to overcome his emotions and face his tormentors.

Last weeks Parsha Balak there was another aspect of 'lonliness' where Bilam (against his will) praises the Jewish People, as a 'People who dwell ALONE and will not be reckoned among the nations.'

And Rashi comments from Targum Onkelos, that 'they will not be annihilated with the other nations.'

And then I saw an interesting Hayom Yom this week in relation to the Destruction of the Temple (we are now in the 3 weeks of mourning for the Destruction.)

Basically the Rebbe was saying that only the Building has been destroyed and is desolate, BUT THE SITE STILL RETAINS IT'S SACREDNESS.

The Shechina never departs from the Kotel!

And similarly with the Personal Sanctuary within each Jew, our Foundation always remains whole,clear and pure. (even although we may feel desolate)

As it is written 'I am asleep but my heart is alert' - Shir Hashirim.

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos

Rambam 5 minutes per week Sefer Tahara, Hilchos Tumas Hameis Chaps 7-14 - PAGE 5

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Apologies for all the spelling mistakes etc in this Book. It is currently being updated and expanded.

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 July 2017 · Shabbos 15 Jul 2017 · כ"א תמוז תשע"ז

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and especially thinking of Brian, who has had a big operation. (Baruch ben Sarah Zlata)

We are all thinking of you Brian and wishing you a refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you much hatzlocha and good news through the year Hirshy.

Thanking Reuven and Chana Lieba for stopping by in London from their Moscow trip, to spend Shabbos with us. It was so nice to be able to talk to each other in a home environment rather than at rushed simchos! Please repeat whenever you get the chance, and that applies to everyone who may be planning trips.

We are now in the middle of summer in the Northern hemisphere, and it is a time when people start to remove layers of clothes, go on vacations and exciting activities, in high spirits.

Our Sages, who recognised dangers here, instituted that we read a Chapter of Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), every Shabbos throughout the summer.

A number of stories about tznius (modesty) came past me this week, and then of course we are reading about Pinchas in the Sedra, and so I wanted to share these.

The Rebbe

When the Rov of Kfar Chabad and his wife visited the Rebbe, he turned to Mrs Ashkenazi his wife, and said 'What about the yiras shamayim (fear of Heaven) of the girls and women in Kfar Chabad?' and then without waiting

for an answer he said 'the true test of Yiras Shamayim is tznius (modesty) and taharah (family purity)

The Alte Rebbe

At the time of the Alte Rebbe there was a new fashion in Russia where jackets had collars.

His grandson, Reb Nochum, son of the Mitteler Rebbe, was preparing for his chassanah, and the Alte Rebbe enquired from him, whether his silk kapota would be made in the traditional way, or according to this new fashion?

Reb Nochum replied that it would of course have a collar.

The Alte Rebbe then requested that it should be made without a collar. But Reb Nochum argued that everyone else would have one and that he would therefore be embarrassed.

The Alte Rebbe then promised him, that if he would wear the kapota without the collar, there would be a place kept for him in Gan Eden together with his grandfather.

(To understand this challenge, one has to understand how great was The Alte Rebbe, and what meant a request and promise from him!!)

Before the wedding The Alte Rebbe requested that Reb Nochum should come to him dressed in his kapota.

And guess what?

HIS KAPOTA HAD A COLLAR!!??

The Zohar

I saw 2 quotes from Zohar this week:

1. The Zohar warns that the Yetzer Hara begins its influence on a person by targeting his clothing....
2. Keeping of tznius by the woman of the home draws down the blessings of

Heaven and earth - the blessings of wealth, children, and grandchildren - upon her home and and upon her family.

I also saw that the Dayanim of Crown Heights delivered a letter to all the homes in the area this week, summarising the essential Laws of Tznius, which I have attached above.

The challenge is difficult, and the rewards must therefore be very great!

Gut Shabbos to all and a Happy Summer.

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

THE POWER OF DIFFICULTY

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 July 2018 · Shabbos 7 Jul 2018 · כ"ד תמוז תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday this Shabbos. Wishing you another successful year with your studies, the education of your children, together with Mariashah, and with much joy.

And another Mazal Tov in LA! Mazal Tov Sophia on your first birthday next week. Looks like Hirshy and Family will be celebrating this coming week!

This weeks parshah is 'Pinchas' and the haftarah is drawn from 'Jeremiah'.

There is always a connection between the parshah and the haftarah, and I found this week's connection interesting, which I would like to share.

We have now entered the '3 weeks of mourning' for the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash, which was the start of our long exile and suffering through the centuries to this very day, when we still find ourselves in this exile, waiting for Redemption and the building of the Third and Final Bet Hamikdash.

So how does this link to the parshah and haftarah?

First of all the haftarah includes Jeremiah's prophetic vision of an almond tree which ripens in 21 days. These 21 days correspond to the 3 weeks of mourning for the destruction of the Temple and the yearning for it's rebuilding.

But what I found more interesting, was the link between Pinchas and Jeremiah (I think the ref is The Rebbe's sicha in vol 18)

Both Pinchas and Jeremiah were partially descended from non-Jews, Pinchas from Yisro the Midianite, and Jeremiah from the woman Rachav of Jericho.

As a result both Pinchas and Jeremiah were denigrated on this account, and both had much darkness to overcome in their journeys.

Jeremiah overcame his dark ancestry and was righteous.

HIS OWN EXPERIENCE IN WRESTLING AND OVERCOMING HIS PAST UNIQUELY QUALIFIED HIM ON HOW TO INSTRUCT THE ERRANT JEWISH PEOPLE ON HOW TO OVERCOME THEMSELVES, AND MAKE A FRESH START.

When we refine ourselves through difficulties posed by ingrained habits etc, THE CHANGE WE EFFECT WITHIN OURSELVES BECOMES PERMANENT. (rather than temporary inspirations on receiving gifts etc)

Because Jeremiah was practiced at refining himself, he was able to resist the downward pull of materiality within himself, and then he could inspire others to raise themselves out of it.

PINCHAS HAD A SIMILAR JOURNEY AND BATTLE AGAINST HIS DIFFICULTIES, but his refinement resulted in the characteristic of self-sacrifice, which goes beyond rationalisation, another type of dedication to Hashem.

Now it says that the one who will come to announce Mashiach will be Eliyahu, and we are taught that this is none other than PINCHAS (Targum Yerushalmi)

This indeed then should be our attitude to the exile in general, (and our own personal difficulties in particular), and to the 3- week mourning period.

Hashem sent us into exile in order to refine and elevate the lowest levels of creation (and ourselves) and to transform the world.

Focusing on this positive purpose of the exile and the 3 weeks, helps us both rectify and nullify them. Because once we have rectified them, they no longer have a purpose, enabling us to usher in the period of Mashiach.

Difficulties give us this opportunity.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

STONES AND BRICKS

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 July 2019 · Shabbos 27 Jul 2019 · כ"ד תמוז תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a successful year in both physical and spiritual matters Hirshy,

Mazal Tov to Sophia Esther for her birthday 2 days after her Daddy. Wishing you all many simchos BEH!

Mazal Tov to Brian and Sharon, who I believe are travelling to EY next week for the Bar or Batmitzva of grandchildren. Sounds very exciting! Have a wonderful trip Brian and Sharon, and wishing you many more simchos! And Mazal Tov also to Renee and Roy and Family who will be joining Brian and Sharon for the simcha.

We are now in the 3 weeks commemorating the destruction of the Bet HaMikdash, and we have been learning more about the Bet Hamikdash

Firstly I saw a presentation by JLI, which was excellent, and one of the points that came up were pictures of diggings at the base of the kotel showing some of the STONES there. One of them was 44′ x 10′, and weighed over 500 tons!

The largest stones used to make the pyramids was about 11 ton

How did they cut and move these!?

And then secondly, I learned a sicha from Book 6 of Likutei Sichos parshas Shmos, ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STONES AND BRICKS, which I will try and summarise.

Basically STONES are a natural creation from Hashem, and BRICKS are man made.

In the above-mentioned sedra, Paroah is forcing Bnei Yisrael to make BRICKS for his cities

The question is, if stones are a higher G-dly level than bricks, why did he not make us get stones?

But Paroah was cleverer than we think!

When G-dlines comes down to us and the world there are 2 aspects

1. There is light which penetrates all the way down through the levels of creation
2. Then there is the receptiveness of the creation down below, recognising this flow

It is like a kind person, whose nature is always looking to give and he is pouring out acts, words and thoughts of kindness.

He doesn't really expect anything in return, and gets joy from his nature, but he gets a greater joy when gratitude is expressed from the receivers.

The temporary Temple in the desert ie the Mishkan was made from animal (animal skins) and vegetable - wooden beams etc (animal is a higher level than vegetable in the creation.)

But lower than this is inanimate material, and this is what the permanent Temple was made from.

And this represents this flow of G-dlines penetrating downwards through animal, vegetable, and all the way to the inanimate.

And as we have learnt from the Alte Rebbe, the lowest levels of the creation have this unique direct connection with the highest levels of G-dliness, and hence the Bet Hamikdash being built with STONE.

But there is more to the story.

There is not only the light which comes all the way down, and the creation expressing gratitude, BUT THERE IS ALSO A LEVEL OF CREATION WHERE THERE ARE DARK FORCES WHICH DO NOT RECOGNISE G-D, AND EVEN OPPOSE.

Without going into too much detail, Jews have the ability to penetrate this darkness, and allow the light of Hashem to penetrate even into these very dark areas.

And this is as it were, MAN-MADE.

This man-made work is equivalent to MAKING OF BRICKS, and when used for holy purposes, can reach even greater heights of G-dliness (because its source is even lower than the inanimate)

Paroah understood this and he tried to hijack these forces to the opposite side of holiness!

The Zohar connects this making of bricks to Torah study as follows

1. The word for mortar in Hebrew is chomer, which also refers to a Torah procedure called kal vachomer
2. The word for bricks in Hebrew is leveinim, which can also mean whitening, and in Torah this is the learning to clarify the halachah

May we merit to break the forces of evil with our Torah study, at what ever level we are, and see speedily, the construction of the THIRD BET HAMIKDASH this year during these 3 weeks

Gut Shabbos to all.

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

'FROM MOSHE TO MOSHE THERE NEVER AROSE ONE AS MOSHE'

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 10 July 2020 · Shabbos 11 Jul 2020 · י״ט תמוז תש״פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a year of lots of new opportunity Hirshy!

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his second year of Law with a first class pass. Well done Zalmy. Michayil el Chayil!

This is a week of Moshes - Moshe Rabeinu, and Rambam (acronym for Reb Moshe Ben Maimon, and also known as Maimonides.)

Besides all of their known greatnesses, what came into focus this week was THEIR TREMENDOUS GENEROSITY.

Moshe Rabeinu

The whole Written Torah came to us through Moshe Rabeinu.

His benevolent eye and generosity is expressed in this weeks Sedra, Pinchas, where he hands over the leadership to Yehoshua, and V23 says that Moshe rested his hands (plural) on Yehoshua. But Rashi mentions that in V18, Hashem had told Moshe just to put his hand (singular) onto him.

It was with this benevolence and generosity that Moshe handed over all his teaching and leadership to Yehoshua, and to us Bnei Yisrael

Rambam

Today, all the learning cycles studying Rambam, came to the conclusion of Mishneh Torah.

And tomorrow we start this Holy work all over again. Today is therefore a good time to make a resolution to join either the one- chapter- a-day, or the 3-chapters-a-day cycles.

The Rambam took the whole Oral Torah, (with all its backwards and forwards Talmud debates and complexities) and expressed his generosity to Klal Yisrael, by crystalizing it into a clear and concise form, so that everyone could understand it and practice it - men women and children at any and every level.

And at the same time he derived from the Written Law, the 613 Scriptural Mitzvot.

To show the Holiness of our incredible Torah I heard tonight a most beautiful revelation (I did not catch the exact source of the following verse.)

In the section discussing our going out of Egypt it says 'Revot moftzei beEretz Mitzraim' - this is the acronym of Rambam.

If you now count 613 words (or it could be letters) backwards from this verse, you find the word Mishneh.

And if you count 613 forwards, you find the word Torah!

And it speaks about going out of Mitzraim on the 14th of Nissan. The 14th of Nissan is also the Rambam's birthday!!

Ie hidden in code in Torah we see Mishneh Torah, connected to Moshe ben Maimon, born on 14th of Nissan, and connected to the 613 Mitzvos!!!

This incredibly deep Torah of ours, is all of our heritages, and has been handed down to us primarily by Hashem, but with tremendous generosity of Moshe Rabeinu and Moshe ben Maimon!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

REPAIRING BREACHES

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 July 2021 · Shabbos 3 Jul 2021 · כ"ג תמוז תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday next week. Wishing you a year of ongoing development in all areas, especially the new ones that you are currently involved with BH

And in the same home, Mazal Tov also to Sophia on her birthday next week. Have a wonderful year Sophia!

We are now in the 3 week period between the historical BREACH of the walls of the Second Bet HaMikdash (Temple) - 17th of Tammuz, and it's destruction, in Yerushalayim - Tisha BeAv, 3 weeks later.

It was built by Herod in 19 BCE and destroyed by the Romans in 69 CE.

The date of destruction of both the First and Second Temple was Tisha BeAv.

It is said that the main cause of the destruction of the Second Temple was baseless hatred between Jews, and the Rebbe has said that the way to address the destruction of our Temple in these 3 weeks is to give baseless love.

And then what arises is ' How is my little action going to help?!'

- The Rambam in Hilchot Teshuvah Chap 3, states:

The balance in an individual, of sins and virtues, relates also to the balance of sin and merit in World.

This balance is not only quantity. Some sins carry more weight than others and similarly with good deeds.

Hashem assesses this balance within the individual every Rosh Hashanah and at the time of death. On Rosh Hashanah, the sounding of the shofar is to wake us from our slumber (our involvement with the vanities of the world) and remind us to awake and remember our Creator and do teshuvah.

Doing good deeds and mitzvot can tip one's own balance towards good, and at the same time tips the balance of the whole world towards good.

- Another aspect, and related to the above, was a talk I heard this week from Rabbi Simon Jacobson, in relation to the tragedies we have been seeing lately.

He quotes another source in Rambam (Hilchot Taaniot Chap 1) showing that these, and other such events are not accidental or co-incidental, disconnected from ourselves.

Rather it is a call for every one of us to take action and try and HEAL THE BREACHES causing these events.

He said that it is not enough to just say Tehillim (as powerful as it is). Rather we need to take action, to heal breaches within ourselves, in our relations with our families, our relationships with friends, business associates, professional lives, community activities, National, and International activities, with acts of goodness and kindness, especially in this 3-week period

Each action has the power to tip the balance for ourselves and the whole world.

We should all see the building of the Third and Final Temple this year before Tisha BeAv

Gut Shabbos to all

LASTING CHANGE

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 21 July 2022 · Shabbos 23 Jul 2022 · כ"ד תמוז תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. Please keep Rivka bas Sara Zlata (Renee) in our prayers as she is going through intense treatments. Refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday. Wishing you much continued success Hirshy in both the material and spiritual, with much happiness

And in the same Family, Mazal Tov to Sophia 2 days later. Wishing you a wonderful year with much growth Sophia!

Mazal Tov to Chava who passed her exams towards a BSc, did well in Sem, and also ran the administration of our office from NY! Well done and thank you!

Mazal Tov Esther Miriam on graduating to Senior School. Michayil el Chayil!

I am sure many others in the Family have also passed exams and courses etc, and we wish all Mazal Tov!

BH I learnt a very interesting Sicha from the Rebbe this week (from Parsha Pinchas 1961) with an interesting practical lesson:

We are now in the 3 weeks of mourning over the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash

The Haftoras that we read over the next 3 weeks are in line with this mourning and are called the 3 Haftoras of Retribution.

These are followed by 7 Haftoras of Consolation over the subsequent 7 weeks.

But it is known that the Haftorah of each week follows the theme of the Sedra of the week.

So how does our current Sedra of Pinchas also fit in to this week's theme, because every aspect of Torah is extremely precise?

To try and summarise:

- This weeks Haftorah is from Yirmiyahu, and both Pinchas and Yirmiyahu came from families of converts. The Jewish People belittled both of them, and in both cases Torah clarifies their lineage
- The beginning of the Haftarah describes how Yirmiyahu became a prophet "The word of G-d came to me saying, 'When I had to yet form you from the womb, I knew you.I made you a prophet unto the Nations.' When Yirmiyahu protested, 'I do not know how to speak, for I am but a youth', G-d answered him, 'Say not I am a youth ....behold I have appointed you. to uproot and to crush..to build and to plant." There is a similarity of nature between the Service of Pinchas.
- Both Yirmiyahu and Pinchas aroused the Jewish People to Teshuvah, Yirmiyahu through rebuke, and Pinchas through the killing of Zimri - this act motivated the Jewish people as a whole (as the verse says about Pinchas 'among them')
- The Rebbe then analyses the different natures of different prophets and how the results of their actions varies. Yirmiyahu is concerned with destruction and exile. Yeshayahu is concerned with consolation and redemption, and motivating teshuvah through words of consolation. Pinchas was similar to Yirmiyahu
- The reward for Pinchas was huge - Hashem granted him 'My covenant of peace' and promised that 'It will be an eternal covenant of Priesthood for him and his descendants after him.'!! Because 'he acted zealously for My sake among them' and 'turned my anger away from the Children of Israel.'
- But Mosheh Rabeinu also did this many times. And so why did he not get this eternal reward that Pinchas got?!

- Basically Mosheh and Pinchas had differing Divine Service. Mosheh was motivated by prayer and by revelation of Divine light from above downward. And receiving Torah and bringing it down and teaching it. This involved his soul, and this light is not accessible to everyone. Pinchas was totally different. He motivated Jews through his action, spurring them to break through darkness and elevate themselves ie a Service from below going upwards. This involved his body. And the eternal award received by Pinchas reflects the powerful nature of this type of service of working down here below with ones body and other people. As the verse about him uses the expression 'among them'. This has the potential to reach everyone.
- More specifically for ourselves it involves refining our own bodies and animal souls and our portion in the world. It seems a daunting task with difficulties and challenges. And our soul comes down from a very high place down to this world and we may be frightened and say 'we can't do it'...'and we are too young..' (in the same way that both Pinchas and Yirmiyahu had their challenges and had to answer to Hashem)
- Similarly we are not only here to perfect ourselves and confine ourselves to our own personal world. We need to involve ourselves with other people outside our realm of holiness. And as Hashem said to Yirmiyahu, urging him to do this work 'Do not fear because I am with you'

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos!

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

HISTORY OF PRAYER

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 July 2023 · Shabbos 8 Jul 2023 · י״ט תמוז תשפ״ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday, and wishing him well to have a wonderful year!

Prayer came up in both the Rambam, and the Sedra of this week

Rambam Hilchot Tefilah Chap 1

It is one of the 613 Mitzvos to pray daily

Torah does not prescribe fixed times or text of prayer.

Each person could offer praises to Hashem and make requests in whatever form he liked.

Ezra however, more than 2300 years ago (at the end of the Babylonian Exile), standardised the text of prayer, and also other brachot (blessings), to be the same for everyone. This was due to the confusion of languages at that time.

He and his Bet Din made the decision of standardised davening of Shemoneh Esreh (Amidah - 18 blessings) and the number of times per day of praying.

The various prayers are linked to the Korbanot (Offerings) in the Bet Hamikdash.

But of course, as is well known, the 3 Daily Prayers that we keep, are as old as our people, dating back to Avraham (instituted Shacharit), Yitzchak (Instituted Minchah) and Yaakov (Instituted Maariv)

Sedra Pinchas

And this week's Parsha concludes with a detailed list of the above Daily and Additional (Musaf) Offerings.

Another interesting point, is about Chap 28 in this weeks Sedra. It is the most read section in the whole of the Torah. Because this is the text that is read in the Torah readings of most of the Yom Tovim, Rosh Chodesh etc. describing the various Offerings on these occasions

Gut Shabbos to all

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

LUNAR LESSON

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 July 2024 · Shabbos 27 Jul 2024 · כ"א תמוז תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to the Davidoff Family in North Hollywood who have 2 upcoming birthdays this week. Mazal Tov Hirshy. Wishing you a year of much livelihood, and with much joy and nachas from all your Family BEH. And Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is 2 days later. Wishing you to continue giving your parents much nachas, and that you should continue developing into a beautiful eidel meidel.

I heard an amusing story this week from Rabbi Gordon, based on the MOON OF ROSH CHODESH.

The Sedra of Pinchas is famous for containing all the Mussaf Maftir Readings that we say on ROSH CHODESH, Shabbos and the other Yom Tovim.

Rashi, on V28:15 brings down a Medrash from Gemorra Chulin, discussing the SUN AND THE MOON in relation to the Offerings of Rosh Chodesh:

At Creation the sun and moon were created with equal power. So the moon came and complained to Hashem about this equal strength saying that 2 Kings cannot rule together with 1 crown. So Hashem reduced the power of the moon, and it now had to receive its light from the sun.

It is also known that the sun represents the Nations of the world, and the moon represents the Jewish People (we go by the Lunar Calendar)

Therefore Rosh Chodesh and the moon also reflect our diminished state, and the suffering that we are experiencing through the ages, while we are in Exile.

And when Mashiach comes, the moon will be restored to its full initial glory. Which means that the Jewish people will be restored to their greatness, as at the time of Shlomo HaMelech (when the Temple stood) and even more so.

The mentioned story took place in the village of Dokshitz (where Rabbi Gordons father came from) in the 1920's or 30's when there was tremendous poverty, etc, and was about this old pious Chassidic Jew standing outside of his broken down shack, in the mud at night, saying Kiddush Levanah (Sanctifying the Moon, which we do soon after the New Moon every month)

And he is saying "..that Hashem should restore the moon to its former glory, as at the time of Creation." (which is part of the prayer)

Along comes a modern , liberal minded young Jew who mockingly says to the Chassid along the lines of ".you old, foolish Jew. All over the world, Jews are being persecuted. There is so much poverty, war, illness and difficulties. And you are living in this broken down shack. And what are you praying for - "that Hashem should bring the moon back to its original size and power?!!"

The old wise Chassid answered, that when the moon is restored to its original glory, (ie with the coming of Mashiach), there will no longer be any wars, poverty, persecution, illness, tragedies, anti semitism, etc. !!

May it be speedily in our days, even during these 3 weeks of mourning.

Gut Shabbos to all!

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

LOVE AND HARMONY

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 July 2025 · Shabbos 19 Jul 2025 · כ"ג תמוז תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying summer (and winter) holidays

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal tov to Nechama Dina (Nini) Davidoff on her birthday today. So happy to have you as part of our Family Nechama Dina, and wishing you a wonderful year with much achievement and development in both the material and Spiritual!

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much success Hirshy in everything that you are working on with so much effort. And it should all be with much joy BEH!

And 2 days later is the birthday of Hirshy's (and Mariasha's) daughter Sophia. Mazal Tov Sophia, and wishing you a very happy year with much success at school, and giving your parents much nachas BEH.

And last but not least is Mazal Tov to Moishe Kehaty on turning 1 on Shabbos. Keep giving your parents, and all of us, much nachas Moishie!

I would like to apologise for the multiple emails that were sent out last week, which was due to a Postmaster Error with one of our email addresses. All part of the fun! But I hope that it did not cause too much inconvenience!

This week's Sedra is Pinchas, and our Sages identify Pinchas with Eliyahu HaNavi.

It is said that Eliyahu HaNavi will herald in the Redemption period.

Our Sages explain that the function of Eliyahu will be more than just the bearer of news.

He will also help to inspire love and harmony in the world, which will make the Redemption become a reality.

Maimonides writes that Eliyahu will come 'solely to spawn peace.'

Spreading peace will then encourage the coming of Mashiach, creating a setting wherein he will desire to enter.

This serves as a lesson to all of us.

That we should work to generate harmony in our own spheres of influence.

This will serve as a catalyst for the ultimate harmony which Mashiach will introduce into the world (From the teachings of the Rebbe, adapted from Keeping in Touch)

Gut Shabbos to all

Pinchas ↑ Pinchas · Contents · By date פינחס

MODESTY

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 3 July 2026 · Shabbos 4 Jul 2026 · י"ט תמוז תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday next week. It has been so long since we have seen each other Sid! Wishing you a happy and healthy year and love to Elaine and the rest of your Family.

Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff (Nini) on her birthday next week. Wishing you a great year with your growing Family Nechama Dina, and with much happiness and nachas!

Mazal Tov to Moshe Kehaty on his birthday at the end of next week. Continue to give your parents and all of us much nachas Moshe, and have a wonderful year with much growth BEH.

In last week's Sedra we see how Bilam tried on 4 occasions to curse and destroy the Jewish People, but on each occasion Hashem turned his words into blessings, and he returned home unsuccessful BH.

But he did not give up!

In Talmud Sanhedrin 106a, we learn how Bilam cunningly contrives an intricate plot to trap and destroy the Jewish men, and in the process the whole Jewish People.

He advises Balak *"That the G-d of these people hates promiscuity*" and he advises Balak with a strategy on how to get the Midianite and Moabite women to entice the Jewish men with harlotry into immorality and serving idols.

And this plot was almost successful, and caused a plague, which caused the death of 24000 Jews, until Pinchas intervened with his zealotry. As it says in this week's Sedra V 25:10,11, "Pinchas the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon HaKohen, caused my anger to be withdrawn from against the Children of Israel....." and the plague was halted.

This narrative between Bilam and the Midianite and Moabite women, illustrates how immodesty and promiscuity was weaponised explicitly to strip the Jewish People of their spiritual protection, and serves as the starkest contrast to the Jewish concept of TZNIUT (MODESTY) – ie how one dresses and behaves

I saw 2 other sources about modesty as follows:

· The Midrash teaches that there is nothing Hashem loves more dearly than modesty. Psikta Ravti 46:1

· The Zohar uses remarkable terms to describe the importance of modesty , and promises generous brachos to a woman who does so, and to her family as well. Based on this the Rebbe promised many brachos for tznius, including health, income, having children, having nachas from children and grandchildren, and finding suitable husbands. The Rebbe contrasts any temporary discomfort involved, to the everlasting brachos a woman will receive for generations to come, and questions how anyone could act otherwise. (Chapters entitled Bas Melech Penima)

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all!

מטות

Mattos

Bamidbar 30:2 · parsha 9 of 10 in Bamidbar · 42 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — A PARADOX 1056
2017 / 5777 — SILK WORMS 1058
2018 / 5778 — HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE. 1062
2019 / 5779 — RAMBAM 1064
2020 / 5780 — LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS 1067
2021 / 5781 — AHARON 1069
2022 / 5782 — THE HINTING OF TORAH 1071
2023 / 5783 — HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY 1073
2024 / 5784 — THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY 1075
2025 / 5785 — LOVING FELLOW JEWS 1078
2026 / 5786 — THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL 1080

A PARADOX

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 August 2016 · Shabbos 6 Aug 2016 · ב' אב תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chanie and the Dahan Family on the engagement of Shlomo! Such good news BH.

Mazal tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you many more happy and healthy ones!

Congratulations to Dovi and Shlomo Levy on achieving their black belts in karate. So no one should start up with the Levys!

Welcome back from Camp Chava, where she was Head Counsellor in Pennsylvania. Well done Chava!

We are in the middle of the 3 Weeks of Mourning for the Desruction of the Beit Hamikdash, and tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh Av, where the mourning intensifies for the last 9 days until Tisha BeAv.

I believe it is in the Mishna which states 'mishenichnas Av memaatim besimcha'.

And the simple translation is 'that when we enter Av we should reduce in simcha.'

However the Rebbe explains it more subtly as follows. He puts a comma after memaatim (reduce) and explains - When we enter Av we reduce, (BUT) WITH JOY!

In other words we do not forget that we are mourning for the Bet Hamikdash, but we INCREASE OUR JOY AND ENTHUSIASM FOR FULFILING HASHEMS TORAH AND MITZVOS.

This can be understood better from another example.

This year the Fast of 17th Tammuz (when the 3 weeks began), was on Shabbos.

And the halacha is that in this case we do not fast on Shabbos.

And the fast is pushed off to Sunday.

But it works out that on the day when the Destruction of Yerushalayim began, and is being commemorated, and we should therefore have been mourning and fasting, WE WERE FEASTING AND ENJOYING SHABBOS!

The Rebbe explains that this is a foretaste of how it will feel like when Moshiach comes.

May it be this year before the upcoming Tisha BeAv .

Wishing everyone a Gut and JOYOUS SHABBOS.

RAMBAM 5 MINUTES PER WEEK. Sefer Tahara, Hilchos Tumas Hameis, Chaps 15 - 21 PAGE 7

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-Hub4PlNwQtRe35VHCtu6S-vuJcLSXD8bxKyb6MLX -y4/edit

by the way I have now updated this Sefer, and you now have the improved version BH

SILK WORMS

2017 / 5777
Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 July 2017 · Shabbos 22 Jul 2017 · כ"ח תמוז תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

BH we had good news that Brian's operation was successful! We know though that it takes a long time to recover from these things and we wish Brian a continued strengthening until full health.

MAZAL TOV TO HIRSHY AND MARIASHA ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR NEW BABY SOPHIA ESTHER BH. Such nice news. Wishing you much joy from her and all the Family.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you and your Family continued achievements and growth especially with your new projects at our office.

Welcome back to Batsheva who has now returned to London from NY with her Make-up degree BH.

Silkworms are linked to the story below, and silk is highly esteemed for its qualities by the Rebbeim.

At a farbreng in 1950, The Rebbe mentioned that it would be a good thing for chassidim to wear Kapotas made of silk on Shabbosim and Yom Tovim, because this is an expression of distinctiveness, and he quoted the Rebbe Rashab on this.

We are now in the 3 week period where we are remembering the Destruction of the two Beit Hamikdash in Yerushalayim.

In connection with this I saw an interesting article from the Rosh Yeshiva of Kerem Beyavneh, Rabbi Greenberg, describing the period in Yerushalayim at

the time of King Chizkiyah, and the Prophet Yeshayeh, when King Sancherev of Assyria was heading towards Yerushalayim with a huge army, with which he had already conquered most of the world. (Melachim 2 Chap 18-19).

I saw an important lesson in this story, in that even though we as a People often look divided, there is a deep underlying Unity within us, and we are all heading to the same destiny.

So Sancherev was now aiming to conquer Yerushalayim with his vastly superior army, and he now sends his General to give a message to the Jews to surrender and submit to him.

When the General sees Yerushalayim he mocks and ridicules with his confidence.

As is often the case, the Jews were split on how to react between left and right.

There was a Group led by Shevna the scribe who wanted to surrender, but the Group led by King Chizkiyah and supported by the Prophet Yeshayeh would not agree to the surrender and servitude of Yerushalayim to this evil force.

Shevna's group was larger than Chizkiyah's ie 130,000 to 110,00.

The people felt defeated, because in addition, Shevna had been communicating with the enemy, and Yeshayeh tried to encourage the people - 'Do not fear what they fear and do not be overwhelmed....Even although they are the majority do not think we should follow them....When there is a consensus of wickedness against the Torah we do not follow this.....But rather, Fear only Hashem.....

It was indeed a very dark time for the Jews, and Hashem was not at all visible.

But then look what happened!

Shevna and his group start to go out of the Gate of Yerushalayim, but at the moment of Truth, he goes out all by himself, and the rest of his party recognise that this runs contrary to the spirit of our People, and they stay behind!

The next morning, the People awoke to find the entire Assyrian camp of 185,000 soldiers dead of plague, and Sancherev had to return home empty-handed!!

There is an explanation of this historical event, brought from the words of Yeshayeh itself.

His prophecy begins pointing out that Bnei Yisrael may think that Hashem is no longer watching over them because of this, that or the other circumstance happening to them.. But Yeshayeh continues that Hashem is Eternal, and does not grow weary of them...and concludes by assuring Yisroel not to fear - Fear not o WORM OF YAAKOV..for I will help you..the word of Hashem and your Redeemer.'

The Midrash gives an interpretation (amongst others) that the worm is referring to the SILKWORM.

The SILKWORM is one of the most magnificent creatures in terms of its life- cycle, as we all at 19 Leweston Place have been experiencing for the past 2 months with Mommy growing her silkworms - dozens of them! And we all taking turns to climb up the mulberry tree in the park to collect leaves every day.

So Rabbi Greenberg explains as follows the Stages of the silkworm Cycle , and links it to the FUTURE REDEMPTION.

1. A beautiful flying creature lays EGGS and we expect such similar beautiful creatures to hatch. But what do we see? We are disappointed to see ugly caterpillar larvae. Ie We are expecting a great Geulah but all we see are tiny eggs. (or our difficult lives with all its problems)
2. CATERPILAR LARVAE - they start eating 23 hours a day! And they multiply their birth weight 86,000 x during the first 21 days! Ie at this Stage

the Jewish Nation is focusing on all their material concerns - the worm's head and body are all one. There is no neck connecting ie the Spiritual (head) and Material (body) are submerged together and dominated by the body growth.
3. Worm sheds its skin and starts to introvert into its cocoon made in a magnificent manner, again working tirelessly day and night. ie It now appears to us as a very dark situation where it may seem that Hashem is not with us anymore.
4. But truly what is happening is the the worm is undergoing a miraculous transformation inside the cocoon and transforming from a worm back to a beautiful butterfly which can fly again. - The fulfilment of our ultimate goal of Redemption and Mashiach (and when it comes to the crunch, the Truth of our deep inner being is victorious over our more base natures)

This should occur speedily in our days before Tisha BeAv this year, which will transform our mourning to a Great Joy.

Gut Shabbos.

HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE.

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 July 2018 · Shabbos 14 Jul 2018 · ב' אב תשע"ח

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on your birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with much new development, for you and your Family.

We are now in the second of three weeks where we are commemorating the destruction of the First and Second Temples.

Yirmiyahu in this week's Haftorah chastises the People for their behaviour, and prophesises about the destruction it will cause.

However, what reflected to me this week in the Sedra Matos Massai, the Haftorah, and also Tanya, was Hashems great love for us, and how open He is to forgive us, therefore providing us with the powerful tool of HOPE. (based on the Teachings of The Rebbe)

Throughout our history, and similarly in our own personal lives, we see these periods of fluctuation between a stable, upright and treasured relationship with Hashem, (represented by the 3 dots of the segol vowel which have a stable shape, and reflect in the word am segula in the haftorah - a treasured people), and then periods when we go astray and lead a slanted and crooked life without stability (represented by again 3 dots, but this time representing the shape of the vowel shuruk - reflecting the word shorek in the haftorah - the planting of our animal natures within our true selves)

So when we go through these periods of straying, and distance from Hashem, where our behaviour is not up to standard, and we have turned instead to the

nations which surround us, THEN WE DELUDE OURSELVES INTO BELIEVING THAT WE ARE BEYOND HOPE! (as Yirmiyahu points out in the Haftorah)

But this is not true.

And this is also seen in the sedra where Hashem tells Mosheh to extract vengeance against Midian.

We see from last weeks sedra how the Jews had gone astray with the Midianite women and their idols, and Hashem did bring down punishment for this.

But this was not the end of the story.

Hashem now instructs through Mosheh in this week's sedra, to go out and carry out Hashems revenge against Midian.

We see here how much Hashem loves His People EVEN THOSE AMONG US WHO LACK THE MORAL FORTITUDE TO RESIST TEMPTATION, HOLDING ACCOUNTABLE THOSE WHO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE PEOPLE. (ie in this case Midian, and not those Jews who sinned)

This intense love of Hashem, can only inspire us to love Him with a reciprocal intensity, by trying to carry out His Will in this world.

And the Haftorah ends 'Yisrael, if you return to Me says Hashem, you will return to your former glory. If you remove your detestable things from My Presence, you will not wander in exile.'

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh , and this should be for all of us in our days.

RAMBAM

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 August 2019 · Shabbos 3 Aug 2019 · ב' אב תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with much success in the education of your children, and with much nachas from the whole Family.

It wasn't difficult to choose the theme of this week's activities

The week was packed with RAMBAM activity

Next week on the 4th of Av is the completion of the Yearly cycle of learning Rambam's Classic work, The Mishneh Torah.

To complete this cycle one has to learn 3 chapters per day over 1 year, because the Mishneh Torah has 1000 chapters.

There is also a 3-Year cycle, which is completed by learning 1 chapter per day over 3 years.

And then there is a third cycle cycle, where even children can participate, and that is learning just the Scriptural Mitzvot which are being discussed in the daily 1-year cycle.

Mishneh Torah is a Book oh halachot (Laws), and besides learning the PRACTICAL LAWS as prescribed by Torah, the above Project, as prescribed by the Rebbe in 1984, also brings about a Unity of people learning Torah together at the level that they find comfortable.

The Rebbe said that the Mishneh Torah gathers all of Jewish law, in a concise and clear fashion, and that every Jewish individual is commanded to study

the entire Torah. Normally this would not be within the reach of most people, but through the Mishneh Torah as compiled by the Rambam, this has become a possibility for everyone.

Mosheh ben Maimon, acronymed Rambam, from the words Rabeinu Mosheh Ben Maimon, became one of the most prolific and influential Torah Scholars and Physicians of the Middle Ages.

He was also a Philosopher and Astronomer.

He was born in Cordova, Spain on the eve of Passover 1135, and died in Egypt on December 12th 1204 (20th Tevet).

His body was then transported from Egypt to Tiberias and buried there according to his wishes.

The main work of Rambam is the Mishneh Torah, and it is still considered today as one of the main authoritative codifications of Jewish Law and Ethics.

For the last 15 years and 7 months BH, I have been summarising the Mishneh Torah into English, and BH the main works of the series is now complete.

The launch of the work will be taking place next Monday evening at the Siyum HaRambam event in Stamford Hill, London BEH

The Books have arrived, the website is set up, orders are starting to roll in, Batsheva is designing the set up for the seudah, Chava has started processing book orders, Shmuly is preparing a presentation on how to use the website and QR codes, Zalmy will be filming for Mommy who is in Australia etc etc.

And so there is lots of excitement BH.

And so I would like to share this launch with the Family:

1. See our website at rambampress.com, which also shows samples of each of the completed Volumes

2. Advert flyer attached
3. Siyum HaRambam event attached.

With wishes to see the rebuilding of the Third Bet Hamikdash in Yerushalayim before Tisha BeAv

And wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, with new resolutions to increase in Torah Study.

LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 July 2020 · Shabbos 18 Jul 2020 · כ"ו תמוז תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This week all the Mazal Tovs go to the Davidoffs in LA:

Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday today! Wishing you a year of much happiness and successes.

This weeks Parshah is Matos Masai, which was also your Barmitzvah Parshah. So enjoy it!

Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is on Shabbos. We love you Sophia!

And so I hope the whole Family will have a very happy Shabbos.

This week is also Shabbos Mevorchim Av, and we are heading towards 'the 9 days', before Tisha BeAv.

It is interesting that in this week's Sedra we learn that Aharon Hakohen died, and the exact date is recorded in Torah.- 33:38

I believe that this is the only time in Torah that an explicit date is given for a Yohrtzeit!

And the date is ROSH CHODESH AV (in the 40th year after leaving Mitzrayim).

And our Rosh Chodesh Av and the 9 Days, always falls in close proximity to this Sedra.

So what is the connection?

The 3 weeks between 17th of Tammuz, and especially the 9 days of Av till Tisha BeAv, are days of mourning for the destruction of both our Temples in Yerushalayim.

The main reason for this destruction, was the baseless hatred between Jews.

Aharon HaKohen was famous for HIS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF HIS FELLOW JEW. - 'He loved peace, pursued peace, loved humanity, and he brought his fellow Jews close to Torah.'

And the lesson for us, as I heard from Rabbi Y Gordon, is that what is needed from us as we enter the month of Av, are EFFORTS OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE for our fellow Jews, as exhibited by Aharon!

This will counter the original cause of destruction, and bring about our greatest Joy, with the Redemption of our People, and the building of the everlasting Third Temple in Yerushalayim.

Gut Shabbos to all.

AHARON

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 8 July 2021 · Shabbos 10 Jul 2021 · א' אב תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his amazing achievement of qualifying as a lawyer after 5 hard years of studying BH!! And with a First Class pass! Amazing achievement Zalmy. We all wish you a wonderful future begashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov on your upcoming birthday Devorah Leah. Wishing you a happy year with much nachas from all of your Family.

This week's Sedra is Matos- Masai on which Hirshy had his Barmitzvah. It is a significant Sedra Hirshy - see Dvar Torah below! Mazal Tov!

This Shabbos is Rosh Chodesh Av, and it marks the start of the 9 Days leading up to Tisha BeAv.

The 9 days are a period of mourning for the destruction of both Temples, which took place on the 9th of Av, a day of mourning throughout the Jewish world.

It is interesting that this week's Sedra Matos - Masai (or Masai, when the Sedras are read separately), address this problem.

It is always read very close to Rosh Chodesh Av. This year it is actually read on Rosh Chodesh Av.

The reason given can be found in verse 33:38, which records the day of the death of AHARON. I believe this is the only place in the whole of Torah, where an individual's date is recorded so specifically. Ie Aharon passed away

on Rosh Chodesh Av, 40 years after coming out of Egypt, and he was 123 years old.

Our Rabbis have explained to us that just as as Rosh Chodesh Av and the 9 Days (referring to our long Exile) are always related to Sedra Masai, so too the antidote for or Exile is also in this Sedra.

And this antidote is Aharon. That is why Torah is pointing so specifically at him.

In the same way as Aharon's nature was "Ohev shalom, verodef shalom, ohev es habrios, umekarevan leTorah" (- He loved peace, pursued peace, loved his fellow-creatures, and tried to bring them close to Torah), so should we be acting, especially in the 9 Days, to counter the cause of our Exile, which was mainly due to baseless hatred.

May these days of mourning be converted to days of the greatest joy, this year!

Gut Shabbos to all

Mattos, Masei ↑ Mattos, Masei · Contents · By date מטות - מסעי

THE HINTING OF TORAH

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 28 July 2022 · Shabbos 30 Jul 2022 · ב' אב תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and we still need to have in mind Renee (Rivka bas Sarah Zlata) who is having difficult treatments at the moment. She should have a refuah shleimah.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you much success in the chinuch of your Family with much nachas and happiness Devorah Leah.

Matos Masei was your Barmitzvah Sedra Hirshy. And so we wish you Mazal Tov again. As described below, there are beautiful lessons to be learnt from this Sedra, and you have been zocheh to be connected to it BH!

We are now moving into Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av this evening, and entering into the 9 Days of Mourning for the destruction of both the First and Second Temple on Tisha Beav (the 9th of Av)

Our Sages teach us that the destruction of the Holy Temple came about because of baseless hatred that Jews harbored to one another.

And therefore it follows that the correction of this problem, and the rebuilding of the Third and Final Temple, will come about through baseless love for our fellow Jews.

It is therefore so interesting to see how sensitive is Torah to our needs.

The Sedra Matos (or Matos Masai) always comes near to Rosh Chodesh Av. In Matos 33:38 (which we read yesterday as divided into daily portions), Torah states very clearly that the date that Aharon HaKohen passed away, was

Rosh Chodesh Av in the 40th year after leaving Mitzraim, and that he was 123 years old.

This is the only place in Torah where a persons birthday is so clearly stated!

The hallmark of Aharon Ha Kohen was that he loved peace, pursued peace AND HE LOVED PEOPLE.

The Sage Hillel urged us to be disciples of Aharon Hakohen who was "a lover of peace and a pursuer of peace, he loved people, and he brought them close to Torah". (Pirkei Avot 1:12) - which was also the Chapter that we read last Shabbos.

And therefore it is so interesting that Torah highlights Aharon, always near Rosh Chodesh Av, when we are entering the 9 Days of Mourning for the destruction of the Bet HaMikdash, to teach us to be disciples of Aharon HaKohen, which will be the needed antidote to bring about the rebuilding of the Third and Final Temple.

May this be speedily in our days, and that Tisha BeAv will be converted to a Yom Tov! May it be this year!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all

Mattos, Masei ↑ Mattos, Masei · Contents · By date מטות - מסעי

HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 July 2023 · Shabbos 15 Jul 2023 · כ"ו תמוז תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy whose birthday is today. Wishing you a year of much happiness and achievement Hirshy in both material and spiritual.

And following 2 days later in the same home is the birthday of Sophia. Mazal Tov Sophia. Wishing you to give much nachas to your parents, and to do well in school! Wishing you all much celebration.

In the Masei part of this week's Sedra, all the 42 JOURNEYS of Bnei Yisrael are listed through the 40 years in the desert.

This was supposed to be a punishment from Hashem, but if one looks more closely, we can see the HIDDEN KINDNESSES OF HASHEM. (As pointed out by Rashi 33:1)

The 42 journeys as decreed and mentioned, gives one the impression that we were wandering about having to camp and move each time with much upheaval and no rest.

So Rashi points out that it wasn't like this. He makes a true calculation, and shows that there were only 20 journeys in the entire 38 years, and Rabbi Gordon pointed out that at one place they were actually camped for 19years. - "..to make us aware of the (hidden) kindnesses of Hashem.."

Of course there were many challenges, pain and hardships throughout those '40' years and '42' journeys, as we have learnt about over the past Sedras in Bamidbar.

The Baal Shem Tov explains to us that Torah is not coming to give us a history lesson of the list of journeys that happened 3300 years ago. What relevance would this be to us? It is coming to give us an important lesson. There is nothing in the macrocosm that does not also exist in the microcosm. Therefore those 42 journeys of the Jewish people, are coming to show us how they are re-enacted in the life of every one of us, from the moment we are born until our last day on earth."

We go through various stages in life, challenges, better times, worse times, personal relationships and developments ups and downs etc. So the Baal Shem Tov tells us that all of these come from Hashem. It is not coincidence. They are journeys designed specifically for each of us, precisely according to our needs AND WITH MUCH CARE. We need to remain connected and understand that everything that we go through on our journey is for a reason AND WE SHOULD REMAIN STRONG IN OUR FAITH THAT IT IS ALL FOR OUR GOOD. Until we will eventually understand this and see the picture clearly.

Gut Shabbos to all

THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 August 2024 · Shabbos 3 Aug 2024 · כ"ח תמוז תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

We wish a Refuah shleimah for Mommy's sister Dina, who is having a hospital procedure.

MAZAL TOV TO MENDEL AND FREIDA ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY BH! The bris should be beshaah tova umatzlachas, and you should have much nachas from him and all of your children BEH, in good health and happiness!

Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff (Nini) whose birthday is tonight. This is your first birthday celebration in our Family! Wishing you a wonderful year, Nechama Dina, with much brachah and achievement, and with much happiness together with Zalmy!

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah whose birthday follows at the end of the week. Wishing you a wonderful year Devorah Leah with much continued nachas from all of your Family.

Mazal Tov to Dovi Levy on attaining Smicha in Rabbinical Studies! What wonderful news Dovi. Wishing you to go michayil el chayil in both your material and spiritual pursuits! Mazal Tov!

What came up a few times this week is that we are in THE FINAL STRETCH TO MASHIACH, as follows:

Toras Menachem 1985

Why do the our Sages tell us of all the anticipated difficulties as we get closer to Mashiach?

The Rebbe explains that obviously this is not to dishearten us, but rather to urge us to counter the difficulties by INCREASING OUR GOOD DEEDS.

And of course it is clearly visible to all of us the myriads of difficulties and dangers that Klal Yisrael are facing all over the world and particularly in EY today! We pray for the safety of our soldiers, the hostages, Am Yisrael, and Klal Yisrael.

Sedra Matos / Massai (V 33:38, 39)

These verses mention the passing of Aharon HaKohen.

And this portion is always read around Rosh Chodesh Av, which is the start of the 9 Days of Mourning for the destruction of both the Temples of Yerushalayim, and it records the exact date of the passing of Aharon.

I believe that this is the only place in the whole of Torah where an exact date is given for an event.

Aharon was famous for "Loving PEACE, pursuing PEACE, LOVING people, and drawing them close to Torah.

It has been pointed out that the reason that this portion always comes out very close to the 9 Days, is because these qualities of Aharon are needed as an antidote to the cause of the destruction of the Temple, which came about through unnecessary hatred of our fellow Jews, and in-fighting.

A story from this week

I had the opportunity this week to do the rare Mitzva of Shluach Hakan - sending the mother bird away from her nest.

A patient from our surgery who is expert in these Laws, noticed a pigeon nesting in one of the trees in our car park and offered to do the Mitzva with me.

We met at the surgery just before sunset on Tuesday with a tall ladder, chased away the mother, removed the 2 beautiful eggs, and then returned the eggs to the nest.

The next day when I went to work I saw that the pigeon was happily sitting back on its nest BH.

I took a photo of this and am attaching it. You will need a sharp vision to spot the bird and its nest.

What is the connection of the story to our theme? It says in the Zohar that the Mitzvah of Shluach Hakan is one of the Mitzvos which WILL HELP TO BRING MOSHIACH

May this be very soon, before Tisha BeAv this year, with much effort from ourselves, and with the help of Hashem!

Gut Shabbos to all

LOVING FELLOW JEWS

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 24 July 2025 · Shabbos 26 Jul 2025 · א' אב תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a wonderful year Devorah Leah with much nachas from all of your children, and much success with their chinuch, all with much joy.

There is an interesting verse in this week's Sedra Matos/Maasei which I would like to share.

The verse is 33:38, and I believe that it is the only place in the Torah which mentions the exact date of someone' passing.

And the verse says about the date of Aharon's passing "...in the 40th year after the Children of Yisrael went out of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first of the month."

And the next verse says that Aharon was 123 years old (3 years older than his brother, Mosheh Rabeinu).

This means that Aharon passed away on Rosh Chodesh Av.

Our Sedra this week always falls close to Rosh Chodesh Av. This year it is going to be this coming Shabbos.

And Rosh Chodesh Av, and Tisha BeAv represent the period of mourning for the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, the cause of which was BASELESS HATRED FOR FELLOW JEWS.

What then is the connection between Aharon Hakohen and the baseless hatred of Fellow Jews?

It is said of Aharon Hakohen in Pirkei Avos "He was ohev shalom, rodef shalom, ohev es habriyos, umekarevan la Torah." - He loved PEACE, he pursued PEACE, he LOVED PEOPLE, and he BROUGHT THEM CLOSE TO TORAH.

This is the exact antidote which is needed to counter the baseless hatred, which brought about the destruction of the Second Temple.

And that is why Torah highlights, in such an unusual way, the death of Aharon, which is always mentioned at this time of the year, near Rosh Chodesh AV.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh, and the rebuilding of the 3rd Beit Hamikdash, even before Tisha BeAv this year!

Mattos, Masei ↑ Mattos, Masei · Contents · By date מטות - מסעי

THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 July 2026 · Shabbos 11 Jul 2026 · כ"ו תמוז תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday today. It is interesting that your Barmitzvah was also the same as this week's Sedra Hirshy – Matos Masei. Wishing you a successful and happy year in all that you do both begashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is 2 days later – so you and your Daddy can celebrate together Sophia. Wishing you a wonderful happy year!

In this week's Sedra Matos /Masei, the Tribes of Reuven and Gad requested from Mosheh to stay on the East side of the Jordan *and not to cross over* to enter ERETZ YISRAEL proper. This is because the East side of the Jordan River was suitable for shepherding livestock which they had a lot of.

Moshe recalls to them the fury of Hashem when the spies discouraged Am Yisrael from entering Eretz Yisrael 40 years previously, with their accompanying punishment, and he explains that this new request may reignite Hashems anger again.

But Reuven and Gad reassured Mosheh that they intend to go in together with the other 10 Tribes at the head of the army, and do whatever it takes to conquer the Land (which took 7 years), and then return to their families and cattle East of the Jordan. To which Mosheh agreed, and in addition he allocated land on the East side of the Jordan to half of the tribe of Menasheh.

The Rebbe explained the whole rationale behind the thinking of the spies and of Reuven and Gad:

Spies Their sin was that they wanted to stay in the desert where all their material needs were met and they could just focus on Torah and Mitzvot. They did not want to be part of normal material living of working the land, jobs etc and all the troubles that go along with it.

Which seems valid enough, but really our purpose is to be part of the world, and in the process, to bring G-dliness into the world.

Reuven and Gad - Was their request of not the same as that of the spies? (Shepherding allows one to sit in the fields all day contemplating and studying as did our Forefathers)

They replied that they understood that the whole Nation could not be involved in such activity (as requested by the spies), and, that rather we should be involved in the ways of the world. But at least some of the Nation should have the opportunity to do activities removed from the world!

And that in the meantime, anyway, they would join with the rest of the Nation to help conquer the Land.

Mosheh accepted this argument, but as a safeguard, he allocated that half of the Tribe of Menasheh should join Reuven and Gad on the East side of the Jordan.

This is because Menasheh WERE FAMOUS FOR THEIR LOVE OF ERETZ YISRAEL (as we recently learnt from Tzelafchad and the daughters of Tzelafchad, who were from Menasheh).

Mosheh wanted to make sure that this presence, and spirit of the love of Eretz Yisrael, would never be lost by the Tribes of Reuven and Gad, who would be outside of the mainland.

May these 3 Weeks of Mourning for the destruction of our Temples and our Exile, be replaced this year with the Coming of Mashiach, the rebuilding of the Third and final Bet HaMikdash and our full return to Greater Israel

Gut Shabbos to all

מסעי

Masei

Bamidbar 33:1 · parsha 10 of 10 in Bamidbar · 43 of 54 in the Torah
0 letters

2016: read together with Mattos, see A PARADOX

2017: read together with Mattos, see SILK WORMS

2018: read together with Mattos, see HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE.

2019: read together with Mattos, see RAMBAM

2020: read together with Mattos, see LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS

2021: read together with Mattos, see AHARON

2022: read together with Mattos, see THE HINTING OF TORAH

2023: read together with Mattos, see HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY

2024: read together with Mattos, see THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY

2025: read together with Mattos, see LOVING FELLOW JEWS

2026: read together with Mattos, see THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL

דברים

Devarim

Devarim · Va'eschanan · Eikev · Re'eh · Shoftim · Ki Seitzei · Ki Savo · Nitzavim · Vayeilech · Haazinu · Vezos Haberachah

דברים

Devarim

Devarim 1:1 · parsha 1 of 11 in Devarim · 44 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — VISION 1086
2017 / 5777 — YERUSHALAYIM 1088
2018 / 5778 — GREAT OPPORTUNITIES 1092
2019 / 5779 — OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL 1095
2020 / 5780 — FOLLOWING THE CLUES 1097
2021 / 5781 — A STORY 1099
2022 / 5782 — THE POWER OF A PHYSICAL ACT 1101
2023 / 5783 — REFLECTION 1103
2024 / 5784 — OIL, WINE and HONEY 1106
2025 / 5785 — THE LION 1109
2026 / 5786 — UNWARRANTED HATE vs UNWARRANTED LOVE 1111

VISION

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 August 2016 · Shabbos 13 Aug 2016 · ט' אב תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Shmuly on passing a big exam. Michayil el Chayil.

Similarly, Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing his difficult exam. Keep advancing Hirshy.

A friend of mine reminded me last week that on Rosh Chodesh, one should learn ones Tehillim (Psalm) with Rashi or other Commentators.

It is a custom to read one's own Tehillim every day, which is the one just ahead of one's age.

So one of the Tehillim that I do every day is my own, which is no. 67 (so now you know my age!)

And so this last week, on Rosh Chodesh, I learnt my Psalm.

Now this is the first time that I have actually learnt my Tehilim and tried to understand it, and it proved to be very interesting.

We all say this kapitel every day in shacharis just before Baruch sheamar, and we also say it on each of the 49 days of sefira.

And listen to the explanation Art Scroll gives about this psalm:

'The Holy One Blessed be He revealed this extraordinary Psalm to Moshe and later to David.

Both men were granted A HOLY VISION IN WHICH THIS PSALM WAS ENGRAVED ON A SHEET OF THE PUREST GOLD WHICH WAS FASHIONED IN THE SHAPE OF A 7 BRANCHED MENORAH.

David etched this psalm onto his shield so that he could read it before going into battle, which assured him of victory (Chida)

Now take note that this Psalm has 7 VERSES (besides the introductory phrase), and 49 WORDS !!! (7 branched Menorah and 49 days of Sefira between Pesach and Shavuos).

Avodas Hakodesh says that whoever concentrates on the MENORAH while reciting this Psalm daily is considered as if he actually lit the Menorah in the Beit Hamikdash and such a person is surely destined to inherit The World To Come.

Whoever recites the Psalm in this fashion will surely be safe-guarded from all evil and enjoy great success!

This coming Motzei Shabbos is Tisha Beav, which is the saddest day in the Jewish calendar, and is the day when both Temples were destroyed, and many other tragedies.

However it is also said that on the Shabbos before this day (ie this Shabbos), every Jew also receives a flash VISION OF THE THIRD AND FINAL BEIS HAMIKDASH.

That is why it is called Shabbos Chazon THE SHABBOS OF VISION!

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos and the Vision to actually see the Third Beis Hamikdash (and the Menorah) and it should be rebuilt in our days.

RAMBAM 5 MNUTES PER WEEK - Sefer Tahara Hilchos Tumas Meais Chaps 22-25, and Hilchos Para Aduma Chaps 1-3. PAGE 8 and 9 - BOOK 10

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B2duYKmTWxFkX1dUNmhIdHJIS28

Devarim ↑ Devarim · Contents · By date דברים

YERUSHALAYIM

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 July 2017 · Shabbos 29 Jul 2017 · ו׳ אב תשע״ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov again to Devorah Leah whose birthday was today. And we wish you long life for the loss of your grand-mother this week. Wishing you only simchos in the future.

We are now in the 9 day period of mourning until the Fast of Tisha Beav, the saddest day in the Jewish calendar.

The mourning is for the destruction of both our First and Second Temples which were located on The Temple Mount in YERUSHALAYIM thousands of years ago.

I am sure everyone is aware of the events which took place in YERUSHALAYIM this week, and prior to this, the resolution of the UN (UNESCO) on the status of the Temple Mount. (And prior to this throughout history!)

It is totally beyond belief, how a world body, the UN, representing the whole world, can come up with a resolution stating that the Temple Mount belongs to the Palestinians and the Muslims worldwide, ie trying to rewrite history in front of the whole world!!

And this week the Palestinians are rioting throughout the Country because we tried to install security measures there after they murdered 2 of our police from the Temple Mount, claiming we have no right to be there!! And that the Temple Mount belongs to them.

And so the question is, why is the whole world and particularly the Muslim world so keen on taking possession of this site, and blatantly trying to rob HAR HABAYIS AND YERUSHALAYIM from us?

Interestingly I have been learning a brilliant Maamer (Discourse) from the Frierdike Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, which is very much relevant to this period of time and to the Har Habayis (Temple Mount) in Yerushalayim OUR ETERNAL HERITAGE, and I think answers our question.

The Maamer is extremely intricate and I will try and summarise, but keeping focus on this week's theme mainly.

It is based on a psukim from Daniel which we say in our tachanun prayers ie 'And now, hear Hashem the prayer of your servant and his supplications, and turn your face to see your desolate Temple, for Your sake, Hashem (in the form of Adni)' and 'Turn your ear, Hashem, and listen, open Your eye and see our desolation, and the City on which Your Name is upon.'

And now.

The and points to something new.

The Name Adni

The Name Adni seems out of place here where Daniel is requesting Hashem's Mercy?

The Name of Hashem where mercy is concerned, is Havaye, and Adni refers more to the physical world?

Another area in Chumash connected to the Name Adni, was with Avraham Avinu, and so there is a strong link here to Avraham Avinu.

Interestingly, The Frierdike Rebbe points out that the Hebrew letters of Daniel are made up of Adni and lamed (I do not yet understand the significance of the lamed)

Hearing and Seeing.

These are powerful senses.

Hearing relates to sound which is more spiritual

Seeing relates more to the physical - one sees a physical object and assess it fully and comprehensively, very quickly.

Both senses powerfully unite and effect the object of the attention.

The philosophers say that Hashem is far removed from the world, and that His seeing and hearing are only parables, but the Frierdike Rebbe brings much evidence from Torah to show that not only does Hashem enliven the whole world, but He also sees and hears everything, and even more - he controls even the movements of a blade of grass flying in the wind, delivering it to its intended destination, and high and low are all equal to Him.

Fear of Hashem

When one will deeply contemplate the above thoroughly, a true Fear of Hashem will arise.

Rav Yehuda states that Hashem only created His world, so that we should come to this Fear.

The Temple and the City upon which Your Name is upon

This of course refers to what remains of the Temple on Har Habayis in Yerushalayim, BUT IT ALSO REFERS TO THE TEMPLE WITHIN EACH JEW (this is derived from the verse where Hashem says 'You should make for me a Temple so that I can dwell therein - therein should have been singular, but it was written in plural ie within each one of us)

So Daniels message was as follows:

Daniel is a man of Golus , down to earth in this world, requesting Hashem (Adni, relating to the world) to look down with the powerful force of sight at our destroyed and desolate situation in this world ie the physical (which will unite with the situation and effect it to change).

EVEN ALTHOUGH THE TEMPLE IS DESTROYED, HASHEM'S PRESENCE IS STILL THERE AND WILL BE THERE FOREVER. SIMILARLY WITH US AS INDIVIDUALS, WE ARE SLEEPING, BUT DEEP DOWN OUR HEARTS ARE AWAKE.

This 'effecting or arousing' of Hashem's mercy, should be initiated by us through the 'and now' implying something new ie we should do Teshuva which Hashem will hear - developing our Fear of Hashem and then doing His Will (His ear will turn towards this and sense our Teshuvah)

And the Prayer of Daniel should be powered by Avraham Avinu who was also called Adon and powered his way through all the Tests with which Hashem had tested him.

This is why the whole world is after this site, but it will be to no avail.

As soon as we awaken our hearts, the Third and Final Temple will be built, and this should happen before Tish Beav this year, which should be converted to a Great Yom Tov with the Coming of Mashiach!!

Gut Shabbos to all.

Devarim ↑ Devarim · Contents · By date דברים

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 July 2018 · Shabbos 21 Jul 2018 · ט' אב תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

The theme of this week's email came from a few sources ie commentary of Rebbe on this week's Haftorah of Yishayeh, (Shabbos Chazon) and a maamer of the Alte Rebbe in Likutei Torah also on the Haftorah.

The pasuk of focus in Yesahayeh for both the above was 'Tzion (the most inner point of the heart and inner soul) will be redeemed by (the practice of) justice, and her captives (the aspect of our outer soul which has been tricked into fulfilling all the worlds distractions) through tzedakah.'

Yeshayeh sees how the Jewish People have lost sight of their Divine mission, and even when they are carrying out Torah and mitzvos, this was being done in a mechanical and empty way, without passion and enthusiasm. And therefore they have been forced to seek fulfilment in the transient pleasures of the world.

So the Alte Rebbe addresses this in his opening line and asks 'How can we come to this position that every day should be as new in your eyes?' (that we should find this passion and enthusiasm)

To keep it very brief he explains how in the upper worlds movement is in a step- by- step fashion, moving from one level to the next in an orderly fashion.

But in this world there is the OPPORTUNITY through teshuva and maasim tovim (good deeds) to draw down and reveal the Essence of Hashem from one extreme to the other, AND IN THE FLASH OF ONE MOMENT!!

An example to illustrate this from halacha is as follows:

Someone who says to his proposed wife 'I am betrothed to you on condition that I am a complete tzadik', the betrothal is valid and official, even if his current state is a total evil person!

Because with one flash of a thought towards teshuvah, he can reach that level.

As it says in 'Shema' - 'These are the words (the mitzvot) which I (Anochi - the Essence of Hashem) command you (metzavecha also has the connotation of connecting to this Essence), today (hayom, in the here and now, while it is still light, and not in the World-to-Come), on your heart...to love Hashem with all your soul..'

And with both aspects of your heart - the left side containing the bitterness of the battle with ones passions, and the holy right side which expresses the joy of doing mitzvot.

And these are not two separate aspects. They live together in the heart, whereby the more bitterness that is experienced, the more is the joy that can be gained from the Holy side. Ie the light is much greater and more appreciated after experiencing darkness.

In the same way the saddest month in the Jewish calendar - Av - wherein is the day of Tisha Beav - when both Temples were destroyed, and on which many tragedies occurred in our history, its name is called Menachem Av (our Father (Av) will comfort (menachem) us) ie through our bitterness will come eventually the greatest comfort.

And so our OPPORTUNITY is to practice the physical deeds which Hashem has commanded us, while it is still 'day' and collect these deeds into a 'locked box' full of our treasures.

And when we will meditate on the power of these deeds, and how many we have collected, and how much reward we have stored in our 'boxes', we will do them with a great joy, and 'each day will be as new in our eyes.'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, maybe in Yerushalayim, before Tisha Beav.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 August 2019 · Shabbos 10 Aug 2019 · ט' אב תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This week's Sedra is Devarim, and I saw a very interesting Dvar Torah from the book 'The Inside Story', which bases each Sedra on the teachings of The Rebbe.

2 aspects of this week's Sedra were looked at:

1. Moshe translating the Torah into 70 languages at the Jordon River before Bnei Yisrael crossed over into Eretz Yisrael.
2. The event of the golden calf

So the question posed is, 'CAN SPIRITUAL CONCEPTS BE EXPRESSED IN EVERYDAY LANGUAGE?'

Or is it allotted only to the privileged few on yellowed, crumbling pages, and faded scrolls?

It is a paradox, because on the one hand, Mosheh translated Torah into 70 languages, but on the other hand, the Talmud brings down, that on the day that 5 Torah Scholars translated the Torah into Greek at the request of King Ptolemy, it was as ominous a day for Israel as the DAY ON WHICH THE GOLDEN CALF WAS MADE.

So what is the connection, and what went wrong with the golden calf?

Bnei Yisrael were misled to believe that Mosheh was not coming back down from the mountain, and they were desperate to have a leader.

They understood the importance of a leader, in that a leader, through their example, CAN ALLOW EACH PERSON TO FULLY EXPRESS THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING OF HASHEM IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAY.

But their mistake was that they used their own understanding, from a vision they had seen at Har Sinai, when they perceived Hashem descending in a Chariot borne by 4 angels. One of those faces resembled an ox. And they then translated a G-dly vision into physical matter.

But physicality can only become connected with G-dliness through a Command of G-d.

So should the golden calf stop us from relating to Hashem on our terms?

It is obvious that Hashem wants us to draw Him into our world, because Mosheh himself translated the Torah into 70 languages, but we must remember not to rely on our understanding alone, without deferring to Torah authority.

In our generation, we have the unprecedented capacity to make Torah available in all languages, to individuals and populations that have never been reached before.

Hashem will be truly revealed in this world when ALL PEOPLE from all perspectives, are able to acknowledge His presence, and study His Teachings.

And this should transform the days of mourning (between 17th of Tammuz to 9th of Av) into days of joy and celebration.

Gut Shabbos to all

FOLLOWING THE CLUES

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 July 2020 · Shabbos 25 Jul 2020 · ד' אב תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah for her birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a happy year with blessings in both the physical and spiritual, and many new developments BEH.

I saw 2 interesting items this week which were connected.

The first I heard from Rabbi Y Gordon on this week's Parshah, Devarim.

The last of the 5 Books of Moses is Devarim, and it is all oabout Mosheh speaking in the first person, giving a resume of all the events that Bnei Yisral encountered etc.

It covers the last 36 days of Mosheh's life from the 1st of Shvat in the 40th year of leaving Mitzraim, when Mosheh gathered the whole Nation together, until the 7th of Adar, when he passed away.

33 days later, on the 10th of Nissan, Bnei Yisrael crossed the Yarden into Eretz Yisrael.

And isn't it interesting that the gematria of the very first word of the Sedra, Eileh, is 36!!

So is the Book of Devarim just an add-on to the other 4 Books?

It is actually a higher level than the others, because in Devarim, Hashem is speaking directly through the throat of Mosheh, to Bnei Yisrael, with no intermediary!

And how does this apply to us?

I saw another article from the Book Chovev Halevavos, titled FOLLOWING THE CLUES.

A person who trusts in Hashem will do whatever is possible according to his specific situation.

Thereafter, if he encounters a situation where his path is blocked and he cannot do anything, he takes this as a sign that nothing is expected of him further in that situation.

When he is faced with a decision, he will decide based on the information available, without concern for the outcome

Since everything is in Hashem's Hands, he is only acting because of His command, on a path which seems the most plausible.

And this is the path on which he is being guided from above , to choose.

Gut Shabbos to all, with a real vision of the Third and Final Beit HaMikdash.

A STORY

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 July 2021 · Shabbos 17 Jul 2021 · ח' אב תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy for receiving his Certificate of Bachelor of Science in Nursing! Michayil el Chayil Hirshy!

I heard a nice story this week which I think has a message to us for the 9 Days and Tisha BeAv, which I would like to share.

The story was about a New Yorker and an Israeli who were travelling together on an 11 hour flight, and the story was told over by the New Yorker.

The New Yorker was a middle- aged businessman, clean shaven, modern dressed and wearing a baseball cap over a kapel.

The Israeli had a shaven head and was wearing ear-rings, and had served in an elite army unit.

They had seats next to each other on an El Al flight.

So as the New Yorker boards and takes off his cap to reveal his Yarmulka, the Israeli says with a typical Israeli chutzpa "Just my luck - I always land up sitting next to some religious fanatic!"

And the New Yorker replies "And I always land up sitting next to some jerk - you got yours, and I got mine!"

After they settled into their places, the New Yorker says " Look we have an 11 hour flight in front of us. It is either going to be very unpleasant, or we can try and make something of it. I would prefer to make it pleasant."

And so they agreed and got talking.

They spoke for the whole trip, non stop, except for when the New Yorker got up to daven shacharit!

It turned out that the Israeli had some business where the New Yorker could help out with part of it, and the Israeli was keen to partner with him in that area.

At the end of the trip the Israeli said to him "I have gained from this trip, but how about you?"

So the New Yorker replied "You know what, maybe you can do me a small favour. When last did you put on Tefillin?" and he answered "30 years ago at my Barmitzvah."

"Could I therefore ask you to put on Tefillin now and just say the short Shema prayer. You are probably familiar with it because your unit says it before going out on some of their missions."

He agreed, put on the Tefillin and said Shema, and he then asked "I can understand what I have gained from this trip, but what have you gained from my putting on Tefillin?"

And the New Yorker answered "For me to see a Jew in Tefillin means a lot."

0ne year later the New Yorker visited his new partner in Israel to see how the business was doing.

The New Yorker told over, in a voice filled with tears, that the Israeli told him "I put on Tefillin every day, every single day!"

When 2 Jews get together, something starts to happen, especially when the hearts meet!

Gut Shabbos to all

THE POWER OF A PHYSICAL ACT

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 August 2022 · Shabbos 6 Aug 2022 · ט' אב תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is keeping well. Please remember Renee (Rivka bas Sarah Zlata) in our prayers, as she is still going through difficult therapy. She should have a refuah shleimah.

In the book of Tanya by the Alter Rebbe, we are learning this week from the section Igeres Hateshuvah, and I found Chap 12 very interesting.

The Alte Rebbe brings a beautiful analogy as follows:

"When a shadow on earth moves a handsbreadth, this equals to the sun's movement in the sky of thousands of miles.."

The analogy is pointing out that any event that transpires in this world, results from a far more ethereal event that took place previously in the spiritually exalted worlds.

But what I found even more interesting, is that "Infinitely more so is this true in the parallel." ie when we do a physical act like a Mitzvah below on earth, we elicit far reaching reverberations in the exalted spiritual worlds! (as brought down from the Arizal)

As it says in Yoma 39a 'Sanctify yourselves and you shall be holy'

And in Vayikra 20:7 "Man sanctifies himself a little below, and he becomes sanctified in great measure from Above." (And the Rebbe comments that 'a little' refers to quantity, and 'below' refers to quality)

Wishing that all of our thousands of small mitzvot that we do together as a Nation, should elicit the era of Mashiach and the building of the Third and Final Temple even before Tisha BeAv this Sunday!

Gut Shabbos to all and with love.

REFLECTION

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 July 2023 · Shabbos 22 Jul 2023 · ד' אב תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a year of much success in both gashmius and ruchnius, and in the upbringing of your Family, together with Shmuly. And with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Chava on qualifying in her BSc Honours for Maths and Science! What an amazing achievement Chava, after putting in so many years of hard work. You deserve it and wishing you to go michayil el chayil with many more achievements!

The whole Book of Devarim covers the last 36 days of Mosheh's life. This week's Sedra, Devarim is about Mosheh Rabeinu REVIEWING AND REFLECTING on the whole saga of events that he and Bnei Yisrael had to experience from the times in Egypt, the exodus from Egypt, the wandering in the desert, and all the challenges and difficulties that were experienced. And he starts off by gently rebuking, guiding lovingly, and encouraging us to keep the Torah and it's Mitzvot.

And connected to this, I have been reading the Frierdike Rebbe's second volume of Likutei Dibburim, and would like to share a section which I found interesting, about the manner in which Mashiach will judge the world soon in our days: (Chap 39 and following)

"And his (Mashiach's) delight shall be in the fear of G-d - Not according to the sight of his eyes will he judge, nor shall he rebuke according to the hearing of his ears.....His is a course of conduct that transcends nature. (Because)

Mortal law is restricted to that which one sees with one's eyes and hears with ones ears....

Hillel uttered a great warning: "Do not condemn your fellow until you have stood in his place." If one sees that someone has faltered, and was unable to withstand temptation, do not condemn him until experiencing his situation yourself....

A major query now presents itself. How is it at all possible that a Jew could ever come to transgress the ways of the Torah and Mitzvos?

For the Torah is such a clear and beautiful lesson in how a person should conduct oneself well in all areas of life - in spiritual life, family life, and in social life?

(Why would anyone want to give this up?)

And the Gemorra answers, " Such is the craft of the Yetzer Hara (Evil Inclination). Today he tells a man Do this, and tomorrow he tells him Do that.....

When Mashiach judges, he will look with an eye to also see and feel the factors that caused the sinner to transgress. He will also sense that the sinner did not want to transgress, but that he was unable to overrule his desires...

However we can correct this now...

For the sake of the childrens upbringing, the lifestyle at home needs to be distinctively Jewish. If the father joins a minyan for communal prayer, and attends the study sessions that are available, -

And if the mother carefully observes the requirements of Yiddishkeit, -

And if Shabbos is as it aught to be, -

Then the atmosphere at home is favorable, so that Yiddishkeit can take root in the children.

What parents can, and do, give their children is such a faith...

In order to build the upcoming generation and the House of Israel according to the Torah, father and mother must work together, with one view, one voice, one goal....."

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing for the transformation of the mourning of Av into days of joy, with the coming of Mashiach before Tisha BeAv

OIL, WINE and HONEY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 August 2024 · Shabbos 10 Aug 2024 · ו׳ אב תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Bris of their new son, Moishe, who is named after Mendel's grandfather ah, who was famous for containing both kindness, and a fighting spirit BH! Wishing you to have much nachas from Moishe and all the other children BEH!

Mazal Tov again to Devorah Leah whose birthday was today!

The theme of OIL, WINE, and HONEY came up a few times this week.

There was a very interesting Sicha (Vol 24) which discussed oil and wine, and which I will try and summarise below.

And interestingly, today's Rambam was talking about the exact same subject, describing the choicest products to be used in the Bet HaMikdash - the best oil is from Tekoa, and there are 9 grades of oil according to how the olives were squeezed. The choicest grapes are found at foot level on the vine, and how the grapes should be squeezed and made into wine. Choicest wine was from Michmash and Yochanah

Sichah (Very summarized)

Based on the Mishnah which states that olive trees in Tekoa are the primary source of oil for (use in Bet HaMikdash). Abba Shaul says that secondary to Tekoa is Regev on the East Bank of the Jordan River (Territory of Argov, the Kingdom of Og - Devarim 3:4))

OIL

Oil alludes to our capacity for bittul - humility, the capability to surrender the complex of our self-awareness, ego, and desires etc to Hashem.

Oil is extracted through crushing the olives

In the process of burning the oil for light, it is completely exhausted, leaving nothing behind.

When it burns, to produce light, it does so silently without resistance.

This is a profile of surrender.

Absolute surrender is not possible without Divine assistance and that is reflected in the choice oil coming from Eretz Yisrael (Tekoa) and the secondary oil coming from East of Jordan River (Regev)

WINE

Wine alludes to intellectual satisfaction, passion, and delight in the intellectual study of Torah.

OIL AND WINE TOGETHER

In the Bet Hamikdash there was a Chamber where both the oil and wine were stored together. It was called the Chamber of Oils and was in the SW corner.

Even although the 2 traits of oil and wine may seem contradictory, we see that they were stored together. To teach us that they can and need to be together, and that the more important one in the partnership is the oil - as reflected in the name of the Chamber.

The lesson is that when a person gets caught up in the intellectual excitement of Torah, he may forget the true 'Author' of Torah, and may forget to bring Torah down to practical action.

But when the study becomes additionally imbued with humility, and the primary point of his study is to align himself with the Divine Will, then '.study is greater because it leads to action'

HONEY

(Midrash on the opening words of this week's Sedra 1:1 Elu hadevarim)

'My children are like the honeybee. All the toil of the honeybee is to produce honey which belongs to their keeper.

In the same way, all the Mitzvot and good deeds performed by My children, are done for the sake of their Father in Heaven.'

Gut Shabbos to all, and may our sweet deeds in the 9 days, convert all our personal and National difficulties, to a time of great joy!

THE LION

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 1 August 2025 · Shabbos 2 Aug 2025 · ח׳ אב תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Janine Milner on her upcoming birthday. Wishing you a wonderful year Janine! So nice to have Darryl, Gavin and Mel on the Group with us now! There was a bit of confusion with the emails when I welcomed them a few weeks ago, and so I am re-attaching the Family Tree which Kevin made, to act as an introduction to all our Family members. Wishing you lots of nachas from all of your Family, and it is a great pleasure to have you all together with us BH!

This week I saw an interesting Midrash describing the destruction of the Bet HaMikdash and its eventual rebuilding, which I found interesting, and would like to share.

, in relation to Tisha BeAv which is this Sunday, as follows:

"A LION (ari) arose under the sign of Leo, and destroyed Ariel. (This refers to Nebuchadnezzar, who arose in the month of Av - ie Leo - and he destroyed Ariel, which refers to Yerushalayim - as it says 'Ariel, Ariel, the city where David camped - Yeshayah).

But this happened in order that a LION would arise under the sign of Leo and rebuild Ariel. (This refers to The Holy One Blessed be He - as it is written 'The lion has roared, and who will not fear? (Amos) - who will arise at the time of mourning in Av to transform our mourning to joy (Yirmiyahu).

And rebuild Ariel - Hashem is the builder of Yerushalayim. He will gather the outcasts of Israel."

This week has also been the Yohrtzeit of the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi, also know as the ARI HAKADOSH - THE HOLY LION, who passed away in 1572.

He was a Kabbalist, whose work has spread, and continues to spread, much light into the world.

Gut Shabbos to all

UNWARRANTED HATE vs UNWARRANTED LOVE

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 July 2026 · Shabbos 18 Jul 2026 · ד' אב תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a year of much success in both gashmius and ruchnius Devorah Leah, with lots of nachas from all of your children, together with Shmuly, and with much joy!

We are now in the 9 days until Tisha BeAv, which is a mourning period commemorating the loss of both our Temples.

The following discussion takes place in Talmud Yoma 9b:

"Why was the First Temple destroyed? – Because of idolatry, murder and adultery. (And this resulted in an Exile of 70 years)

During the times of the Second Temple, people were engaged in Torah, Mitzvos and generosity. And so why was it destroyed? – Because there were Jews who hated other Jews for no reason. (And this resulted in an ongoing Exile of up-coming 2000 years!)

Which teaches us that unwarranted hatred (*SINAS CHINAM*) is equal to idolatry, murder and adultery combined."

And the fact that we are still in exile after 2000 years, points to the complexity of repairing sinas chinam, which is based on raw irrational hatred, resulting in disputes, quarrelling and deeper and deeper layers of complexity.

This is discussed in Likutei Torah, Matot 86a, 88b and Maamar Hechaltzu 5659, Chap 3, where the conclusion was that the antidote of Sinas Chinam

has to be *AHAVAS CHINAM –* unwarranted love, which also transcends reason.

Ie With a single unpredictable and unconditional act of one human being caring for another, connecting with another, especially another whose very presence he cannot bear, the whole of creation becomes healed and fulfilled.

The Tanya of today and yesterday seemed to be making a similar point, related to the theme of Teshuvah (Chaps 11 and 12 of Igeret haTeshuvah)

The Alte Rebbe explained that even after a person has done Teshuvah regarding his past sins, he should still always remember them, but from afar.

This does 2 things:

1. Firstly, it reminds him that he is not perfect, and he will not be arrogant, and in the process, accept other people more readily

2. It will bring him to a state of joy, when he is able to be more accepting of the more painful challenges that happen to him in his life, due to his matured attitude.

"As our Sages declare, ' Those who are humiliated, yet do not humiliate in return. Who hear their insult and do not retort. Who perform out of love and are happy in affliction – concerning them Scripture says, Those who love Him shall be like the sun rising in all its might (Judges 5:31, Shabbat 88b)

Moreover, whoever passes over their feelings, all their sins are passed over (Rosh Hashanah 17a)"

Gut Shabbos to all

ואתחנן

Va'eschanan

Devarim 3:23 · parsha 2 of 11 in Devarim · 45 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — GROWING YOUNGER 1114
2017 / 5777 — HONOUR 1117
2018 / 5778 — NATURAL TALENT 1119
2019 / 5779 — FORCED LOVE? 1121
2020 / 5780 — OUR PRECIOUS BODIES 1123
2021 / 5781 — POWERFUL WORDS 1125
2022 / 5782 — 'SIMPLE' JEWS 1127
2023 / 5783 — BEARING SIMULTANEOUS WEEPING AND LAUGHTER 1129
2024 / 5784 — TU BEAV, TESHUVAH, FORGIVENESS 1131
2025 / 5785 — THE YARDSTICK OF TORAH 1133
2026 / 5786 — AROUSAL OF THE JEWISH HEART 1135

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

GROWING YOUNGER

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 August 2016 · Shabbos 20 Aug 2016 · ט"ז אב תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and enjoying the Summer.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy for having been offered a place in Law School. Now for something different!!

Wishing Miriam Brocha to enjoy all her globe trotting.

We are now in the last Book of Chumash, Sefer Devarim.

Devarim is different from the previous 4 Books. It is said that the first 4 were from Hashem, and the last was a repetition from Moshe Rabeinu.

This week Zalmy showed me a Dvar Torah from Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, which I found interesting, and am summarising below.

The Book of Devarim is set entirely in the LAST MONTH OF MOSHE'S LIFE.

And what is striking, is that we still see Moshe as a passionate and driven leader at the age of 120!

At the very end of the Book we read that at the age of 120 MOSHE'S EYES WERE UNDIMMED AND HIS NATURAL ENERGY WAS UNABATED.

There was an interesting Research carried out into AGEING (the Grant study) which began in 1938, trying to find out what contributes to HUMAN FLOURISHING.

George Vaillant, one of the Researchers wrote books called Ageing well and Triumphs of Experience, and 2 of the many dimensions he explored, are relevant to what we see with Moshe.

He calls these

1. Generativity ie taking care of the next Generation

In the middle or later life, when we have established a career etc, we can either stagnate or make a decision to take on new Projects or learn new skills.

The character of this decision is openness and care, and to invest one's substance into forms of life and work THAT WILL OUTLIVE ONESELF.

This could even be voluntary or charitable work.

2. Keeper of the Meaning ie Use of the Wisdom which comes with age

Age together with Wisdom, brings reflection and detachment that allows us to stand back and not get swept along with moods, the fashions, or the madness of the crowds.

He therefore concludes, that especially in our fast moving society of today, we need to turn to Mentors, who can help steer one through the 'white water rapids'.

And don't we see Moshe Rabeinu reflecting this to us.

1. With Moshe's position that he had reached, he could easily have retired, happy with all his achievements of an extraordinary life, chosen by Hashem, Leader of Klal Yisrael etc

Or he could have brooded on his failures and been depressed about not being allowed into Eretz Yisrael etc.

Moshe did neither of these.

What did he do?

He turned his attention to the next Generation. He became Moshe Rabeinu - Moshe our Teacher

He told us who we are, and our destiny.

He spoke about Justice, care for the poor, consideration for employees etc

He spoke of Hashems love for our Ancestors and urged us to reciprocate this love with all heart, soul and might.

He reminded the people of the blessings they would enjoy if they kept Faith with Hashem and the curses that would befall if they did not.

He taught the Song of Haazinu.

He gave the Tribes his death-bed Blessings

2. Moshe summoned all his Wisdom to reflect on past and future, giving to the young, the gift of his vast experience

ALSO BY WAY OF EXAMPLE HE SHOWED WHAT IT IS TO GROW OLD WHILE STAYING YOUNG

Ie Moishe's energy was unabated, (and not, and his eye was undimmed, but) BECAUSE HIS EYE WAS UNDIMMED.

This means he never abandoned his Ideals, no matter what difficulties arose. (and therefore his energy was unabated)

The people who do not give up their ideals, who never give up, who do not 'go gentle into the dark night', who still see a world of possibilities around them, and who encourage and empower those who come after them, - these keep their Spiritual energy intact.

There is something moving about seeing Moshe, at almost 120, looking forward as well as back, sharing his Wisdom, and teaching us, that while the body may age, the Spirit can stay young AD MEAH VEESRIM.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos.

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

HONOUR

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 August 2017 · Shabbos 5 Aug 2017 · י"ג אב תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Rivky on qualifying in her Accounting course after spending many years studying part-time and juggling this with raising her Family together with Shmuel etc. Well done Rivky - amazing achievement.

Mazal Tov to Hirshy for more excellent scores coming in, this time in Philosophy. BH

Welcome back Chava from your successful Winter Camp in SA, which was also very enjoyable.

Thank you Kerry Lee for meeting up with Chava in SA and making her feel so welcome.

One short Dvar Torah from the Rambam, caught my attention this week, and it resonated very much like parts of this week's Sedra Vaeschanan.

For those learning 1 Chapter of Rambam per day over 3 years, we have been learning the halachos relating to Judges (Sefer Shoftim, Hilchos Sanhedrin) - This is the last of the 14 Books of The Mishneh Torah.

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Chapter 24 was talking about how there are times when a judge can use his discretion in judging certain cases, based on what he feels strongly in his heart as being true, and also what is necessary for the Community in that period of time and circumstance.

But all of his deeds should be for the sake of the HONOUR OF HEAVEN, and the HONOUR AND DIGNITY OF PEOPLE should be precious in his eyes.

From his side there must be no personal elements involved.

When a person dishonours the Torah his person will be dishonoured by people at large.

Conversely when a person honours the Torah, this person will be honoured by people at large.

And there is no other honour for the Torah except to FOLLOW IT'S STATUTES AND JUDGEMENTS.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

NATURAL TALENT

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 July 2018 · Shabbos 28 Jul 2018 · ט"ז אב תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

MAZAL TOV to Avi and Penina on the purchase of their new home in Tarzana! This is such good news. Wishing you to continue building a binyan adei ad together.

We have now come out of the 3 weeks of mourning, and I thought it would be nice to have some entertainment this week, especially that I also saw a link to this in the week's parshah Vaeschanan.

It was based on a summary of a sicha of The Rebbe, where the Rebbe explained about TRUE INDIVIDUALITY as follows:

One might think that the more we keep Torah and mitzvos, the more our personal individuality disappears.

But Torah in this weeks parshah teaches us that the opposite is true – our true individuality depends directly on the depth of our attachment to Hashem.

The mistake arises because we associate our personality, with what we see around us in the rest of the world, and which we share with the rest of humanity, but this is really only our secondary animalistic side.

Therefore the personality or talents that we glean from here comes from a common and limited potential, from which the whole world draws and lives.

On the other hand when we address our personality from a Divine potential , then we touch on areas of infinity, and here we tap into areas of our personality which make us truly unique.

The more we allow the animalistic parts of our personality to dissolve as we draw closer to Hashem, the more we allow our unique Divine personality to shine forth, WHICH IS UNIQUE TO OURSELVES AND LINKED TO INFINITY.

The above was based on the posuk 'You who are clinging to Hashem your G-d, are all living today.'

So this weeks 'Living Torah' reflected this message, and then I saw an article in The Times of Israel about Shulem Lemmer, a Belzer chosid with a beautiful voice, who has been signed up to a major record label with Decca Gold, part of the prestigious music group Universal Music in NY.

Enjoy!

https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/livingtorah/player_cdo/aid/4074494/jewish/A-Modest-People.htm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anPJFBzVC2c> Avinu Malkeinu – Shira Choir ft. Shulem Lemmer | אבינו מלכינו "מקהלת שירה" ושלום למר

https://youtu.be/vw_CXVnQ8qk

Gut Shabbos to all and may it be that in this month, Menachem Av, whose zodiac is the lion, we should see the rebuilding of the Bet Hamikdash which is called a lion, through Mashiach of whom it is said his name will be called Menachem.

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

FORCED LOVE?

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 August 2019 · Shabbos 17 Aug 2019 · ט"ז אב תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH Mommy is back home after having her foot operation this week.

I also hope everyone is now enjoying the summer holidays, and I wish everyone safe and happy travelling.

This week's Sedra is Vaeschanan, which contains our famous prayer 'Shema Yisrael'

The next verse of Shema, commands us to love Hashem with all our hearts etc

But can one really force someone to love?

If one loves Hashem, he does not need a command to do so.

If one does not love Hashem, telling him (or her) to do so, will not change their mind!?

Rambam and the Baal Shem Tov explain, that this verse is both a command and a promise.

1. The command is to contemplate on Hashem, and His Creation, and His presence in our lives etc
2. The promise is that if we do this deeply enough, we are assured that we will indeed thereby, come to love Hashem

I presume that this applies also to contemplating on the good qualities ofour fellow human beings, as it says in this weeks Hayom Yom (12th of Av) from the Baal Shem Tov - 'He who loves his fellow Jew loves G-d, because the Jew

has within himself a part of G-d. Therefore when one loves the Jew ie his inner essence, one loves G-d.'

Gut Shabbos to all

OUR PRECIOUS BODIES

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 31 July 2020 · Shabbos 1 Aug 2020 · י"א אב תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and either fasted well, or are fasting well.

Mazal Tov Hirshy on graduating as a nurse!! What an amazing achievement after so many years of studying, and navigating the American education system. Keep up the good work in all areas. It proves that 'If you work and and you find, you can be believed.'

Mazal Tov Chava who also passed the modules that she has been studying with flying colours! You should go from strength to strength in all areas!

I would like to welcome Sharon Davidoff to our group. Sharon is Brian's wife, and also the sister of a school colleague of mine Lennie Barber. In fact I was just recently in touch with Lennie at a School reunion for the first time in 53 years! So nice to have you with us on the group Sharon!

I saw 2 interesting points this week which were related.

The one was from Tanya in Chap 12 of Igeres Hateshuvah, and the other was from this weeks Sedra Vaeschanan

Tanya

The Alte Rebbe describes the great opportunity we have, by being in this physical world, through a beautiful analogy of the sun and a shadow.

When the sun moves millions of miles in the heavens, this is reflected by a shadow on earth moving just a few inches!

And this works also the other way around - When man (or woman) down below on earth perform small physical acts ie sanctify themselves by doing the

small physical Mitzvot which Hashem has commanded us to do, then we become sanctified in huge measure Above. As we say in our brachos '...Who has sanctified us with His Commandments...'

Chumash

It says in Chap 4:15 'ushemartem meod lenafshotechem' - you should guard yourselves (your life) carefully. Ie we should look after our health.

Rambam writes that looking after the body is part of serving Hashem.

And the Magid of Mezeritch stated further 'that a small hole in the body, produces a large hole in the soul'.

Meaning that our physical health affects our spiritual health.

Wishing everyone a very joyous Shabbos!

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

POWERFUL WORDS

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 July 2021 · Shabbos 24 Jul 2021 · ט"ו אב תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying the summer (and winter in Au and SA!)

So exciting to see some of the children going away on their first sleep-away Summer Camps, and parents accompanying them on flights - Mendel to NY, Gavriel to Florida, and Esther will be staying local in the Uk. Enjoy!

Mazal Tov Chava on passing your exams in your ongoing studies. Well done, and for all the other good works that you are doing. Michayil el Chayil!

In this weeks Sedra Vaeschanan, certain parts of the simple text stood out so strong, that I thought I would like to share this, for reflection, in the week when we hear again the 10 Commandments at Har Sinai.

V 4:32 - 34 Mosheh speaking, "Ask now about earlier times that were before you, from the day that Hahem created man on earth, and ask every being that exists, from one end of the heavens to the other: Was there ever at another time, anything like this great thing, or was something like it ever heard of? Did another people hear the voice of G-d speaking from the fire as you heard it, and remain alive. Or did any god perform such miracles, to come and take for himself one nation from the midst of another nation, with trials, signs, wonders and battle, with mighty force, extended power and great manifestations, like everything the Eternal your G-d did for you in Mitzrayim before your eyes?!

"These words The Eternal spoke to your entire congregation at the mountain, from within the fire, the cloud and the thick cloud, with a great voice that did not cease...." 5:19

"And you did not see any image" 4:15 (with all the above events)

"Be careful that you do not forget.." 4:23

"You shall realize it today, and impress it upon your heart, that it is The Eternal Who is G-d in the heaven above and on the earth below. You shall keep His statutes and commandments that I am commanding you today, so that it be well with you and with your children after you, and in order that you may live a long time...." 4:39-40

Gut Shabbos to all.

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

'SIMPLE' JEWS

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 11 August 2022 · Shabbos 13 Aug 2022 · ט"ז אב תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. BH Renee (Rivkah bas Sarah Zlata) has had some improvement in her treatment but we still need to continue with our Tehillim and prayers for her.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary next week. Wishing you continued happiness and achievement together.

We wish Zalmy much success in his move to LA. Meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal letovah! We wish you success in your studies and much growth in all areas, Zalmy, and with much joy!

We send our love to Miriam and Mommy in Germany, who is visiting there.

I saw 2 items this week which were interconnected and interesting.

Chumash (from the Amshinover Rebbe)

The Parshah this week Vaeschanan starts off "Vaeschanan el Hashem baes hahi.." - I beseeched Hashem for grace at that time

The Amshinover Rebbe explained that Mosheh beseeched Hashem that in later generations ("at that time")when Jews will find themselves in the depths of exile, unable even to muster up the proper intentions before praying, and only capable of uttering the words, their prayers should be acceptable before G-d.

Likkutei Diburim

And to show the greatness and importance of our 'simple' uttering of the words of prayer and Tehillim, I saw a nice story from the Frierdike Rebbe in Likutei Dibburim.

Reb Dovber was an unpretentious member of our People, an artless villager.

He was quite far from expert in the obscure small print that scholars relish, but he would read Tikun Chatzos and the whole Book of Tehillim every day. He would read verses of Tehillim as he took his dairy products to sell to the townsmen.

The Rebbe Rashab (the Frierdike Rebbe's father) when he heard about Reb Dovber, said "The truth is, that by virtue of such unsophisticated Tehillim reciters, by virtue of such folk who don't even know the meaning of the words they are saying, the world stands.

Their reading of Tehillim brings intense joy to the Infinite Being of G-d.

So much so that at minchah time on Shabbos, the most sublime hour of Divine gratification, we say "Who is like Your people, like Israel, one nation on earth?"

That is to say: G-d's people Israel, draw His true Unity into this world."

Gut Shabbos to all on Shabbat Nachamu

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

BEARING SIMULTANEOUS WEEPING AND LAUGHTER

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 26 July 2023 · Shabbos 29 Jul 2023 · י"א אב תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

It is coming up Tisha BeAv fast on Thursday, (for the destruction of both Temples and other tragedies), and so I thought to do this week's email early, and share some thoughts from the week.

Likutei Sichos of the Rebbe vol 19 p67 (very summarized)

Tractate Gemorra Makos concludes with 2 stories of Rabbi Akiva's reaction to tragedy

- Once Rabbi Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Akiva were travelling together when they heard the sounds of celebration in Rome 120 mil away (a great distance)

They started to cry (because they who are heathens live in safety and ease and celebration, while our home , the Footstool of our G-d , is burned down by fire.)

Rabbi Akiva laughed and replied "If this is what happens to those who transgress His Will, how much more so awaits those who fulfill His Will."

- Another time they were ascending together to Yerushalayim. When they came to Mount Scopus, from where they could see the ruin of the Temple, they tore their clothes (as prescribed by law). When they reached the Temple Mount, they saw a fox emerging from the place of the Holy of Holies.

They started to cry, because such a Holy site in the Temple was now a haunt of foxes.

Rabbi Akiva laughed and explained "So long as Uriah's threatening prophesy had not been fulfilled, I was afraid that Zechariah's positive prophesy about Jerusalem would likewise not be fulfilled. Now that I see that Uriah's prophecy has been fulfilled, (about the destruction of Yerushalayim) I know that the prophecy of Zechariah will also be fulfilled in the future!

They said to him these words "AKIVA YOU HAVE COMFORTED US. AKIVA YOU HAVE COMFORTED US."....

And a connected lesson that I learnt about Tisha BeAv, is that even although the day is one of immense tragedy and mourning, and the King of all kings, Hashem, commands us to fast and say the Kinot because of this , it can also be done in a way of joy.

Because the same King of kings has commanded us to SERVE HIM WITH JOY.

Tisha BeAv will soon be converted into a day of great celebration, when we will no longer have to bear opposites together in our hearts. May it be this year.

Gut Shabbos to all

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

TU BEAV, TESHUVAH, FORGIVENESS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 August 2024 · Shabbos 17 Aug 2024 · י"ג אב תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their Anniversary tomorrow. This is close to Tu BeAv, which we celebrate in a few days, when lots of marriages would take place in Yerushalayim each year. Wishing you much happiness together!

Mazal Tov to Zelda Marks, whose birthday is next week. Thinking of you with warm memories Zelda, and hoping that you are doing well. Wishing you a wonderful year with good health and happiness!

As we now move from the 9 days of mourning climaxed by Tisha BeAv, we have a Shabbos of REJOICING, where we read the HafTorah of NACHAMU (COMFORTING), and are hopeful that Hashem will comfort us for the destruction of the Holy Temples and Yerushalayim. (and all the current problems we are facing)

This is followed by a further 6 weeks of CONSOLATION, where each Haftorah follows this theme.

Running alongside these 6 weeks, there is a general custom that there are 6 weeks between TU BEAV (15th of Av) and Rosh Hashanah, where we already start to wish each other a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for Good and Sweet New Year.

If you take the gematria (numerical value) of 'kesivah vechasimah tovah' and 'chamishah assar beAv', (15th of Av), they both equal 928! Ie Tu BeAv is linked to ROSH HASHANAH

Which connects to the fact that TU BEAV, is also a DAY OF FORGIVENESS (Mishnah Taanis).

In relation to forgiveness I saw a beautiful Tanya in Igeres Hateshuvah Chap 11: (As one of the avenues of Teshuvah):

When a person humbles himself by remembering his or her past misconduct, and imperfect record, this enables him to become immune to becoming angry, or taking offence in any way.

As our Sages declare "Those who are humiliated, yet do not humiliate in return, who hear their insult and do not retort, who perform out of love, and are happy in their affliction, concerning them Scripture says "Those who love Him shall be like the sun rising in all it's might."

Moreover he who passes over his feelings, all his misdeeds are passed over." (Judges 5:31, Shabbat88b etc)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, with consolation and good news for the whole of Klal Yisrael

THE YARDSTICK OF TORAH

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 8 August 2025 · Shabbos 9 Aug 2025 · ט"ו אב תשפ"ה

Sent with a "Re:" subject but it is an original full piece opening "Dear Family"; included.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their Anniversary. Wishing you many more years of much happiness together with lots of continued nachas from your children!

I also noticed that it is the yohrtzeit of Basha Stein this Shabbos (not sure of her first name) who passed away on the 15th of Av 1949.

We are now in the first week of Consolation after Tisha BeAv, and I saw an interesting interpretation in this weeks Haftarah, Nachamu (Comfort my People..), Isaah 40:3-5, where Hashem is speaking about our return from exile:

"In order to make the return easier, every intervening valley will be raised and every intervening mountain and hill will be lowered.....The glory of G-d will be revealed...."

This was explained as follows: (From the Book of Haftaros)

Each of us has to become expert in self-appraisal to ascend the ladder of Spiritual growth.

It is easy for us to ignore our shortcomings and consider ourselves as mountains.

Or at least as hills if we realize that we are not accomplished Torah Scholars – for example, 'I am an admirable businessman or professional....'

On the other hand we may also err in seeing ourselves as a valley, and G-d forbid, fall into a depression, if we realise that we have not progressed very far in life.

Therefore the verse is teaching us that we need to set aside time periodically to measure our moral and religious behaviour against TORAH'S YARD-STICK.

This will inevitably drive home to us our own spiritual deficiencies, which will make 'Every mountain and hill lowered' to a suitable level of humility.

And also to move from depths of depression by reminding ourselves of G-d's infinite capacity and readiness, to forgive, which will raise us up from depression – 'Every valley will be raised...'

And then we will be fit to come close to Hashem – 'The glory of G-d will be revealed....'

Wishing everyone Gut Shabbos with much comfort!

Va'eschanan ↑ Va'eschanan · Contents · By date ואתחנן

AROUSAL OF THE JEWISH HEART

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 July 2026 · Shabbos 25 Jul 2026 · י"א אב תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

There is a yohrtzeit coming up at the end of next week, on the special day of 15th of Av (Tu BeAv) of my mother's mother, Basha Stein ah. She passed away on 10/8/49, the year before I was born, and so I never met her. Her neshamah should have an aliyah.

I recently read the following in the Frierdike Rebbe's Likutei Dibburim Chap 51:1, which relates also to this week's Sedra, Vaeschanan, and I therefore thought that it would be appropriate to share. It was written in Gluboka 1934, as follows:

"Jewry today is in a difficult situation, both materially and spiritually. (May G-d have mercy on His People and bless them with an abundance of life and livelihood!).

Now all Jews are 'believers and descendants of believers', in G-d and His Torah.

And it is written ' if you walk in the Ways of My Statutes and observe My Commandments and fulfil them, I shall grant you your rains in their season, the earth will yield its harvest, and the trees of the field will yield their fruit.'

Here G-d is stating, in the Torah, that material wealth depends on spiritual considerations.

Ie, If people follow His Ways and observe His Commandments, He will grant material blessings – a livelihood, health and children....."

I also saw a *beautiful video* relating to Tisha BeAv, which is today, which I wanted to share – see attached below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB1cgEpA4FQ

Gut Shabbos to all!

עקב

Eikev

Devarim 7:12 · parsha 3 of 11 in Devarim · 46 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — LONG LIFE CONTINUED 1138
2017 / 5777 — DOWNFALL AND CONQUEST 1141
2018 / 5778 — THE SOURCE, THE RIVER AND THE GARDEN 1143
2019 / 5779 — HIDDEN DEEP LOVE 1148
2020 / 5780 — A STORY OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION 1150
2021 / 5781 — MATCH-MAKING 1152
2022 / 5782 — A SWEET AND HAPPY LIFE 1154
2023 / 5783 — THANK YOU HASHEM! 1156
2024 / 5784 — REWARDS OF LISTENING 1158
2025 / 5785 — FINDING LIGHT AND JOY IN THE BROKEN PIECES 1160
2026 / 5786 — APPRECIATING LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS 1163

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

LONG LIFE CONTINUED

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 August 2016 · Shabbos 27 Aug 2016 · כ"ג אב תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope you are all well.

Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin on his upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you lots of Hatzlocha Shmueli! You are far away but we are thinking about you.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah and Family on their move to a new Home! It is hard to believe that you have been with us for 5 years! The time has just flown by and it has been a pleasure having you all with us.

We wish you lots on new Mazal with your move, and it is sure nice for us that you will still be nearby in Stamford Hill BH.

Did I hear that Dani wants to go to Law School? Wishing you much success Dani!

Last week we spoke about an 80 year Research Project into long life, and funnily, 2 more Research Projects came past me this week, one in my Dental Journal

I find it so interesting how Science, especially now that there are is so much new technologic progress, keeps proving things that Torah has been teaching us already for centuries!

1. Good Deeds

I had to look twice when I saw this heading in the BDJ - Good Deeds ?!

And this is also precisely what Tanya was talking about this week - TZEDAKA

So the BDJ says as follows:

While it has long been recognised that the enactment of a good deed can correlate with happiness and self worth, research now suggests that people who give money to charity actually exhibit heightened brain activity.

Noted particularly in the ventral striatum and tegmental parts of our brain, these areas are closely linked to positive feelings, our physiological reward system and the processing of emotional output from the amygdala (Moll J et al)

WHAT THIS MEANS IS THAT THE ACT OF DONATION TRIGGERS A CHEMICAL REACTION IN OUR BRAINS THAT PRODUCE A SENSE OF REWARD AND POSITIVE EMOTION.

NOT ONLY THIS BUT IT IS WELL DOCUMENTED THAT THOSE WHO GIVE REGULARLY, FEEL HEALTHIER BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY (Mental Health Foundation - Altruism Page, July 2016)

They then continue and say - If giving blindly encourages positivity, imagine how good it would feel helping someone you know!

2. Harvard University

4 Harvard Researchers, over a 16 year period, (1996 - 2012) collected data from 75,534 women over 16 years of age.

The majority of these women were Christian and 1700 were Jewish

They found that those who attended more than 1 Religious Service per week had a 33% lower risk of premature death.

The Project's senior author Professor Tyler Vander Weele, also pointed to another similar Research focused solely on Jews which echoes his findings.

This study was on 1811 Jewish Israeli men and women over the age of 70, and its conclusion was 'SYNAGOGUE ATTENDANCE IS SEEN TO PROMOTE SURVIVAL.'

THE Harvard study statistically ruled out such factors as reverse causation ie such as 'healthy people go to Church more than unhealthy people' etc

He therefore concludes ' THIS SUGGESTS THAT THERE IS SOMETHING POWERFUL ABOUT THE COMMUNAL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.'

Wishin everyone A Gut Shabbos and not to forget RAMBAM 5 minutes per week. (Sefer Tahara - Book 10 - Hilchos Para Aduma Chaps 8-14)

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

DOWNFALL AND CONQUEST

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 August 2017 · Shabbos 12 Aug 2017 · כ' אב תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mommy and I are in the French alps for 2 weeks and I am out of touch with any birthdays, and our comfort zone of technologies, so please forgive us if we miss out on any Mazel Tovs etc. Hopefully we can catch them up later.

I saw 2 separate Dvar Torahs from The Rebbe on this week's Parsha Eikev, and it struck me that they are the '2 sides of the same coin'. The first one I am saying over from memory.

DOWNFALL
There is a pasuk in this week's sedra, where it is explained the mechanics of how the downfall of a Jew can come about.(chas veshalom) It starts when we look out at the world and the ways of the world, and we are awed by this, (*...hamidbar hagadol vehanora - *the great and awesome desert - the world is sometimes described as a desert), seeing ourselves as small, weak and insignificant in comparison.

The pasuk goes on to mention *nachash *- snakes. The venom of a snake is hot. ie the next stage is we get very excited and heated up over all the world's attractions.

Next word is *saraf - *fiery serpent. This is even hotter, and reflects now a discomfort with the heat and excitement, and damage is taking place from too much indulgence. This signals troubles.

Then *akrav* - scorpion - the sting of the scorpion is cold. Coldness now starts to set in.

*Tzimaon - *and thirst in the dry desert.

CONQUEST
The second vort I saw was from the posuk where Mosheh says to the us 'You are the smallest of the Nations' This prompts us with the question - As such how are we to survive? And even if we can survive how are we to fulfill our Divine mission and influence over the rest of the world? In addition we have assimilation and wars eroding us further, and the demands of modern life leave us with progressively less time to pursue our spirituality? It seems an impossible task.

But there is an answer
Now, even the whole world knows that size is not always the indication of power, with the discovery of the power of the atom, the smallest part of matter, and what it can unleash. *Even the smallest particle can release incredible force,* (as is seen with atomic energy where the atom is split)

And the lesson for us, taking the atom analogy further, is that the key to releasing our potential is by breaking our egos, thereby allowing our inner Divine energy to shine through. The better we master this 'spiritual technology', the easier will it be for us to not feel intimidated. Within us lies the power to change the entire world for the good, and to realise who we really are in relation to the world.

Gut Shabbos to all.

THE SOURCE, THE RIVER AND THE GARDEN

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 August 2018 · Shabbos 4 Aug 2018 · כ"ג אב תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying summer holidays.

We wish Pesach and Chanie and Family Mazal Tov for their move to California next week. We are for sure going to miss you all, but your move should be with much success in gashmiyus and ruchnius for yourselves, and for the whole Family. Meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal, letovah!!

Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin in Australia for your upcoming birthday next week. Long time no see Shmueli! Wishing you a good year in all matters, and with much happiness.

Wishing Hirshy and Family a safe trip to London. We are all excited BH

Yesterday was the yohrtzeit of The Rebbe's father Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson (1878-1944).

He was a mystic and scholar, writing commentaries on the most esoteric texts, and was the Rabbi of a major Ukranian city.

He was persecuted by the Soviets because of his work and sent into exile to Siberia.

His writings are very deep and beautiful, and I thought I would give an outline of one of his writings which I saw in Chabad.org this week, so as to get a taste of his beauty. Please look there for the full version, which is also only an adaptation.

I am sure Chanan is going to love the part about the garden!

The talk was based around the posuk 'A river flows from Eden to water the garden.' - Genesis

Besides its literal meaning it is also a metaphor for the passage of ideas from their point of origin, to their fully realised form as teachable lessons. (and this is a very long distance as will be explained)

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak links the concepts of Eden, river and garden, with the lives and passing of 2 famous Talmudic Sages in a most beautiful way, which I will try and explain.

The Garden

A garden offers our senses diverse pleasures, but it is only after careful deliberation of the gardener, who judiciously selects his flowers and trees, plots their placement with an eye to maximise their effect, manicures the paths, trims, prunes and paves so that the visitor can take joy in the garden.

Similarly, a teacher is meticulous and careful in what he presents, and how he presents it, and what he withholds, so that his lesson can provide intellectual delight.

The River

The river that feeds the garden is the entirety of the teachers intellectual amassment.

The river is broad and powerful, its flow incessant.

From this stream he constructs his garden, his carefully chosen lessons.

The Source which is Beyond - Eden

This is far different to the pleasing rationality of the river and garden.

Eden means intense delight, but it also has connotations of something unfathomable, with dizzying creativity, and even chaotic.

There can be wisps of this quality in the river and garden, but this is barely perceptible.

It is a world of its own.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak now links the above to the life and death of 2 great Sages, Rabbah bar Nachman and Rav Yosef - Babylonian Talmud in 3rd Century.

They were colleagues and were both the potential future leaders.

Who was more fit for the leadership?

Rav Yosef

He excelled in the breadth of the Torah.

His knowledge was encyclopaedic, and he was reverently called Sinai, in reference to the entire corpus of Law given to Mosheh on Sinai.

Rabbah

Rabbah understood and relentlessly pursued, the depth of Torah.

He was reverently called 'one who uproots mountains' alluding to his incisive penetrating understanding

The colleagues opted for Rav Yosef, saying that, while a sharp and deep mind is admirable (Rabbah), legal decisions can only be based on knowledge of the relevant texts. Ie the people need the 'wheat'.

But Rav Yosef insisted that Rabbah deserves the position because 'the owner of the wheat is needed.'

So Rabbah took the leadership, and after Rabbah's passing, Rav Yosef did assume the position 3 years later.

The passing of Rabbah.

Rabbah passed away alone in a forest in exile from the Persian government.

When the Sages of Pumpedita sensed their leader was no longer on earth, they went in search.

As they neared Agama, they saw a flock of birds hovering over a spot in the forest.

They understood that the birds were there providing protection for their saintly leader, which was correct.

They located him, and did the mitzva of burial and mourning.

The Talmud relates that on the day he died, a storm lifted an Arab riding on his camel, from one side of the Papa River to the other.

The passing of Rav Yosef

When Rav Yosef passes away, the Euphrates River leaps and clamours bringing the bridge that spans it, to it's knees.

The broad RIVER represents Rav Yosef's carefully constructed and vast rivers of knowledge, and the tumult of the river at his passing, was its celebration of his life.

Rav Yosef was a man of the RIVER. Rabbah was a man of EDEN.

Rabbah's restless, penetrating mind aligns him with the indecipherable point of knowledge that is found in Eden. This was represented in his passing showing his solitary journey (alone he perceived the secrets of Eden), the hush of the forest, and the wings of the birds, and the storm.

Rabbah and Rav Yosef, despite their variances, are inseparable friends.

Rabbah provides the spark of ingenuity that gives rise to the endless formation of ideas.

Rav Yosef streamlines them, and shapes them into applicable Laws

However Rav Yosef understood that for there to be a RIVER, there has to first be an EDEN.

And that is why he gave over his leadership to Rabbah first, and only later, after the passing of Rabbah, did Rav Yosef take the leadership.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

HIDDEN DEEP LOVE

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 August 2019 · Shabbos 24 Aug 2019 · כ"ג אב תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying the summer holidays.

After Tisha BeAv, we have the 7 Weeks of Consolation.

Last week was the first, and we read the Haftorah 'Nachamu, Nachamu Ami' - Comfort, comfort My people.

All 7 Haftoras after Tisha BeAv are from the Prophet Yeshayah, and I heard an interesting Dvar Torah from Abudahan, where he sees that the order of the 7 Haftorahs, is relating a message to us.

I only heard how the first 4 relate to the HIDDEN LOVE OF PUNISHMENT as follows: (The punishment from Hashem was obviously the destruction of the Temple, the defeat of the Jewish People and our scattering into exile, for our misbehaviour)

1. Nachamu, nachamu is where Hashem tells Yeshayah to say to the Jewish People, Nachamu - Last week's, Sedra Vaeschanan
2. Azavani Hashem - The Jewish People say that Hashem has abandoned us! - This week's Haftorah, Sedra Ekev
3. Aniyah Soarah Lo Nuchamah - You (Israel), like a storm tossed ship, who has not been comforted - Next week's Haftorah, Sedra Reeh
4. Anochi, Anochi Hu Menachemchem - It is I, yes I who comforts you - Sedra Shoftim

It is hard to understand the above, because we were punished, and now after the punishment we are being comforted, and so why are we still saying

'Hashem has abandoned us' and 'We are like a storm-tossed ship without comfort'?

So the Abudahan explains as follows:

There is a VERY DEEP LOVE OF HASHEM WHICH HE CAN ONLY EXPRESS IN THE HIDDEN WAY OF PUNISHMENT!

But to understand and experience this love , we have to be spiritually prepared for it.

So straight after our defeat and loss of Temple, we were at a low level of spirituality, and if Hashem would have expressed His deep love for us in 'strictness', we would have been completely shattered by it, and would have seen it as aggression.

Therefore Hashem sent Yeshayah to comfort us - Step 1 above

Now the Jewish People are recovering and coming more in tune with Spirituality, and they complain and say, '(We are not satisfied with just a Prophet, we want Hashem Himself) - Hashem has abandoned us!' -Step 2 above

So the Prophets go back to Hashem and relay over the message from Yisrael - Step 3 above.

And now Hashem Himself moves in to comfort Yisrael, who are now Spiritually ready to receive Hashem's GREAT HIDDEN LOVE - Step 4 above.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos .

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

A STORY OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 August 2020 · Shabbos 8 Aug 2020 · י"ח אב תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying summer.

Mazal Tov to Rivky for having attained full American Citizenship. Such a nice achievement! Wishing you continued success in all areas Rivky!

We have experienced a live story of HOPE AND INSPIRATION in our community this last week, which I thought would be worth to share.

A member of our community passed away last week on Tisha BeAv, and his life story came to light. He was 47 years old.

I don't want to go into his medical condition, but at birth he had severe problems.

When he got older at 5, they did very delicate and complex surgery on him. In fact the procedure that he went through became named after the London Surgeon who devised the operation.

At his Barmitzvah, the whole Family were crying because of the miracle that he had survived to that age.

He then had a further operation at age 20.

He got married and together with his wife they raised a Family of 6 healthy and amazing children.

Shimon AH was a quiet and gentle person.

He was conscientious with his Judaism, and all his children keep Judaism in a vibrant and genuine manner. The oldest boy is 22

I vaguely knew that Shimon AH had some health issue, but I never knew that every day of his life was a miracle of survival. That is because he never complained and never spoke about it.

And he was always quietly happy, getting on with his jobs, family and communal work. There was never any requests for help or charity.

He had no enemies. Everyone loved and respected him.

We all have problems and challenges, and rightly so, these challenges can seem overwhelming for us at the time.

But I think we can gain much inspiration and hope from Shimon AH. There is always hope!

On day 1 of his life, the doctors were afraid to move him from one hospital to another, for fear of his life.

And blessings and advice were sought for every move, throughout his life. (unbeknown to most of us)

And yet day by day, miracle by miracle, and with the help of Hashem, he built a formidable Family, one which any Jew would be proud of.

In this week's Sedra Eikev, we read the second paragraph of Shema, where Hashem promises us tremendous blessings if we will heed His commandments and serve Him with love, and a whole heart, and our entire being.

I think that the life of Shimon AH bears some reflection of this sentiment.

At the end of this paragraph, there is also a hint to the coming of Mashiach.

May this be speedily in our days when we will all be together again with departed ones.

We are now in the 7 weeks of comforting after Tisha BeAv and I wish everyone a joyful Shabbos!

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

MATCH-MAKING

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 July 2021 · Shabbos 31 Jul 2021 · כ"ב אב תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying summer.

Mazal Tov to Pesach on the purchase of his new accounting business in America. Wishing you much success Pesach, in both your gashmius and ruchnius pursuits!

The 15th of Av (Tu BeAv) symbolizes the transformation of the sorrow of exile, into the joy of Redemption.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said "There were no days as joyous for the Jewish People as the 15th of Av and as Yom Kippur, when the daughters of Yerushalayim would go out in white clothes... And dance in the vineyards. And what would they say? 'Young man, please lift up your eyes and see what you choose for yourself for a wife. Do not set your eyes towards beauty, but towards a good family, as the verse states 'Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain, only a woman who fears the Lord shall be praised." - Sanhedrin p26b

This raises many questions, and this is not made any clearer by another Beraisa which states "The Sages taught - What would the beautiful women among them say? Set your eyes toward beauty. What would those of distinguished lineage among them say? Set your eyes towards family, as a wife is only for children. What would the unattractive ones among them say? Acquire your purchase for the sake of Heaven.."

The Rebbe explains as follows - In these matchmaking events, both the young men and women were being called upon to live up to Judaism's highest spiritual ideals of marriage.

All the daughters of Jerusalem understood that nobility of spirit and devoutness were the measure of a person, and that they all possessed these qualities by being part of the same family ie part of the Jewish People.

In some, these qualities were well developed - the beautiful ones.

In others, these qualities were still below the surface - the unattractive ones.

But they all come from the same family, all with equal potential to blossom into a highly praiseworthy woman who fears the Lord.

The Rebbe says that the most important words in the Mishneh are the ones most overlooked ie "YOUNG MAN, PLEASE LIFT UP YOUR EYES"

The young women were saying, "if you don't see the beauty in me, then elevate your gaze, and then you will realize the true value of each of us."

The Gemorra tells a story of a young man who rejected a poor girl who he found unattractive. The great Sage Rabbi Yishmael took her into his home and took proper care of her. He later invited the young man to his home. Upon seeing the young lady, he found her most beautiful. The Rabbi then told the shocked boy, 'this is the same woman who you did not want to marry!' Rabbi Yishmael then wept and said 'The daughters of Israel are beautiful - it is only poverty that renders them ugly.' Nedarim 86b

Wishing all those who have not yet found their match, to find one soon, and it should be with great joy!

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

A SWEET AND HAPPY LIFE

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 18 August 2022 · Shabbos 20 Aug 2022 · כ"ג אב תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Renee continues with her treatment and we wish her a speedy recovery. BH there has been some progress.

We also wish Brian a refuah shleimah from covid.

I saw an interesting interpretation from this week's Sedra Ekev, on how we can have a sweet and happy personal journey to our own 'promised land', which I would like to share.

It was from Sefer Hasichos 5752 Vol 1 p324-328, and was based on the verse 8:8 from our Sedra, which says, "G-d has given you a land of wheat, barley, grapevines, figs, and pomegranates; a land of oil producing olive, and (date) honey."

Wheat.

Primarily human food

Barley

Primarily animal food

These 2 foods represent our work with our two souls ie our Divine and animal souls, (which are BATTLING to take charge of 'the little city' - our body)

Wine (product of the grape)

Represents the JOY with which we should approach this work

Figs

Refers to the garments worn by Adam and Eve (fig leaves)

And represents our efforts to REFINE THE GARMENTS OF THE SOUL - Thought, Speech and Action

Pomegranate

The many seeds of the pomegranate symbolize the multitude of Mitzvot, through which we REFINE THE WORLD around us

Olives

Need significant exertion to squeeze out the oil

Dates

Date palm trees take a long time to grow

Both olives and dates therefore represent the EXERTION that we need to put in to our journey during our exile.

But both of these produce the added benefits of LIGHT (from the oil) and SWEETNESS, (from the honey of the dates) and allude to the revelation of the inner dimensions of Torah in the times of Mashiach

And for us personally, these efforts will enlighten and sweeten our relationship with Hashem and His Torah, on our journey to our own 'promised land'.

Gut Shabbos to all

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

THANK YOU HASHEM!

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 August 2023 · Shabbos 5 Aug 2023 · י"ח אב תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying the Summer (or Winter) holidays.

The dominant theme during this week was about BLESSINGS.

We have been learning the Laws of Blessings in this week's Rambam (Hilchos Brachos), and there was also a connection to Blessings in this week's Parshah Eikev.

Rambam

There is one main Mitzvah from Torah with regard to blessings, and that is that we must bless Hashem after eating bread and a meal to satiation (Birkat Hamazon)

Our Sages however have instructed us to also make

- Blessing over benefit - food, drink, and pleasant fragrances. Blessings are made before and after foods and drinks, and before pleasant fragrances.
- Blessings before a mitzvah
- Blessings of praise and thanks

In this way, we will constantly remember Hashem.

In Chap 10, Rambam discusses the blessings of praise, which are interesting and unusual.

The important ones that I wanted to share from this chapter, were the blessings for good tidings, and also 'bad' tidings. And Rambam says 'A person is obligated to recite a blessing over undesirable occurrences with a positive spirit, in the same way as he joyfully recites a blessing over desirable occurrences -

derived from "And you shall love Hashem with all your might."! See the text for the exact wording of the blessings.

Sedra

The Baal HaTurim interprets the verse (10:12) ".what does Hashem request of you? Only to fear. and love Him..with your whole heart ....."

He points out that if you take the numerical value of the Hebrew words 'what' and 'from you' in the above verse they each come to the value of 100 (without going into detail)

This refers to the 100 Blessings we are supposed to say each day. (which I think is brought down in the Laws of Shabbat)

There are also 100 letters in this verse.

"And if you constantly heed My Commandments...I will bring rain for your land at its appropriate time - the drenching rains and the later rains, and you will gather in your grains, your wine and your oil. I will provide grass in your field for your animals. You will eat and be satisfied." (11:14 and 15)

Gut Shabbos to all

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

REWARDS OF LISTENING

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 August 2024 · Shabbos 24 Aug 2024 · כ' אב תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

This week I saw 2 Dvar Torah which were connected, which I would like to share.

15th of Av (from Mashiach Day by Day)

- Shulchan Aruch YD 246:23

.Especially from the 15th of Av and on, one should begin learning TORAH at night (because the nights start earlier and last longer)

- Taanis 31a

From the 15th of Av, one who adds in learning is granted additional life.

Sedra, Ekev

"Vehayah ekev tishmeun." - It will be, if you will LISTEN to these Laws..The Eternal your G-d will keep His promise to you..He will love you, bless you,...bless the fruits of your land - your grain, your wine, your oil.....

So the Baal Haturim explains the hidden messages in the word Ekev (If)

- Its numerical value is 172, and the section in Torah describing the 10 Commandments (which some say is a crystalisation of the whole Torah), has 172 words! Ie the word Ekev is also referring to the whole Torah.
- The Hebrew letters of Ekev, can also spell out Kva, which means "Fixed" - as in the phrase 'aseh Toraschah kva' - make your sessions of Torah learning at fixed times every day

Ie if we will listen to, and heed the Laws of Hashem, and set fixed times to learn HIS TORAH, then.... Especially, increasing now as the nights start to get longer....

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos!

FINDING LIGHT AND JOY IN THE BROKEN PIECES

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 August 2025 · Shabbos 16 Aug 2025 · כ"ב אב תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying the summer (or winter) holidays

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester

Rahel and I have just come back from a 2 week trip to Sydney Australia to visit Baty and her Family.

While in Australia we went to visit Zelda, and also met her daughter Gaby Cass. We spent a beautiful time together. Greta was also supposed to join us, but she couldn't make it.

'Coincidentally' I also noticed that Zelda's birthday is upcoming on the 25th of August, and so I would like to wish her a big Mazal Tov. Wishing you many more years of good health and happiness, with much continued nachas from all of your children and grandchildren!

Selma also mentioned that 2 of her children are also living in Sydney, but we did not manage to meet them.

I also contacted Sid Davidoff and Adrian Sacks by phone, who are living in Melbourne, and this was also so nice to be in contact BH.

In this weeks Sedra, Eikev, I saw an interesting article from Rabbi JJ Jacobson, about Mosheh's smashing of the stone Tablets, which I would like to summarise and share.

The following points occurred:

- Mosheh comes down from Har Sinai, sees misbehaviour, and smashes the 2 Tablets with the 10 Commandments
- After a period of repentance, Hashem gives us a second chance , and Mosheh hews a second set of Tablets which Hashem engraves again with the 10 Commandments, and Mosheh delivers these to the People
- Later in history we placed the BROKEN PIECES together with the whole Tablets in the Ark of the Holy Temple - in the Holy of Holies.
- In the closing verses of the whole book of Deuteronomy, at the zenith of Mosheh's life, he is praised for the action he took in smashing the first Tablets?!

It is explained as follows:

Mosheh did not smash the Tablets in anger.

At the time when the Jews were in a state of failure and shatteredness, Mosheh was guiding us on how to start the healing process.

Both the shattered and whole Tablets were both placed together in the Holy of Holies in the Bet HaMikdash!

This conveyed one of Judaism's greatest messages - Truth is not only found in Spiritual perfection. It is also found in the broken pieces of the human psyche.

The broken Tablets, like a broken heart, still contain the light of G-d.

We hope for wholeness. But when we encounter brokenness, we shouldn't run from it.

We should embrace it bringing our broken pieces into our own 'Holy of Holies.'

As one of the Rebbeim stated, "There is nothing more whole than a broken heart."

Mosheh taught us that hope isn't lost. We can find Hashem and holiness in the shattered pieces of broken dreams.

And Hashem said to Mosheh, "Thank you for breaking them (the tablets)"

Gut Shabbos to all

Eikev ↑ Eikev · Contents · By date עקב

APPRECIATING LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 July 2026 · Shabbos 1 Aug 2026 · י"ח אב תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and enjoying the summer.

MAZAL TOV TO FREIDA AND MENDEL ON THE BIRTH OF A BABY GIRL NAMED NECHAMA! This is such beautiful news BH. Wishing you many simchos and much nachas, and to bring up Nechama to Torah, Chuppah and Maasim Tovim BEH.

Mazal Tov to Janine Milner on her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Janine with much happiness and nachas from your children, and all in good health BEH

Wishing long life to Isanne Ossey on the 10th Yohrtzeit of her mother Mary Heiman ah, which was on Tisha BeAv. Her neshamah should have an aliyah !

So many events this week were related to the Stein side of the Family, in the month of Av

· The naming of the new baby after my mother, Nechama ah (Joyce) – which also means comfort

· Janine's upcoming birthday

· The yohrtzeit of Isanne's mother on Tisha BeAv, Mary

· The yohrtzeit of my mother's mother Chasha ah (Annie) on TU BEAV (15th of Av), yesterday.

See attached Stein Family Tree made by Kevin Ossey

And so I thought that I would share a teaching that I saw this week, in the Editorial of Chayenu, about about the day TU BEAV – 15th OF AV

Our Sages taught that there was no holiday for the Jewish People as JOYOUS as Tu BeAv (Conclusion of Tractate Taanis)

Kabbalah teaches that the 15th day of every month marks its Spiritual Zenith, when the moon is fully revealed and its spiritual energy reaches its peak.

However, this is more so revealed in Av, because it follows on from the darkness of a steep descent of Jewish consciousness with the mourning and destruction of the Holy Temples on the 9th of Av. (The Light which follows a deep darkness)

Interestingly, and connected, we also start learning about the Laws of the New Moon in Rambam this week.

Each month the moon wanes and disappears, yet it always returns.

In the same way, every descent contains the potential for renewal.

Our task is to remain devoted to Hashem and His Torah even during our periods of darkness.

Through this dedication we will merit the ultimate light, speedily in our days .

Gut Shabbos to all, with much light, joy and comfort!

ראה

Re'eh

Devarim 11:26 · parsha 4 of 11 in Devarim · 47 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — TZEDAKA 1166
2017 / 5777 — The Marathon 1168
2018 / 5778 — THE ZODIAC OF ELUL 1170
2019 / 5779 — GROWTH 1173
2020 / 5780 — THE WISDOM OF TOLERANCE 1175
2021 / 5781 — A GENTLE INNER VOICE 1177
2022 / 5782 — THINKING OF OTHERS 1179
2023 / 5783 — FISH 1181
2024 / 5784 — SOME LESSONS FROM ANIMALS 1184
2025 / 5785 — TESHUVAH - A STORY 1186
2026 / 5786 — A WAKEUP CALL 1189

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

TZEDAKA

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 2 September 2016 · Shabbos 3 Sep 2016 · ל' אב תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin on his birthday which I think is today. Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on your upcoming Anniversary. Also hope you are settling down well in your new flat. I believe also that Freida and Mendel are coming home after their shlichus in Hawaii. Well done and I am sure it was also enjoyable. It was also so nice to see Shmuly and his whole Family doing mivtzoim this week, and Pesach and his Family at the Kosel.

I have limited internet facilities today as we are on holiday in Devon with the Family, which has been very nice BH.

Last week we mentioned the research project of Moll et al - 'Human fronto mesiolimbic networks guide decisions about charitable donations'. There was a question tickling my mind after I read about their work, and I did wonder what their results would show if their subjects were giving charity lishma Ie just because Hashem commanded, and not because of any ulterior motives, but I think that this would be beyond research.

However this week there were many pointers to discuss the Torah view of Tzedaka.

Today we read about giving Maaser in Pashas Reeh, and for weeks now, the Alte Rebbe is discussing Tzedaka in Tanya , which gives us a deep Chassidic insight into how Tzedaka operates.

Chumash.

Rashi questions why Maaser command is placed straight after the command of not to cook a kid in the milk of its mother Ie what is the connection? And he answers as follows 'Hashem says to Yisrael - do not let Me 'cook the young shoots of your crops in their mothers innards '(Ie before ripening), because if you do not tithe properly, just before their ripening, I shall summon the East wind and batter them. Similarly with the Bikkurim gifts.' And then today's Chumash ends - 'If you do separate all of your tithes ....for the Levite and the proselyte and the orphan and the widow who are in your city, let them eat their fill, in order that Hashem your G-d bless you in all the endeavours that you make.

Tanya

But really the deep explanations of the Alte Rebbe allow us to understand Tzedaka , and allows us to see better, how the results of the above Research are starting to shed a little light. However , because it is complex, it may be better to leave this till next week.

Wishing everyone a very Gut Shabbos.

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

The Marathon

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 17 August 2017 · Shabbos 19 Aug 2017 · כ"ז אב תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

We are still in the French Alps, and as such I do not have access to all Mazal Tovs, so please forgive if I have left anyone out. I did get wind though that Shmueli Bassin is celebrating a birthday. So Mazal Tov Shmueli. Wishing you much success this year for you and your Family. And I heard that Pesach is in Yerushalayim with his Family, where all our hearts yearn also to be there together with you. Enjoy.

We are coming up now to Rosh Chodesh Elul (this Shabbos is Shabbos mevorichim Elul), the month when we take stock of the past year, and make new resolutions to continue in the direction of our strengths, and try and repair areas where we were weak, *each one of us according to our ability,* and through these efforts we should all merit a Shana Tova Umetuka physically and spiritually. - Hayom Yom of this Shabbos

So, 3 interesting threads came to my attention this week which led me on to this week's theme, and which I wanted to share, and these were:
1. An interesting point I saw in Tanya
2. An interesting discussion Mommy and I had about a Guest speaker on the Ted show.
3. Contemplating the above points, together with the nature of Elul.

Tanya
Tanya was speaking about how the flow of life and blessing reaches us by discussing the word *behibaram* the word used about Hashem's creating. The Alte Rebbe looks deeper at this word and sees it saying '*be hey baram' *(He

created the world with the letter *hey)*, and also notices that the letters of the word also make up the name of '*Abraham', * who epitomised the characteristic of *kindness*. Ie the flow of life and light which enlivens us, comes down from this very high source in the *yud * of Hashems name, down through the letter *hey* in His Name and then down to our lowly world below.

But what really struck me was how this is brought about. It is initiated by us little people, and not the Torah Scholars who spend most of their day studying and part of their day doing kindness and charity, BUT BY THE ONES WHO SPEND MOST OF THEIR DAY DOING ACTS OF *KINDNESS AND CHARITY*!

Which means each one of us is able to initiate this flow of life, light and blessing to ourselves and the world - Tanya, Igros Kodesh 5

Ted Show
The guest was an expert in Education and had done extensive research into what makes people succeed in life, by interviewing successful businesses and people and Institutions etc. Her results showed THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE VERY CLEVER, OR TALENTED STUDENTS WHO SUCCEEDED, BUT THE ONES WHO HAD A GOAL, AND HELD ON CONSISTENTLY TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS.

Marathon
Which led me to contemplate that life is a Marathon, where the long term goal is important, and we do not need major talents to get there. But, each of us, with our own capabilities, can reach our goals and bring down goodness for ourselves and the world, if we are sensible and *determined* to hold on and get there.

On a light note I am attaching a photo of one of the results of our holiday in France :) Game called Petanque, which is popular in this area.

Gut Shabbos and wishing everyone a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a Good New Year

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

THE ZODIAC OF ELUL

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 August 2018 · Shabbos 11 Aug 2018 · לי אב תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos. Wishing you continued growth and achievement together with much happiness.

Elul arrives this Shabbos BEH, and this brings in quite a change to the atmosphere of the year.

To get a sense of this, I would like to share a talk I heard from Rabbi Aaron Raskin on the Zodiac of Elul, and I have also attached a nice song from Daniel Zamir called Yaala, which I think is also related. The lyrics of the song was written by a great Jewish poet in the 16th Century, Rabbi Israel Nejara, describing the love between Dod (probably referring to the love of G-d) to his raayah ('wife') – Yaala.

The source of information on the Zodiac is derived mainly from Sefer Yetzirah

The name

The first letters of the word Elul spell out 'Ani Ledodi, Vedodi Li' – I am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is to me.

Elul is our preparation for the next month of Tishrei (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), and the first part of the posuk (ani ledodi) refers to our stock-taking and INTROSPECTION of the past year to see how we can improve. And 'vedodi li' is Hashem's reciprocation to us in Tishrei with blessings for the New Year, according to our preparation.

The Mazal ie Zodiac

This is Virgo the Virgin – Betulah

Before coming down to the world we are in a state of purity, which tends to get tarnished in our journey through the world.

But through introspection and true TESHUVAH, we can regain this purity.

Tribe

The tribe linked to the month of Elul is Gad.

The men of Gad were extremely powerful. With their swords they would remove head and arm of enemy in one stroke.

Sefer Yetzira links this to tefillin (head and arm) but also through the letters of their name – the gimmel stands for 3, and the dalet stands for 4 ie the shin on the head tefillin has 3 arms, and the shin on the arm tefillin has 4 arms.

Also the Hebrew word gimmel means GIVING CHARITY, and dalet means (to) the poor.

Together with their charitable nature, they also exhibited self-sacrifice in going at the head of the army into Eretz Yisrael, when really their allocated land was East of the Jordan. And this was causative to the DRAWING DOWN FROM HASHEM OF THE 13 TRAITS OF MERCY .

The letter

Sefer Yetzira proscribes a letter to each month, and for Elul this is the yud.

Yud is the smallest of the letters, but it also is linked to action.

It reflects our HUMILITY in Elul whereby we regret our past behaviour, and resolve to try and return to Hashem in an active way.

Attribute

For Elul it is ACTION.

We put tefillin on arm first, and then the head, ie we do first, and later try and understand what Hashem wants of us.

Predominant limb

This is represented by the left arm.

The left side usually represents impurity, but we place the tefillin on the left arm, because tefillin has the power to overcome this impurity.

THERE IS A CUSTOM TO CHECK OUR TEFILLIN AND MEZUZOT IN ELUL.

Tetragrammaton Ie the 4 letters of Hashems Name

For Elul the order is heh,heh, vav, yud.

This connects to the last letters of each of the 4 words in the posuk 'utzedakah tihiyeh lanu ki.... ' – Charity will be to us because...

In relation to the bringing down in Elul of Hashem's 13 Mercies, Rabbi Ginsberg explains this from the numerical value of Elul

Aleph – 1

Lamed – 30 (remove the tens) = 3

Vov – 6

Lamed – 3 (as above)

Total = 13

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcDTBRGwerw> דניאל זמיר עם ברי סחרוף ומתיסיהו - יעלה

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a Gut Chodesh with much preparation and success for a kesivah vechasimah tovah! – that we should all be 'written and signed for a Good Year'

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

GROWTH

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 August 2019 · Shabbos 31 Aug 2019 · ל' אב תשע"ט

Dear Family,

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary, which is on Shabbos, and Rosh Chodesh Elul. Wishing you many more years of continued growth and joy!

And Mazal Tov to Avi's brother Chezzi who had twins! (a boy and a girl BH).- wishing many simchos for the Family and extended Families.

This week, from 2 angles we learnt about TZEDAKAH and GROWTH.

1. In the Sedra
2. Tanya portion of this week

Sedra

In this week's Sedra Reeh, it mentions ' You shall surely tithe all of your produce..'

The Hebrew word for tithe is taaser.

And our Sages point out that this is the same root as titasher - to become rich.

In other words by giving TZEDAKA we BECOME RICH.

And the Rebbe in a letter, mentions that by resolving to give charity beyond our means, Hashem grants us the wealth to do this (Igros vol 14 p211)

Tanya

The Alte Rebbe's teachings are very deep, and one of the points discussed this week, was from the phrase describing Charity as 'mazmiach yeshuot' - it causes deliverance TO SPROUT FORTH.

The Alte Rebbe explains that when one gives Tzedakah it effects a Divine manifestation that utterly transcends man's service.

One of the analogies that he uses is the GROWTH FROM A SEED as follows:

The seed itself is tasteless and bland (mostly).

We than plant this seed and a shoot sprouts from it.

But the shoot and subsequent tree are not the very essence and being of the seed at all, for the seed has long ago decayed in the soil, and is not the source of the vegetative power!

It is the soil itself which is the vegetative power for the GROWTH OF THE SHOOT.

It is only that the earths vegetative power does not manifest its power openly.

Without going into details of the Alte Rebbes comparison, it is obvious why one of the expressions used for Tzedaka, is that 'it causes deliverance to SPROUT forth' ie our bland act of charity causes growth way, way beyond our act, achieving abundant and continual supply of fruit! (section 8 of Igeres Hakodesh)

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all.

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

THE WISDOM OF TOLERANCE

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 August 2020 · Shabbos 15 Aug 2020 · כ"ה אב תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying summer.

Mazal Tov to Avi on the wedding of his brother Eli BH. Wishing you many simchos Avi!

During the summer we read a chapter of Pirkei Avot every Shabbos.

Last Shabbos and relating to this week we read chapter 4, and we came across a cute story, related to Mishneh 3, which I was thinking about often during the week.

The Mishneh says: 'Do not regard anyone with contempt, and do not reject anything. For there is no man who does not have his hour, and no thing which does not have it's place.'

The Maharal comments, that every person and thing plays a role in the grand scheme of creation, without which the world is incomplete.

The Meam Loez illustrates this with a story of a mouse, who by mistake walked over the foot of a lion, and woke him up.

The lion was angry and cried out, ' You lowly mouse, you deserve death for walking on me!'

The mouse responded with a broken heart, that he apologises, and begged the lion not to harm him, and that he will one day repay the lion for this.

The lion laughed and said, 'How can a puny little creature like you possibly be of of help to the king of the beasts?!' But he nevertheless let the mouse go.

Once the lion was out hunting, and he fell into a trap that had been set by hunters.

The lion roared an awesome roar that reached the ears of the mouse in its little hole, who decided to go out and see if he could help the lion.

He found the lion trapped, and so he gnawed a hole in the net in which the lion had been caught, thus allowing the lion to escape.

Linked, is the giving of Charity to the poor, which is discussed in this week's Parsha Reeh!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

A GENTLE INNER VOICE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 5 August 2021 · Shabbos 7 Aug 2021 · כ"ט אב תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying the summer, and now starting to prepare for the new year

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you much continued happiness together, with many more achievements and growth. Enjoy your parents visit Devorah Leah.

We are now approaching Rosh Chodesh Elul, and heading towards Rosh Hashanah, and I saw a beautiful piece from Rabbi Tzvi Freeman, who poetically, captures this atmosphere well. It is based on a Maamer, Ani Ledodi 5726 Chap 5, as follows:

"In the Hebrew month of Elul, the month before Rosh Hashanah, a voice inside whispers that it is time to return home.

Some return, even from the most distant places.

Some want to return, but cannot overcome their ways.

So the voice inside whispers, "I know that you want to return. I appreciate that."

And some more return.

Some try, but are just too tied down.

So the voice inside whispers again, "Even if you don't return now, I want you to know that you are deeply loved."

Upon feeling such love, an unbounded love that comes from the very essence of being, who could not return?

In the month before Rosh Hashanah, listen for that that voice.

Listen deeply."

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all, and wishing everyone a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah.

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

THINKING OF OTHERS

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 25 August 2022 · Shabbos 27 Aug 2022 · ל' אב תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. Wishing Renee and Brian a refuah shleimah!

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for their Anniversary on Shabbos. Wishing you many more happy years together with many continued achievements in both the material and spiritual!

In this week's Sedra Reeih, in today's portion chamishi, we read about Charity (TZEDAKAH)

This section is always read also on the days when we say Yizkor for departed parents.

This is to emphasise the importance of Tzedakah.

And The Alte Rebbe has been discussing Charity for many weeks, but also in today's Tanya, (Igeres Hakodesh Letter 9) the Alte Rebbe is begging us to give attention to TZEDAKAH:

" My beloved ones, my brethren and friends, who are unto me like my soul:

I come [herewith] as one who reminds and awakens those who sleep the slumber of "vanities of vanities," and to open the eyes of the blind....I.e., in all mundane matters and in the means by which one earns one's livelihood, one should not be like those who do everything for their own sake, acting only out of their desire to satisfy themselves and their families, rather than for G-d's sake. Let not the House of Israel be like all the gentiles....

Therefore, my beloved ones, my brethren:

Direct your hearts to these words which are expressed very briefly, how in these times, when the approaching footsteps of Mashiach are close upon us, the principal service of G-d is the service of charity.

As our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Israel will be redeemed only through charity."

And as we move now to Rosh Chodesh Elul, a month of preparation for Rosh Hashanah, with reviewing and reflecting on our past year, and assessing what improvements we can make for the future, we wish everyone a kesivah vechasima tova for a Sweet, Happy and Healthy New Year.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh to all!

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

FISH

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 August 2023 · Shabbos 12 Aug 2023 · כ"ה אב תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you many happy and healthy years together.

In Tanya we are currently learning the section 'Holy Letters' where the Alte Rebbe discusses Tzedakah (Charity) at length and from all different angles.

In Letter no. 3 he discusses Tzedakah as an 'armoured coat of mail (scales)', and this very much links up with the scales and fins of the kosher fish in this week's Sedra Reeh, and the yohrtzeit of the Rebbe's father Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson which was this week.

Tanya

'And he garbed himself with tzedakah as a coat of mail and a helmet of salvation upon his head.' -Isaiah 59:17.

On this verse our Sages commented that just as with chain mail, each scale adds up to form a large mail, so it is with charity, each coin adds up to a large amount.

This means that just as the mail is made up of scales over gaps, and these shield against any arrow entering through the gaps, so it is with the act of charity.

Charity is greater than all the Commandments (equal to all the rest together) - Bava Batra 9a

Sedra (14:9)

'Of these that live in the water you may eat: All (FISH) that have fins and scales you may eat.'

Rav Levi Yitzchak

For a period of 30 years, from 1909 to 1939 the city of Dnetropetrovsk, merited to have one of the most fearless and unabashed leaders of Judaism as their Chief Rabbi. For these activities Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was arrested in 1939 and exiled to Asia where he died on 20th Av 1944 in Alma Ata.

In one of his Teachings on this subject of fins and scales (Likkutei Levi Yitzchak p398-399) he asks basically 2 questions:

- Why is it that if a fish has scales, it means it will also have fins, and therefore be kosher, but not the other way round? Ie a fish which has fins, will not necessarily have scales.
- Why are fins, which are the secondary kosher sign, mentioned before scales, which are the primary sign, in the above verse?

To answer in a very summarized form:

A Jews connection to Hashem is actualized in 2 ways:

- Studying Hashem's TORAH - Represented by the FINS OF THE FISH ('If you walk in My Statutes..Vayikra 26:3 - In the same way the fins propel the fish
- Observing His MITZVOT - Represented by the SCALES OF THE FISH - As per scales of armour and Tzedakah mentioned above from Tanya. Tzedakah is the main representative of Mitzvot

The Talmud debates extensively which is greater, Torah study or Mitzvos and concludes that Torah is greater because it leads to the performance of the Mitzvos. (Kiddushin 40b) That is represented by fins being mentioned before the scales

Yet scales alone are enough to establish the kashrut of fish? Represented by a Jew who practices Mitzvot, presupposes that he has at least some Torah knowledge.

But a fish which has only fins is not kosher. Represented by someone who only learns Torah and does not do Mitzvot, he does not even have the reward of the learning (Yevamos 109b)

Gut Shabbos to all and may our giving of charity protect us from all difficulties!

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

SOME LESSONS FROM ANIMALS

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 August 2024 · Shabbos 31 Aug 2024 · כ״ז אב תשפ״ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary next week on Rosh Chodesh Elul. Wishing you much continued happiness together, with much continued achievement in both the material and spiritual, and much nachas from all of your children BEH!

I heard an interesting vort from Rabbi Gordon's shiur this week:

Kosher animals have to have 2 signs ie they chew the cud, and they have split hooves

Torah specifies 4 animals which chew the cud, or have divided hooves (and therefore not kosher) - 14:7 ie the SHESUAH, the CAMEL, the HARE, and the ROCK BADGER.

And one animal, the PIG, which has split hooves but does not chew the cud (and is therefore also not kosher) - 14:8

Now there are 1000's of animals all over the world, and it would therefore have been impossible for Moshe to make such a statement that only the above 5 species are not kosher!

This is a clear sign that the Torah was given by Hashem, and therefore testimony to its Holiness!

And on the same theme, from Mashiach Day by Day:

From Shir Hashirim 8:14 - Flee my beloved and liken yourself to a GAZELLE, or to a young DEER.

The Jewish People wish that Hashem will never fully depart from them (even when we cause the Divine Presence to depart)

The deer runs away little by little, constantly turning it's head to look back.

Therefore we request that Hashem, if he has to flee from us, He should flee like a deer (constantly looking back to the place that it left)

As we head for the month of ELUL, the letters of which is an acronym for Ani LeDodi VeDodi Li - I am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is for me (Shir Hashirim), may it be, that we return to Hashem and Hashem returns to us fully, with good news for the whole of Klal Yisrael.

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing everyone a kesiva vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year.

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

TESHUVAH - A STORY

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Friday, 22 August 2025 · Shabbos 23 Aug 2025 · כ"ט אב תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary. Wishing you many more happy years together with continued achievements in both gashmius and ruchnius, with lots of nachas from all of your children!

I would also like to welcome Sarita Bassin to our Family email. Sarita has recently turned Batmitzvah and is the daughter of Batya (and therefore my grand-daughter). So nice to have you on the group with us Sarita, and wishing you much success with everything that you do!

This coming Shabbos is Shabbos mevorechim Elul, when teshuvah starts to be felt in the atmosphere. And I heard an interesting story from Rabbi Yehoshuah Gordon ah, on this theme, and which was also linked to this week's Sedra, which I would like to share:

There was a chosid of the Alte Rebbe whose son parted from the way of Judaism, and he got involved in a whole lot of issues, one of which was a passion for horses. His father was upset about the way his son was living, and he came to the Alte Rebbe seeking his help.

The Alte Rebbe advised his chosid to bring his son over for a meeting.

When the son was told about this, he brushed it off with much insolence.

His father persisted, and in the end he reluctantly agreed, only on condition that he meets him while sitting on his horse, and that he is not getting off his horse.

The Alte Rebbe agreed, and on meeting him the Alte Rebbe said " Can I ask you a question?" "Sure he answered!"

" What is the difference between a fast horse and a slow horse?" The Alte Rebbe asked.

The son replied, "A fast horse gets you to your destination quickly, and a slow horse, slowly."

The Alte Rebbe then answered that that was true, but only if they were both going in the right direction towards their destination. If the slow horse was going in the correct direction, and the fast horse was going in the opposite direction, then the slow horse would get to the destination before the fast horse! So it could be that a slow horse is better than a fast horse?"

"I suppose so . This could be, answered the son."

But the Alte Rebbe then replied, "I disagree. If you have a fast horse, even if you have gone far away from the correct path, you can quickly come back to the correct path, after one turns around. But if you have a slow horse, this could take a very long time!!"

It was said that this son digested the message, and eventually came back to the correct path, on his 'fast horse'!

This story was linked to the beginning of this week's Sedra Reeh, where Hashem gives us the choice of staying on the good, well-trodden path of a life of Torah and Mitzvot. Or deviating and worshipping other "g-ds" (11:26-28)

In the fast moving age that we are living in, it is easy to land up very far away with even a small deviation.

But as the Alte Rebbe was pointing out, it is also possible to come back very quickly!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh, and a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a good and sweet New Year.

Re'eh ↑ Re'eh · Contents · By date ראה

A WAKEUP CALL

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 6 August 2026 · Shabbos 8 Aug 2026 · כ"ה אב תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

We are now getting close to the month of Elul which leads to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Ie Elul is a month of Teshuvah, in preparation for Rosh Hashanah, where we can sense a distinct change in atmosphere. And then the 10 days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are similarly days of Teshuvah,.

And this week's Parshah *Reeh*, where it speaks much about the Mitzvah of Tzedakah, often coincides with the beginning of Elul, and must surely have a deeper connection to Elul as explained by the Rebbe in Vol 34 in Likutei Sichos this week.

The Rebbe quotes the Rambam from his Laws of Teshuvah as follows:

"Even though the sounding of the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah is a decree, it is also sharing a hidden message.

It is as if the shofar's call is saying: Wake up you sleepy ones from your sleep, and you who slumber, arise.

Inspect your deeds, repent, remember your Creator.

For these reasons, it is customary for all of Israel to

· give profusely to charity,

· perform many good deeds

· and be occupied with Mitzvot....."

And the Rebbe concludes that, the fact that we increase in good deeds and are occupied with Mitzvot, betters our position before G-d's judgement (because we have rightly earned this through our service)

But the fact that we give profusely to charity (because we also tend to call out for G-d's limitless kindness for ourselves, even though we are undeserving), this arouses Hashem to descend into our world and be King of the Universe.

Connected to the above is a short Dvar Torah from Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, the Rebbe's father, whose yohrtzeit was this week, which I saw, as follows:

In the event in Chumash, where Eliezer is trying to arrange a marriage for Yitzchak (his master's son) with Rivkah (Bereishis 24:55), her brother and mother are trying to delay Rivkah leaving home, and ask that she stay with us "*for 2 days or 10 ."*

The Sages interpret their request as being 1 year or 10 months to prepare her wedding trousseau.

But Reb Levi Yitzchak explains that the simple text also has meaning, and is referring to the 2 days of Rosh Hashanah, and the 10th day of Tishrei which is Yom Kippur.

And the "or" in the text, in Hebrew, has the numerical value of 7, referring to the 7 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Thus revealing an underlying connection between Yitzchak and Rivkah to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (and also in another place, to Sukkot)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh, and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year!

שופטים

Shoftim

Devarim 16:18 · parsha 5 of 11 in Devarim · 48 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — DYNAMICS OF TZEDAKA 1192
2017 / 5777 — CELESTIAL BODIES 1195
2018 / 5778 — BROCHAS 1197
2019 / 5779 — REALISATION 1199
2020 / 5780 — THE HIGH-LEVEL RETURN OF TZEDAKAH (CHARITY) 1201
2021 / 5781 — ACCOUNTING 1203
2022 / 5782 — KINGS 1204
2023 / 5783 — SIMPLE SINCERITY 1206
2024 / 5784 — WILL POWER 1208
2025 / 5785 — WHY WORRY 1210
2026 / 5786 — A REFUGE FROM DIFFICULTY 1212

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

DYNAMICS OF TZEDAKA

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 September 2016 · Shabbos 10 Sep 2016 · ז׳ אלול תשע״ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov to Dovi who won the Best Camper award at overnight Camp in Canada!

As was shown by the Research Project on Charity, unbeknown to ourselves there is a DYNAMIC which takes place in the brain on giving Charity

This is clearly explained in much deeper terms by the Alte Rebbe in Tanya, in the section Igeret Hakodesh, which we have been learning for the last few weeks and are still learning. (Tanya is translated into English if anyone is interested)

The Alte Rebbe explains Tzedaka very deeply and intricately according to Chassidus and it would be impossible to summarise it effectively.

But what I wanted to share is just the sense of the DYNAMIC MOVEMENTS which it causes between the body, the Heart, the Soul and Hashem.

This does not only apply to Tzedaka. It applies to all Mitzvos, but Tzedaka seems to be the most prime and powerful mover.

So here are some snippets

. Hashem, though He permeates all the upper and lower worlds from the peak of all levels to this lowly physical world, nevertheless He is also distinct and removed from all these worlds.

He animates all the worlds metaphorically speaking as a radiation shining from His Holy Name.....and reaches downwards by many immense contractions

This descent of this illumination is called the CHESED of the Lord.

. But which is the way man merits that the Truth of Hashem issues to this lowly dark world.. The arousal of great compassion before G-d also needs to be in Truth. But even when it is in Truth in human terms, how can this relative truth arouse this Supernal compassion from the truth of Hashem?

The advice for this IS THE TRAIT OF CHARITY - which is the attribute of compassion for one who has nothing of his own, to revive the spirit of the humble.

And the arousal from below elicits an arousal from Above

Hashem arouses the sleeping and awakens the unconscious.. to merge from concealment into manifestation and a great illumination, to radiate with the light of life into this world, the truth of G-d

.For in the heart (the element of Divine fire that is in the heart) there are 2 aspects - outer and inner

The outer is the enthusiasm that flares from the contemplation on the greatness of Hashem giving birth to a strong love

The inner is a point in the inward depth of the heart which transcends all knowledge and contemplation

And these areas get covered with thin and thick husks in a state of exile and captivity

It is necessary for man to perform 'milah' to remove these coarse and thin husks.....and this is done by the giving charity to G-d from the money which is his vitality, especially him who is very hard pressed, for he gives of his very life.

For he has earned from the toil of his hands, from the depth of his heart as is the way of the world in their occupations with business and the like.

And now when he disburses the fruits of his toil and gives unto the Lord with joy and gladness, he thereby redeems his soul from the pit ie he redeems the innermost point of his heart which was in a state of exile and captivity.

And TZEDAKA HAS THE POWER TO BRING MASHIACH

In the advent of Mashiach, because the hut of David has fallen to a level of 'feet' and 'heels' which is the level of ACTION, there is no way of truly cleaving unto it and to convert darkness into its light except through a corresponding category of ACTION, namely the ACT OF CHARITY

And whoever sacrifices his impulse and opens his hand and heart, subdues the sitra achra and converts the darkness into the light of G-d, and he will merit to see'eye to eye Hashem returning to Zion'

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a year filled with light plus all other good.

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

CELESTIAL BODIES

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 August 2017 · Shabbos 26 Aug 2017 · ד' אלול תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary which was on Rosh Chodesh. Wishing you many more productive years together and a happy and safe trip in New Jersey.

I also got wind that Avi's business is now 10 years old. Mazal Tov Avi and it should be another 10 years of success, and more.

The talk of this week has been 'the great American eclipse' - a total solar eclipse passing right across America, and I saw some interesting points in relation to this.

1. A total solar eclipse is when the moon passes between the sun and the earth, temporarily blocking the sunlight fully. This was for 2 mins and 40.2 secs this week.
2. The last time such an eclipse's shadow fully cast itself across America from coast to coast, was nearly 100 years ago.
3. It was the most widely visible total solar eclipse in history. - 12.2 million people were in its direct path (70 miles wide) and another47 million people (15% of US) were within a 2 hour drive.
4. The gravitational pull on the earth's surface, of the sun together with the moon, increased, causing the earths surface to rise by 1.5 ins. (where the shadow fell).
5. Next solar eclipse to traverse the US as this one did, will be in 2024 (or was it 2045?), unusually soon. This one will traverse from NE to SW, whereas the current one traversed from NW to SE.

I saw a point about this, that the area of country where these 2 paths intersect is Cedar Lake in Jackson County just S of Carbondale, and this area is called 'Little Egypt'!? lots of theories flying around about this ie 400years in Egypt, moon 40 times smaller than sun etc

The bottom line is that all the CELESTIAL BODIES are massive, and have complicated orbital paths.

It is amazing how much man has come to understand about their natures, but there is a lot we do not understand.

And I saw a short vort from the Rebbe on this subject.

At these times, we should be reminded of how great is the Power of Hashem, who for thousands of years has been consistently moving these huge bodies, without any reduction of energy.

It was Avraham Avinu who first watched these Celestial Bodies eg sun rising in East and setting in West every day etc, and came to the conclusion that there must be an awesome power guiding these which is way beyond, and cannot be contained by the world.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a Ksiva Vechasima Tova for a Good New Year.

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

BROCHAS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 August 2018 · Shabbos 18 Aug 2018 · ז' אלול תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

In Elul we experience a greater closeness to Hashem, and what came to my attention this week which I would like to share, is the making of brochas ie blessings.

Everything in the world belongs to Hashem, and by making brochas when we benefit from these items, we are acknowledging that they belong to Hashem, and expressing our gratitude (Gemorra Brachos and Sotah)

The Zohar states that only by saying a brocha can one receive brochas.

Rabeinu Bechaye explains this as follows. When one does not say a brachah, one places oneself under the control of nature, (which is limited) and thus not allowing a connection to the Source which is above nature (from where brochas to us can arise)

The Rebbe taught that not only should we make sure that a child never eats without saying a brochah, but we should also give them snacks to increase the opportunities for making brochas.

There is a beautiful short brachah for children to say after eating bread instead of birkat hamazon in Aramaic as follows:

'Brich Rachmana Elahana, Malka dealma, Mara dehai pita.' - Blessed is the Merciful one, our G-d, King of the world, the Master of this bread.

(I presume adults can also say this if circumstances dictate)

To summarise briefly the categories of brochas from Rambam: (Sefer Ahavah, Hilchot Brachot)

1. There is one Scriptural Command, and that is to bless Hashem after eating a meal - Birkat hamazon (ie after a meal where one has washed for bread)

The rest of brochas that we say were established by the Rabbanim,

2. Those said over items from which we derive benefit, as follows:

A. To recite appropriate blessing before eating any food or drink.

a. Fruit of trees - etz
b. Fruit of earth and vegetables - adamah
c. Other foods eg cheese, fish, meat, drinks etc - shehakol d. The 7 species of Eretz Yisrael have special brochas

B. To bless after eating food or drink
C. To bless before smelling pleasant fragrances.

a. Scent of trees - atzei besamim
b. Scent of herbs - isvei besamim
c. Other scents - minei besamim

3. Blessings before doing a mitzvah
4. Blessings of praise and thanks.

Gut Shabbos to all.

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

REALISATION

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 September 2019 · Shabbos 7 Sep 2019 · ז׳ אלול תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

This week I have a very short and powerful Dvar Torah, and I would like also to introduce how to use the Rambam Study Schedule.

Dvar Torah

I saw this in 'Here's My Story' of this week.

This person was asking the Rebbe about how he could lead his life in a more joyful way.

He told the Rebbe that he wasn't a 'happy go lucky' type, and what made it even harder, was that he was never satisfied with his accomplishments.

The Rebbe answered simply, 'When you find yourself being unhappy, remind yourself that you are just a little creature, to whom the Creator gave the ability and the privilege, to connect to Him via the Mitzvot of the Torah.'

The person stated that 'Until today, whenever I am not happy, I think about the Rebbe's words, and that changes my attitude.'

Rambam

BH there are many people starting to learn Rambam, some who are looking at this for the first time.

Uncle Chanan made a very important observation, in that he wanted to learn Rambam with the Daily Study Schedule which is being learned world-wide, and he quite rightly, could not understand the Hebrew, abbreviations etc, to be able to locate the current chapters being learnt.

So Batsheva got to work straight away, and is in the process of making a Table in English, with the English date as well as the Hebrew, showing exactly which pages in our new Rambam series, are the current ones.

This can be seen for both the Comprehensive Summary, and the Concise Summary, and it also reflects both the 3-chapters- a- day cycle, and the 1-chapter-a-day.

See the Table attached

Besides making this available for our Group, we will also post this on our website for the use of everyone. Hopefully this will go up soon.

Chanan also suggested a blog, whereby people generally could discuss the current Rambam, and we are working on this also BH.

And BH, in August we had 1230 users on our website rambampress.com

THANK YOU CHANAN, AND THANK YOU BATSHEVA!!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, enjoyable learning, and a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a Sweet New Year.

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

THE HIGH-LEVEL RETURN OF TZEDAKAH (CHARITY)

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos and Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 20 August 2020 · Shabbos 22 Aug 2020 · ב' אלול תש"פ

Also re-sent on 2020-08-20.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their 10th Anniversary today! Wishing you many more happy and healthy anniversaries together, with much nachas from all your Family.

Today is Rosh Chodesh Elul, and Elul is a month of PREPARATION and TESHUVAH, before Rosh Hashanah

CHARITY can lead to HIGH-LEVEL TESHUVAH (there are many levels of Teshuvah), and we have been learning about this in the Tanya portion this week.

There is a pasuk we say in the morning davening 'He sows tzedakot and causes yeshuot (salvation) to sprout.'

The Sages have said in Sotah, that 'with the same measure that a man metes out, so shall it be measured to him.' But it seems that Tzedaka (Charity) is different, in that the reward is way beyond our act. The Alte Rebbe explains this with the beautiful analogy of planting a seed, as follows:
When one plants a seed in the earth, it is not the seed which grows, it is the vegetative property of the earth which gives the growth. The vegetative power of the earth is hidden, and only becomes revealed by the little seed. The earth now effuses vitality to make possible the growth of the shoot from the seed, and the seed actually then decays in the soil. The seed and the soil unite, ie the

particular power of growth of the seed, unites with the earths universal vegetative property.

As a result, from one tiny tasteless seed, results a huge abundance of tasty kernels or delicious fruits or vegetables etc The Zohar terms this as 'an arousal from below.' - which brings about an arousal from Above.

Our small physical acts of doing mitzvos in this world, are rewarded like for like in The World to Come. But the coins of Charity take one to a much more lofty level way beyond our planting, which is the illumination from the actual light of Hashem, which surpasses all the life of The World to Come, and this is called TESHUVAH ILAAH (The High-level Return) This is what the pasuk refers to when it says that the sowing of Tzedakah causes salvation to sprout, ie darkness is converted into light.

On the lighter side of planting seeds, I would like to congratulate Channa on the garden she has planted at home. This evening I had a taste of the first produce, ie a delicious potatoe. It is so interesting how one appreciates the product, and the blessing on the product, so much more when you see it growing and being nurtured. And there is a lot more to come - tomatoes, many squash, aubergine, apples, pears and flowers etc Well done Channa!!

Gut Shabbos and gut Chodesh to all, and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year.

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

ACCOUNTING

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 August 2021 · Shabbos 14 Aug 2021 · ו' אלול תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.
We wish Uncle Chanan a speedy recovery from the small operation that he had this week. BH he was feeling good yesterday.

I would like to apologize that some people were left out of the last 2 weeks emails due to a digital error. I am not sure who this was, but I will gladly re-send if you just let me know.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary this week. We hope you are doing well, and we wish you continued happiness together!

The month of Elul is the month of RECKONING.

In the material world, if a businessman is to conduct his affairs properly and with great profit, he must periodically take an accounting, and correct any deficiencies.... Likewise in the spiritual avodah of serving Hashem.

Throughout the year all Israel are occupied with Torah, Mitzvot, and developing and expressing good traits. The month of Elul is the month of reckoning, when every Jew, each commensurate with his abilities, whether scholar or businessman, must make an accurate accounting in his or her soul , of everything that occurred in the course of the year. Each must know the good qualities in their service of G-d, and strengthen them. He must also be aware of the deficiencies in himself and in his service, and correct these.

Through this excellent preparation, one merits a good and sweet year materially and spiritually. - Hayom Yom 27th of Av

Gut Shabbos to all!

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

KINGS

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 1 September 2022 · Shabbos 3 Sep 2022 · ז׳ אלול תשפ״ב

Dear Family,

BH Brian has made steps of improvement with his health. Renee is still going through difficult treatments. We wish them a continued refuah shleimah!

Sedra Shoftim

I heard an interesting commentary from the Baal HaTurim on this week's Sedra Shoftim, in the section talking about KINGS (17:20). - 'This is so that he not feel superior to his brethren, and that he does not deviate from even the slightest commandment, ..in order that he and his sons may reign for a long time among Israel.'

Many points came up from this commentary which I will list:

- The verse starts and ends with the Hebrew letter lamed which is unusual. The numerical value of lamed is 30, alluding to the kingship of Yehudah (the numerical value - gematria - of Yehudah is 30)
- I am not sure of this source but the Baal Haturim says that there are 30 levels of attaining kingship
- David Hamelech was from the tribe of Yehudah and was 30 years old when he became king.
- The Psalm talking about David's kingship (Psalm 18) starts with the letter lamed.
- When the pasuk says that 'he may reign for a long time', it is saying that his (David's) reign will last, and not Shaul's. (Rashi also emphasizes this and explains how Shaul's downfall came about, by not obeying the command of the prophet of his time, Shmuel, even though it was only a slight mistake) I also found it interesting how in Judaism, a king is held accountable

by an ordinary person who has become a prophet, conveying the word of Hashem.- checks and balances are in place.

The King in the Field

We are now in the month of Elul, and Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi describes the auspicious nature of the month of Elul by means of a parable of 'The King in the Field'.

The King is normally only found in the deep recesses of his palace but in Elul, He (Hashem) comes out to be with the people with a smiling countenance. And we can approach Him and make all our requests. This is referring to the shining of the 13 Attributes of Mercy emanating to all from Hashem the King, in the month of Elul

David HaMelech

I also saw a nice message from the Baal Shem Tov (Keter Shem Tov Par 60) on how we can reciprocate to Hashem.

In Tehillim 22:4 it says "You are Holy, You dwell upon the praises of Israel."

This means that by us showing loving words of gratitude to G-d, praising Him for granting us health and livelihood, we are thereby 'supporting G-d.'

And He then showers us with blessings for children, health, and sustenance.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and that we should do preparation in Elul, to be able to Crown Hashem as our King on Rosh Hashanah. Wishing all a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a good and sweet New Year

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

SIMPLE SINCERITY

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 17 August 2023 · Shabbos 19 Aug 2023 · ב׳ אלול תשפ״ג

Text mentions "this week's Sedra, Mishpatim" but cites a Devarim verse; kept under the calendar parsha Shoftim.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Wedding Anniversary today. Wishing you many more years of continued achievement together and with much joy.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on landing his first Law job in the USA. This is an amazing achievement Zalmy and we all wish you much continued success!

I saw a nice Rashi in this week's Sedra, Mishpatim, (Devarim 18:13)

The subject being discussed is worrying about the future.

And Torah instructs us, "Tamim tihyeh...You should be simple and sincere with Hashem.."

Rashi explains - Walk with Him with simplicity and without guile. Put your hope with Him, and do not delve into the future. Rather, accept wholeheartedly whatever He brings upon you, with perfect faith. Then He will be with you, and you will reap the rewards of His apportioning."

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is a known time of the year when Hashem apportions out to us, our allocations for the upcoming year.

And Elul is the time when we make our preparations for this.

It is an auspicious time to take an accounting of the past year and take steps to correct where necessary.

The sound of the shofar is a wake up call.

Although we are assured, that in the month of Elul Hashem is close and accessible to our requests, we nevertheless need to make our own efforts to increase in our Service of Hashem. - (Shulchan Aruch)

We also wish each other blessings, and these exchanges increase the blessings that Hashem bestows on Klal Yisrael. (Minhagei Chabad)

Gut Shabbos. Gut Chodesh. And wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a shanah tovah umesukah - That we should be written and signed for a good and sweet New Year!

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

WILL POWER

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 5 September 2024 · Shabbos 7 Sep 2024 · ד' אלול תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

I saw two interesting Dvar Torah this week which are connected.

Hayom Yom 2nd Elul (Summarised)

It is clear that throughout the earth are wellsprings of living water.

The difference between them is only that some are near the surface, others far.

Everything therefore depends on the 'well-digger', his patience, perseverance and will-power to reach the water.

Every Jew possess precious qualities in:

- Love of G-d
- Fear of G-d
- Fine character traits

Bringing these traits to the surface depends entirely on the individual tapping deep into his resources.

The tools are PATIENCE, PERSEVERENCE, AND WILL POWER, and the work is to EXERCISE THIS WILL on himself and upon others.

Sedra

One way this can be done practically came up in this week's Sedra Shoftim 16:18:

"You shall appoint for yourselves Judges and (Enforcing) Officers in each and every City.

The Talmud explains that 'city' also refers to each individual.

Our 'Judges' are those parts of our Spiritual make-up which checks into Torah and Shulchan Aruch, to see what acts are permissible, and which are not.

If then, against one's judgement, the Evil Inclination does not want to fulfil G-d's Command, then our own 'Officers' come to the rescue, to force compliance.

As the Talmud states "Man's Good Inclination must always be in a state of powerful dominance over one's Evil Inclination." (Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

WHY WORRY

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 29 August 2025 · Shabbos 30 Aug 2025 · ו׳ אלול תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shlemah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Leslie with much joy! I hope all is going well with you.

Also coming up next week is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Morris. I am actually in NY at the moment but I would have loved to have posted the article which Kevin wrote about him. Maybe you could post this Kevin? It gives a good historical background to some of our Davidoff history. Wishing Uncle Morris's neshamah an Aliyah, and remembering him with much fondness.

It was lovely meeting Dovi and Shlomo (Levy) for dinner tonight in NY!

I saw an interesting letter from the Rebbe this week, which was linked to a verse in this week's Sedra Shoftim (V18:13) - You shall be whole-hearted with Hashem your G-d.

Rashi comments on this verse - Follow him with perfect faith and put your hope in him, and do not delve into the future. Rather, whatever happens to you, accept with perfect faith..

In the letter, the Rebbe responded about the subject of FAITH and WORRYING:

There are 2 options to see the fulfillment of blessing

- Or to walk around worried in case the blessing wont be fulfilled.

And then, when the blessing is fulfilled, there will be the fresh worry of why did I waste so much time and energy worrying for nothing!

- Or to be staunch in one's trust and faith in Hashem that He will lead one along the correct path and fulfill all blessings.

Then when one sees the blessings being fulfilled one will be able to recognize how well one succeeded, about not worrying where there was no cause for concern, and seeing the strength of one's faith.

Gut Shabbos, and wishing everyone a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

Shoftim ↑ Shoftim · Contents · By date שופטים

A REFUGE FROM DIFFICULTY

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos, Gut Chodesh · sent Thursday, 13 August 2026 · Shabbos 15 Aug 2026 · ב' אלול תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary which is today. Wishing you many more happy and healthy one's together with much achievement in both gashmius and ruchnius.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who also have an Anniversary next week. I hope that you and the Family are all doing well and wishing you a wonderful year together.

Mazal Tov to Isanne Ossey on her birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a year of much success Isanne, all in good health and happiness.

Mazal Tov again to Mendel and Freida on the birth of Nechama. I heard that the kiddush that you made for her last Shabbos was absolutely beautiful. Wishing you much nachas from her and all of your Family. Kevin Marks has updated his Family Tree accordingly which I am attaching – Thank you Kevin!

In this week's Sedra Shoftim, we learn about the Cities of Refuge, and I also heard an interesting connection of the Cities of Refuge to the month of Elul, from Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon ah.

The Cities of Refuge were designed to allow someone who had killed another *by accident, *to flee there and be protected from the relatives of the slain person who may be pursuing to take revenge. 3 were set up in Eretz Yisrael proper, 3 in Trans Jordan, and 3 will be set up in the future Greater Israel, when our borders will be extended BEH

There are a number of verses in Torah which have acronyms relating to Elul.

Eg "*E*ni *L*edodi *U*dodi *L*i", (I am to my Beloved, and my Beloved is to me) which reflects the close relationship between the Jew and Hashem in Elul.

Another one , which relates to the Cities of Refuge, is "VeHaElokim *E*na *L*eyado *U*samti *L*echa makom asher yanus shama" (Hashem orchestrates an accident whereby someone dies, and then He makes a place of refuge where the manslaughterer can find refuge) – Exodus 21:13.

So what is the connection of the City of Refuge to Elul?

Chassidus explains that the City of Refuge refers symbolically to a Jew who is caught up with negativity, and desperately needs a Refuge from the situation that he or she has found themselves in.

One may have made mistakes with one's behaviour and actions and made wrong choices in the past, where one negativity has led to another, and one may have been pulled along in this direction by forces beyond one's control.

And it then feels like one is being pursued by negativity, and it feels like negativity and habit has taken complete control over oneself, often against one's true will.

And the guidance is then to flee to a City of Refuge, which refers symbolically to Torah and its Teachings and guidance.

Ie in the month of Elul we can find, through Torah, shelter, repair, teshuvah and strengthening of our bond with Hashem.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a Gut Chodesh, and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

כי תצא

Ki Seitzei

Devarim 21:10 · parsha 6 of 11 in Devarim · 49 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — THIRTEEN 1215
2017 / 5777 — KOL YISRAEL 1218
2018 / 5778 — PRECIOUS DAYS 1220
2019 / 5779 — ELLUL 1222
2020 / 5780 — COMFORT ZONE VERSUS THE YOKE OF TOIL 1224
2021 / 5781 — PURE AND CLEAR WINE 1226
2022 / 5782 — GOOD INFLUENCE 1228
2023 / 5783 — LEARNING FROM CHILDREN 1231
2024 / 5784 — FAMILY AND LIGHT 1233
2025 / 5785 — REFLECTION 1236
2026 / 5786 — ONE SMALL ACTION 1238

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

THIRTEEN

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 September 2016 · Shabbos 17 Sep 2016 · י״ד אלול תשע״ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Talya on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a successful year Talya!

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Levy who also has a birthday next week. I seem to remember you were born just before candle lighting on a Friday. Happy birthday.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly, having been selected for the Shul Committee here.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy with his new fancy car and his good Grades from exams

In the month of Elul, and all the way through to Hoshana Rabba, we say an extra Psalm at Shacharis and Mincha 'LeDavid Hashem ori veyishi mimi iyrah, Hashem maoz chayay mimi efchad' - Psalm 27 - this is the first verse.

The Rebbe says the following about this verse in a sicha from Book 9 Likutei sichos:

Rashi asks, why does this first verse of the Psalm repeat the word Hashem twice?

And he answers that this refers to the twice mentioning of the name of Hashem in the Posuk known as the THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY (Hashem Hashem Keil rachum vechanun...' (very much linked to Rosh Hashana etc)

Isn't it also interesting that Hashems name is mentioned THIRTEEN times in Psalm 27!!

The Rebbe explains how the 2 mentionings of Hashems name in the first verse relate to how a person feels before doing a sin and after, and also how it relates to the month of Elul

Both mentionings of Hashem refer to a closeness to Hashem, and in Elul it is a time of closeness, where we think about Hashem and how the past year has been, and see how we can improve in preparation to Rosh Hashana.

Before a sin:

The yetzer hara (evil inclination) comes along and either tells us that this sin we are about to do, is a mitzvah, or we just do not have the strength to resist the powerful temptation.

Therefore we need the help here to know and understand the truth, to help us make the right choices. - and Hashem is there at the time trying to assist.

And we see the posuk here saying by the first Hashem - 'Hashem ori (my light) veyishi (my salvation), mimi iyra (from who should I be afraid) - the terminology used, yirah is a fear when the enemy is still far away.

After sinning:

Even after a sin it is not too late, because Hashem is still near to us

This is followed with the second mention of Hashem 'Hashem maoz (the strength) chayay (of my life), mimi efchad (of whom will I be afraid) - pachad is an intense fear of immediate danger.

Here all the terminologies used have greater intensity.

Ie in this circumstance Hashem gives us the opportunity to do Teshuva, and due to the intensity of the situation , we reach a level, not only of Mitzva observance ('you shall live by them'), but to a much higher level which is beyond Mitzvos (maoz chayay -strength of life)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a year of closeness to Hashem with joy and strength.

Kesiva vechasima tova.

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

KOL YISRAEL

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 August 2017 · Shabbos 2 Sep 2017 · י״א אלול תשע״ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his upcoming birthday next week. Your birthday always reminds me of when we spent the first night of Selichos in Longbeach when we were there for your bris. - Good memories! Wishing you a happy and good year Mendel.

In the spirit of Elul, approaching Rosh Hashana, I saw a few interesting points

1. Each week we read a Chapter of Pirkei Avot until Sukkos and each Chapter is introduced with the Posuk 'KOL YISRAEL YESH

LAHEM CHELEK LEOLAM HABA' - EVERY JEW HAS A SHARE IN THE WORLD TO COME

The words 'kol Yisrael ' is an abbreviation for - K, Kohanim, L, Leviim, and Yisrael for Yisrael. Ie all Jews, regardless of their status, have a share in The World to Come.

The last words in this pasuk after kol Yisrael, have a numerical value of 541, which is also the numerical value of Yisrael. Ie these words indicate that every Jew, till the last one, has a share in The World to Come - Chida.

2. The fire within a Jew can be hidden for a long time, like the spark within a flint stone.

Even though the flint stone could be lying in water for many years, the spark never gets lost.

As soon as it is struck a fire can be created. - Sicha from Rebbe

3. Every Jew will eventually do this Teshuvah (lo yidach mimenu nidach)

The question is only if we will do so now, or push it off until later. - Sicha from Rebbe

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a Good New Year.

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

PRECIOUS DAYS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 23 August 2018 · Shabbos 25 Aug 2018 · י״ד אלול תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Levy on his birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year and an exciting party Mendel. Love from all of us.

In this weeks Sedra, Ki Seitzei, there is an interesting mitzva of sending away the mother bird from its nest. Ie one is not allowed to take the mother bird together with it's young.

Once one sends away the mother bird one is allowed to take its young.

But listen to the reward Torah gives, if one sends away the mother - 'SO THAT IT WILL BE WELL WITH YOU AND THAT YOU LIVE A LONG TIME'!

And Rashi comments on this and says 'If for such a light mitzva as this, which involves no monetary loss, and Torah says it will be good for you and you will live long, THEN HOW MUCH MORE SO WILL BE OUR REWARD WHEN WE FULFIL MORE DIFFICULT COMMANDMENTS' (one will at least get the above award)

And then Rashi points out the following sequence of Laws mentioned in Torah which point to the rewards stemming from doing mitzvot ie

1. 'Sending away the mother bird. -verse 7
2. 'When you will build a new house..' (ie you will now be privileged to build a new house) - v8
3. 'You shall make a guard rail.' (ie one good deed leads to another) -v8
4. Laws about vineyard (ie you will attain a vineyard) -v9

5. Laws about plowing (and fields) - v10
6. Laws about garments (and you will have fine garments) -v11-12

Wishing everyone to achieve much reward, using each of the PRECIOUS DAYS that Hashem grants us with so much generosity.

Gut Shabbos, and a kesiva vechasima tova for a year with much blessing and joy.

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

ELLUL

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 September 2019 · Shabbos 14 Sep 2019 · י"ד אלול תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Joy on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a Happy and Healthy Year Joy.

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff who also has a birthday next week. I hope all is going well and we wish you success with everything that you are doing Talya.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy who also has a birthday next week. Have a wonderful year Mendel with lots of success at school with your learning, sports etc.

From Rosh Chodesh Ellul to Yom Kippur (40 days) is when Moshe went up to Har Sinai the second time to get the second set of the Luchos.

When he returned on Yom Kippur Hashem declared 'I have forgiven, as per your request.'

This established the precedent for TESHUVAH, ie mans ability to correct our past mistakes.

So the 29 days of Ellul offer us a little island in time, a sanctuary, where we can review our past year and introspect on how the battle of our lives is progressing, and therefore how to improve.

In this regard Ellul is linked to 'The Cities of Refuge', to where someone who had killed another by accident, was allowed to flee.

The Arizal explains that the verse in Torah describing this ie inah leyado vesamti lach, spells out the word Ellul (taking the first letter of each of these 4 words).

Attached also find the upcoming weeks calendar for learning Rambam, made simple by Batsheva, who has designed it in English and including English dates, with the page numbers whereby we can at least learn the summary and associated Mitzvot, connected to the world-wide programme, from either the Concise Summary, or the Comprehensive Summary Books - Thank you Batsheva!

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing us all a successful Ellul in preparation for Rosh Hashanah!

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

COMFORT ZONE VERSUS THE YOKE OF TOIL

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 August 2020 · Shabbos 29 Aug 2020 · ט' אלול תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

There were a number of points of interest that came up this week which were linked, which I would like to share, and to conclude with a practical point.

As you know, we are in the month of Elul which is linked to Teshuvah, and making good resolutions for the New Year.

And we just started learning the Laws of Teshuvah in Rambam today (for those learning 1 chapter a day).

In chapter 3 which we will read on Shabbos, the Rambam explains the power of Teshuvah and the POWER OF A MITZVAH.

He explains that a person should see himself as balanced equally been good and not-good, (we don't know what adds up to be good and not-good), and that doing EVEN ONLY ONE mitzva or good deed, this will tip his whole balance towards good. (And the opposite is also true)

Similarly his one good act can tip the whole balance in the world to good!

On Rosh Hashanah Hashem assesses the balance within each individual, and the sounding of the shofar is to awake us from our slumber (our involvement with the vanities of the world), and to remember our Creator.

To supplement this, we heard a cute story from Pirkei Avot of last week (6:4,5,6).

The Mishneh speaks about the 48 ways in which Torah is acquired, and this is THROUGH TOIL AND HARDSHIP, but the Mishnah promises that if we do toil, '..you shall be happy and it shall be well with you - You shall be happy in this world, and it shall be well with you in The World To Come.'

The Ben Ish Chai offers a wonderful analogy showing how this battle between the comfort zone of life, and the toil of Torah plays out, as follows:

'2 donkeys were carrying their loads.

One was carrying a heavy load of salt and suffering under its weight, and the other was carrying large but weightless sponges.

The one carrying the sponges was joyfully leaping over the mountains and skipping over the hills.

After a few hours the donkeys reached a river which they had to cross.

When the first donkey entered, his load of salt began to melt and soon disappeared completely. He then walked joyfully and lightly through the river.

When the second donkey entered, his sponges became full of water and became very heavy. The sponges that had formerly been his friend, became his enemy (Chasdei Avot).'

And to compromise between these views, todays Tanya (Letter 11), says that we have to be happy with both the 'good' and the 'difficult' situations that we are faced with in life. Because really they are both tests from Hashem to see how we will react!

Bottom line, it would be good if we could all make a resolution to take on ONE new, practical mitzva to do for the coming year!

Gut Shabbos and a kesiva vechasima tovah for a good, sweet and happy year in both the physical and spiritual!

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

PURE AND CLEAR WINE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 August 2021 · Shabbos 21 Aug 2021 · י"ג אלול תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday next week. Well done for going away on your own for Summer Camp Mendel! And wishing you a happy year with lots of success in everything that you do.

Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia Davidoff on her first birthday tonight. So nice to have our first Chaya Mussia in the Family! Love from all of us.

There was a beautiful description of TZEDAKAH in today's Tanya (Igeres Kodesh Chap 12).

The Alte Rebbe explains how there are 2 ways of giving Tzedakah (Charity):

1. As an Act
2. As an Avodah (Toil)

When Charity is carried out as a mere act, even this arousal from below will cause an arousal from above, and bring about peace in the upper realms.

But this effect is not so well recognised in the lower worlds. Ie we do not see clearly the effects of how charity separates evil from good.

When Tzedakah is practiced with toil however ie by going against one's bodily inclinations to not give, Hashems glory rises and becomes manifest in all the worlds.

The reward of this type of Charity is "hashket vavetach leolam" - quietness and surety forever

The word hashket also has the meaning of 'resting on the dregs'

IE THE DREGS SINK ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM, LEAVING PURE AND CLEAR WINE, ABOVE.

This means that this type of toiling in Charity, extricates and separates out the evil from within ones soul, until it falls below all worlds - (And you will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea - Micha 7:19), leaving the reward of eternal quietness and surety.

Gut Shabbos to all and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a sweet and peaceful New Year

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

GOOD INFLUENCE

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 8 September 2022 · Shabbos 10 Sep 2022 · י"ד אלול תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

BH Brian is feeling better, but we should continue to say Tehillim for Renee - Rivkah bas Sarah Zlata , who is having difficult treatments!

Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia whose birthday is today. Wishing you to keep advancing and becoming even more sweet than you already are. You should give your parents lots of nachas BEH!

Mazal Tov to Joy, whose birthday is at the end of next week. Wishing you a healthy year with much joy!

And last but not least, also at the end of the week, is the Barmitzvah birthday of Mendel Levy BEH. Mazal Tov Mendel! Looking forward to spend your special Barmitzvah with you in EY BEH. And wishing you to keep going michayil el chayil in your own special way!

There were a few interesting connected items that came up this week.

Chumash (based on a sicha of the Rebbe in 5751)

This week's Sedra is Ki Teitzei - When you go out to war upon your enemies..

Although the ideal of peace is so prominent in Torah, Hashem has designed and created the world in such a way that it leaves man in an almost constant inner battle with our evil inclinations.

The Zohar (III 188b) points out that the Hebrew word for bread is lechem, and it has the same root as the word for war - milchamah. This symbolizes the continuous struggle between the base, and sublime natures of man ie does he eat gluttonously, or on a higher level to keep his body healthy to serve Hashem...

And the message of our Sedra is therefore, "When you go out to war.", - when the soul "goes out" of its heavenly setting, into a body, to fight a war between the material and the spiritual, it never loses sight of the fact that every obstacle is surmountable.

By meditating on this point, we will always be "upon our enemies" ie transcending every material adversary, and sanctifying the world with goodness and spirituality.

Pirkei Avot (Chap 1:15) for this week

"Shamai said...And receive every person with a cheerful countenance"

Even although our primary pursuit must be Torah study, an introverted activity, do not become like a hermit, or confined to an elite circle of scholars.

Receive every person with a friendly face, even one that can bring you no benefit (The Rebbe in Biurim)

Speak to people congenially, with sweet and pleasing words (Rambam)

Current news

And connected to the above, an event from this week where we got a new Prime Minister in the UK, Liz Truss. I saw an interesting article about how she has been influenced by Jews. One aspect was as follows:

At Shell, an oil company where Truss began her career as an accountant, she worked under an Orthodox Jew, she told the Chronicle. "He was the best boss I ever had and a very big influence on me," she added.

"I remember, that at work during winter, he would leave early for Shabbat every Friday. In the summer he was there until much later," Truss went on. "That was one of my first experiences of seeing how Jewish life could be incorporated into corporate life and it really impressed me how proud he was of his religion."

Later in life, she said, she realized she had seen her boss modelling values held by her Conservative political party. "So many Jewish values are Conservative values and British values too. For example seeing the importance of family and always taking steps to protect the family unit. And the value of hard work, and self-starting and setting up your own business," ..

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a sweet and happy New Year

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

LEARNING FROM CHILDREN

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 24 August 2023 · Shabbos 26 Aug 2023 · ט' אלול תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov Zelda on your birthday tomorrow. I hope you are well. So nice to be in touch again. Wishing you a wonderful year in good health!

Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia whose birthday is this week. Wishing you to grow up to be a fine girl and bring your parents much nachas!

One of the points discussed in this week's Sedra, Ki Tetze, is about the REBELLIOUS SON.

In relation to this I saw an interesting article from 'Hebrew Word of the Week' on the word NAAR - YOUTH (From the Book - People of the Word)

Judaism highly values YOUTH for both their

- Tremendous physical energy, and
- Their unique spiritual energy

In 2017, the Oxford Dictionary chose their word of the year as YOUTHQUAKE - a significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people.

The Rebbe said 'The rebelliousness of young people is not a crime. On the contrary, it is the fire of the soul that refuses to conform, that is dissatisfied with the status quo, that cries out that it wants to change the world, and is frustrated with not knowing how.'

The Hebrew word naar reflects both the above aspects of youth.

- In the mystical Lecha dodi that we sing on Friday night we find the passage, hisnaari meafar kumi, meaning shake off the dust, and arise. Ie the revolutionary energy of youth.
- The word uri, means to wake up, and refers to the special spiritual sensitivity found in children in their quest for truth.

Many illustrations in Torah show this spiritual sensitivity of children.

Torah teaches us how we can also stay young in spirit.

The terminology used to describe the aging of Avraham and Sarah, is baim beyamim, which means they entered their days. This teaches us that they not only reached a certain number of years quantitatively, but, qualitatively, they entered each day fully with curiosity and openness, never thinking that they had it all figured out, or holding onto expectations of how things are supposed to be.

Gut Shabbos , and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

FAMILY AND LIGHT

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 12 September 2024 · Shabbos 14 Sep 2024 · י"א אלול תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Meyer and Malky Sarfati, for the wedding of Esther, which is today! Esther and choson should build a binyan adei ad - an everlasting home beYisrael, together!

Mazal Tov to Joy Camaroff on her birthday next week. Sorry we missed you on your trip to London Joy, but wishing you a happy and healthy year.

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff on her birthday next week. Hope all going well with you Talya and wishing you a year of much achievement and happiness.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday next week. Hope that you had a wonderful trip in EY Mendel, and wishing you a year of much success in both gashmius and ruchnius. Still have good memories of your barmitzvah in EY!

Mazal Tov to Mussia on her birthday next week. Wishing you a happy year with giving much nachas to your parents!

FAMILY

One of the highlights of this week was meeting with Tracy Pollock and her daughter Lyss while on their trip to London.

Tracy is one of the daughters of Shirley Isaacson (ne Davidoff) who is in turn a daughter of Uncle Morris ah.

In conversation we worked out that the last time that I would have seen Tracy would have been in SA when she was maximum 9 years old. From the res-

taurant table where we met, I was also able to speak to Shirley, where we have not seen each other or spoken, for 30 years!

Welcome Tracy to our weekly email Family Group, and please forward this email on to your husband Avrohom, and to Lyss, as I don't have their email addresses.

It is a source of great delight to re-connect with Family, and thanks for giving us the opportunity for this to have happened. We see resemblances in the faces, the natures, the interests etc etc.

Just some snippets from our meeting - Lyss has been in EY for the last 6 years, 3 years of which were in the Israeli army helping to defend our People, and 3 years studying. She has now come to Birmingham University for a year to continue her studies in ..neuro science? Tracy was a Dental Hygienist, and Avrohom is a neuro radiologist. One of Tracy's boys (cant remember which one) cycled from Alaska all the way down to somewhere in S America! Etc etc

Whenever we get a new Family onto the group I have this urge to have a summarized Family tree, just relating to the current group ie not too extensive, to use as an introduction tool for everyone to know who is who on the group. Any volunteers to make this?

It has been a great pleasure to hear about your Family Shirley, and in real, to meet Tracy and Lyss. I am sure you can be proud of them.

LIGHT

The main theme from this week spiritually, that came to my attention, was LIGHT. This came up many times as follows:

- Rabbi Aryeh Citron

It is customary, in the month of Elul to recite Psalm 27 twice each day, by Shacharis and Minchah. It starts with the words "LeDavid, Hashem Ori." To David, G-d is my LIGHT...

- According to the Chida, saying this Psalm slowly and with full concentration at this time of the year, is an assistance for long life.
- ".my Light" according to Medrash, refers to Rosh Hashanah, and G-d shines a positive light on our judgement on that day, by applying His Attribute of Mercy.
- On Rosh Hashanah, Hashem brings forth a brand new light, to inspire every Jew to do Teshuvah and brighten his path.
- Light is a metaphor for rejoicing, and we rejoice on Rosh Hashanah, knowing that G-d will miraculously judge us positively
- Hayom Yom of 6th of Elul

The Baal Shem Tov cherished LIGHT exceedingly. He declared, "The word light in Hebrew is or, which is numerically equal to raz, which in Hebrew means 'secret'. A person who knows the secret within any entity can diffuse light."

- Tanya from this week (letter 12)

In the upper worlds, Hashem, through His INFINITE LIGHT, makes peace between opposites - between water and fire, and between the angels Michael and Gavriel.

The arousal of this great illumination and immense diffusion of light, to bring about this peace, is effected from below by our acts of charity, from one, to another who has nothing of his own, and thereby reviving the spirit of the lowly, and arousing the heart of the downcast.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos, and a kesivah vechasimah tovah, for a year of much light, goodness and sweetness.

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

REFLECTION

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 4 September 2025 · Shabbos 6 Sep 2025 · י"ג אלול תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia Davidoff whose birthday is tonight. Apologies for missing your birthday party Mussia, but I wish you a very happy year with much achievement, and that you should give much nachas to your parents BEH!

A big thank you to Reuven and Chana Lieba, and Chanan and Naomi for hosting Rahel and I for a beautiful Shabbos get-together in Cape Cod last Shabbos!

We are now well into the month of Elul, and Rosh Hashanah is getting closer.

One of the elements of Elul is to spend time in SELF- REFLECTION AND STOCK-TAKING of the previous year.

To look back and see what we achieved and where we went wrong, and to then make appropriate GOOD RESOLUTIONS on how to improve in the New Year.

There are 12 days from Chai Elul (18th 0f Elul), and there is a tradition to use these 12 days to look back, one day at a time, to each of the 12 months of the previous year.

Other Customs for this month are:

- Listening to the shofar being sounded daily to arouse feelings of teshuvah

- Wishing all our friends and family etc to have a Good and Sweet New year when we speak or write to them.
- Sending out Rosh Hashanah cards
- Enhancing our inter-personal relationships
- Asking forgiveness from those we might have wronged or hurt
- Saying 3 extra chapters of Tehillim each day in addition to the daily quota
- Having our Mezuzot and Tefillin checked

Our involvement in these Traditional actions will keep us sufficiently busy doing only good, and in the hope that Hashem will judge us favourably, and seal us for a Good and Sweet Year.

Gut Shabbos, and wishing everyone a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

Ki Seitzei ↑ Ki Seitzei · Contents · By date כי תצא

ONE SMALL ACTION

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 20 August 2026 · Shabbos 22 Aug 2026 · ט' אלול תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Today is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Morris ah, and we wish long life to all the members of his Family in this group – Shirley, Zelda, Greta and all their Families. I remember Uncle Morris so clearly - his beautiful blue eyes which always had a little sparkle, and he always found something to speak to us about. His neshamah should have an aliyah!

And this coming week is also Zelda's birthday. Mazal Tov Zelda. I saw a nice picture of you Baty and Sarita BH. I hope that you are well, and wishing you a wonderful year!

Mazal Tov to Chaya Musia Davidoff. Wishing you a very successful and happy year Mussia, bringing your parents much nachas BEH!

Elul is the month of teshuvah and I found 2 short related 'gems' which I would like to share:

· Rabbi Yasa said: The Holy One Blessed be He says to Israel, "My children, open for Me an opening of teshuvah the size of the eye of a needle, and I will open for you an entrance wide enough for wagons and carriages to pass through." (Song of Songs 5:2 – Shir Hashirim Rabbah)

· Teshuvah consists of

o Correcting and putting one's present in order

o Regretting the past

o Making good resolutions for the future

The key however is the present.

When the present is properly ordered, one can fill what was lacking or wrong in the past, and build fences and safeguards for the future (The Rebbe)

Gut Shabbos and wishing a kesivah vechasimah tovah to all, for a Good and Sweet New Year!

כי תבא

Ki Savo

Devarim 26:1 · parsha 7 of 11 in Devarim · 50 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — A RADICAL PATH 1241
2017 / 5777 — FIXED TIMES 1244
2018 / 5778 — JOYOUS ACTION 1246
2019 / 5779 — HUMILITY AND CHAI ELLUL 1248
2020 / 5780 — FREE CHOICE 1251
2021 / 5781 — THE LAND OF ISRAEL 1253
2022 / 5782 — DEEP REFLECTION 1255
2023 / 5783 — SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 1257
2024 / 5784 — COMPLETE SETTLING WITH JOY 1259
2025 / 5785 — OUR HERITAGE AND CAPABILITY 1261
2026 / 5786 — GOOD RESOLUTIONS 1264

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

A RADICAL PATH

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 22 September 2016 · Shabbos 24 Sep 2016 · כ"א אלול תשע"ו

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well

Mazal Tov Freida on your upcoming birthday. Wishing you continued success and happiness.

Mazal Tov also to Chava on your birthday thereafter. You should have a good year in Sem and NY.

There was a very interesting point that I learnt this week, or should i say that I got to understand better, and I think it relates to all of us

Yesterday was the 18th of Elul which was the birthday of two great people, The Baal Shem Tov (1698) and The Alte Rebbe (1745)

It is also the day when the teacher and Master of the Baal Shem Tov (Achiya Hashiloni) appeared to him in 1724, and when the Baal Shem Tov became revealed in 1734.

Basically the Baal Shem Tov founded the Chassidic movement and the Alte Rebbe set up its foundation and framework from which at least the Chabad element of Chassidus grew

Mommy and I went to a farbreng on Chai Elul where Rabbi Chaim Muller spoke very powerfully about all this, but one of the the points I wanted to share was the RADICAL CHANGE introduced by the Baal ShemTov with one of his following statements:

"Every single thing one sees or hears is an instruction for his conduct in the service of G-d."

Now we have heard the Rebbe saying this statement thousands of times, but somehow the way Rabbi Miller explained it made me understand it in a new and important way.

The basic way most people understand Judaism, and the way Judaism has been practiced over the previous centuries, is an insular way - living in the shtetl, closing oneself off from the world, dressing in a very specific and different way from the rest of the world, not socialising with the world, not eating the same food etc etc

In short Hashem was to be found in this insular world, and the world outside was seen to be a disturbance, and even antagonistic.

And therefore this statement of the Baal Shem Tov started to send a RADICAL RIPPLE OF CHANGE through the Jewish world.

He was saying that Hashem could be found everywhere, even in the world.

His statement wasn't just a new idea. It was founded from deep within Torah, and the succeeding Rebbes expounded and kept expanding these Teachings of Chassidus.

In fact Rabbi Miller pointed out that it is recorded that the above statement has been refered to by the Rebbe in almost every single sicha that he has spoken and I think I heard him say a figure of 5000 times.

Rabbi Miller explained, that what it means to us as Jews, is that whoever we are, at whatever level we are, wherever we find ourselves in life, whatever style of dress we have adopted, we are all within the framework of 'seeing and hearing' Hashem.

Every event of our day is not an accident or incidental.

We are all now out there in the world, each at our own level and standard.

And according to the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov, we are all still very much closely connected to Hashem. Each event of the day is a delivery to each of us from Hashem

Besides understanding that these events are all from Hashem, we also have the opportunity to conduct ourselves, in these situations, in a way which reflects and improves our service of Hashem. It could simply be kind or helping another , and how we deal with each event,etc .

By the way, this does not detract from those beautiful communities who still want to live an insular way and continue to serve Hashem along these traditions.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a Good and Fruiful Year

PS A reminder to keep up Rambam 5 minutes per week. The weekly chapters can easily be found at Chabad.org in the 'Learning' section

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

FIXED TIMES

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 September 2017 · Shabbos 9 Sep 2017 · י"ח אלול תשע"ז

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Welcome back home to Pesach and Shmuly plus Families from EY and America

This coming Shabbos is 18th Elul, which is the birthdays of The Baal Shem Tov and The Alte Rebbe, 2 Great Chassidic Masters.

It also means that there will now be 12 days to Rosh Hashana, and it is a custom to look back at the last 12 months of the present year, over this period, and make new resolutions with which to improve.

In relation to this, one point in particular was dominant this week, which I would like to share.

For those who don't know the meaning of a cliché, it means a phrase which is very commonly used, and through this it kind of loses its meaning. It is like it goes 'in one ear and out of the other.'

One of these commonly used expressions is that we should SET FIXED TIMES TO STUDY TORAH.

This week for some reason, I suddenly understood it in a new light.

It came up in a Maamer that I was learning from the Frierdike Rebbe, and was then strengthened by a Rashi from this week's Sedra, Ki Savo, and this was strengthened further by putting it into practice.

The beauty of Setting a Fixed Time for Torah Study, is that it does not affect ones normal current daily activities.

It just says that one or more parts of one's day are going to now be set aside and given a DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITION.

This could be as little as 5 minutes in the morning and 5 minutes before going to sleep, but these times become DEDICATED to Hashem.

And the emphasis now becomes learning Torah for Hashem, and not just learning it as any other subject. And the rest of the day carries on as normal.

But there is now a subtle and real difference to the day.

In this week's Sedra, Rashi explains the word heemiricha in the following beautiful sentence. 'Today Hashem has distinguished you (heemiricha) to be for Him a treasured People, as He said to you, and to guard all His Commandments.'

Rashi sites 2 interpretations of this word heemiricha:

1. 'Setting aside and distinguishing' ie we have distinguished Him and set him aside from alien gods, and He has set us aside for Himself to be His treasured People.
2. 'Glorifying'. This is the possible negative connotation whereby we can get the balance wrong, and glorify ourselves, as in 'All sinners glorify themselves (yitamru)'

Wishing Gut Shabbos to all and a Kesiva Vechasima Tova for a Good New Year.

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

JOYOUS ACTION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 30 August 2018 · Shabbos 1 Sep 2018 · כ"א אלול תשע"ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida on her birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year in all areas with much joy. Looking forward to seeing you (and the rest of the Family who are coming for Yom Tov), soon BEH.

Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is also next week. Wishing you much success in all the areas you are working in, both in gashmiyus and ruchnius, Chava. And with much happiness.

I saw an interesting dvar Torah from this week's Sedra Ki Savo, which I think also carries an important practical lesson on how we can derive SATISFACTION FROM OUR ACTIONS.

It was from a commentary in the Gutnick Chumash based on a sicha of The Rebbe.

Ki savo means when you enter ('When you enter the land which G-d is giving you')

But what is the definition of the ACTION of entering?

Is the 'entering' when the first few people enter Eretz Yisrael, or do we all have to arrive and settle first?

On a personal level, when does entering a room occur - when the hand enters, or most of his body, or the whole body?

The Gemorra (Chullin 33b) answers 'Partial entry is not considered entry'.

Similarly Rashi comments on the verse in our sedra, that the entry to the Land refers to the time when they 'conquered the Land and divided it.'

This teaches us a powerful lesson on how we should do an action.

It should be done WHOLEHEARTEDLY and with FULL IMMERSION.

In order to reach this state of total immersion, we must temporarily relinquish any other cares or concerns and dedicate ourselves with full devotion and concentration to the matter at hand.

Also to remove personal bias so as to make the act pure.

Primarily we are referring here to Holy actions of performing mitzvos (because the 'entry' being spoken about is the entry to Eretz Yisrael), but presumably, the same principle can be applied, by dedicating all of our actions in the same way.

This brings new LIFE to our actions with infinite potential.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Shanah Tovah with much joy.

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

HUMILITY AND CHAI ELLUL

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 September 2019 · Shabbos 21 Sep 2019 · כ"א אלול תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with lots of new growth and development, in joy.

Mazal Tov Chava whose birthday is also next week, a few days later. Wishing you a successful year Chava with all the new things that you are doing. Hatzlocha.

Yesterday was Chai Ellul, 18th of Ellul, which is the birthday of both the Baal Shem Tov and the Alte Rebbe.

After the passing of the Baal Shem Tov, his son Rabbi Tzvi was appointed to lead the Chassidim.

1 year later during Shavuos meal on the first yohrtzeit of the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Tzvi announced that his father had appeared to him and instructed him to transfer the leadership to the greatest disciple of the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch, also known as the Maggid of Mezeritch.

As opposed to the Baal Shem Tov, who would travel from place to place, the Maggid stayed in Mezeritch, and from there he sent out his disciples to establish centres of Chassidic life throughout Russia, Poland and even Germany.

He passed away 19th Kislev 1872

One of his most famous disciples was The Alte Rebbe who established Chabad Chassidus, but the Maggid had many famous disciples.

In the following story, the Maggid taught an important lesson on HUMILITY

The Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, and the Alte Rebbe had 2 points that comprised the essence of their Service expressed in prayer, ie

1. Clinging to Hashem (dveikus) - light
2. Self-nullification (bitul) - vessel for the light

The Baal Shem Tov teachings stressed the dveikus, and the bitul was implied as already included.

The Maggid's path was to separate out the two. Thus there were 2 clear pillars of Service, clinging and self-nullification.

The Alte Rebbe wanted his Chassidim to create many 'vessels' through self-nullification that would spread the light that Chassidus had accessed. There is very little mention of dvekus in the Alte Rebbe's teachings. It is not missing, but concealed. Ie exactly opposite to the Baal Shem Tov

The story that occurred was when 2 of the Maggid's disciples (brothers), came and asked him to honour them by discussing some of the revealed aspects of Torah.

The Maggid began elucidating a very complex topic in Torah, and then revealed major difficulties with his own explanation, and then responded to these difficulties with another explanation.

He kept explaining and revealing new flaws, with genius, and repeated this 9 times.

The 2 brothers who were Torah geniuses, literally had to squeeze their heads to employ every ounce of their intellect just to follow it.

After the brothers left, the Maggid remarked 'THEY ALMOST PUSHED ME DOWN!'

What did the Maggid mean by this?

The answer is connected to what the Baal Shem Tov said moments before he passed away from Tehilim 36:12, 'LET NOT THE FOOT OF PRIDE OVERTAKE ME.'

This is something that was also told about the Holy Arizal.

What the Maggid was saying was that in order to speak such great Torah learning to the 2 brothers, he had to knowingly put himself in danger of becoming aware of his own greatness.

But because of his love of Israel, ie because of his concern that the 2 brothers should attach to the light of Chassidus (Torah's inner dimension) through himself, he had brought himself to the very precipice of the great abyss, TEETERING ON THE VERY EDGE OF LOSING HIS SELF-NULLIFICATION (BITUL).

In the end the Maggid was BH successful in preventing this fall.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and good Ellul preparations for Rosh Hashanah

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

FREE CHOICE

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 September 2020 · Shabbos 5 Sep 2020 · ט"ז אלול תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

BH Shmuel Levy is recovering well from a small operation he had. Wishing you a refuah shleimah Shmuel, and very soon!

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on the birth of a beautiful girl, named Chaya Mussiah (not sure of spelling). Wishing the whole Family much joy and nachas from her, and many more simchos!

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy for his birthday tomorrow. Keep up all your good work and achievements Mendel. Wishing you a great year!

It is the month of Elul which is a preparation for Rosh Hashanah, and it is significant that we have been learning the Laws of Teshuvah in the Rambam this week.

And of course Teshuvah is central to Elul and Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur

Teshuvah means Return, and has a quality of returning to oneself and coming closer to Hashem

The chapters of Teshuvah in Rambam are very powerful, and it is worth reading them in the original, but I will try and summarise a few points:

- FREE CHOICE is given to all men (including women) to turn himself to the path of good and be righteous, or to go on the path of not-good and be wicked. The choice is fully his, and his alone.

Man is unique in creation with this capability.

There is no one who compels him or leads him to either of these 2 paths. Rather he on his own initiative and decision chooses.

- If this were not the case, how could there be the concept of reward and punishment?

There are also many other proofs brought, but the Rambam does not underestimate its complexity, by saying 'Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.'

- Just as a person can sin willfully and consciously, so can he repent willfully and consciously.
- A Baal Teshuvah (Master of Teshuvah going through the above procedure), should not consider himself distant from the righteous because of his sins. This is not true. Once he has taken action, he is really beloved and desirable before the Creator as if he never sinned. Our sages declared ' in the place where Baalei Teshuvah stand, even the completely righteous are not able to stand.' For the Baal Teshuvah has overcome his evil inclination more than the righteous.
- The manner of the Baal Teshuvah is to be very humble and modest. If fools try and shame them by mocking their change of lifestyle, they will pay no attention. On the contrary, they will hear this abuse and rejoice. Whenever they are embarrassed by their past deeds, their merit increases!
- Torah has already promised that ultimately Israel will do Teshuvah towards the end of exile, and she will immediately be redeemed.

But it is all in our own individual hands.

And the reward is great, in this world, or the world-to-come, or both.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year.

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

THE LAND OF ISRAEL

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 August 2021 · Shabbos 28 Aug 2021 · כ' אלול תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and preparing for Rosh Hashanah.

Mazal Tov Freida for your birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with lots of new development, and with much joy! Looking forward to seeing you all soon BEH. (and all the other Family who will be visiting)

Mazal Tov Pesach for passing your exams, which now allow him to do tax returns in the US (in case anyone is looking for a good Accountant!)

Today is Chai Elul (18th of Elul), a very significant day in the Chassidic calendar, as it is the birthday of both the Baal Shem Tov (1698) and The Alte Rebbe (1745), both giants and luminaries in their respective ways.

This week's Sedra is Ki Savo - "When you shall come to the land which the Eternal your G-d is giving to you as a permanent possession.." ERETZ YISRAEL.

And so I found it interesting that this week's Tanya (authored by The Alte Rebbe) was talking about ERETZ YISRAEL, and Rosh Hashanah, in such a beautiful way, which I therefore thought would be suitable to share on Chai Elul.

It is from Letter 14 in the section, Holy Letters, as follows:

"This letter is written to arouse the old love and fondness for the HOLY LAND, so that it burn like fiery flames from the inwardness of man and from the depths of his heart, as if this very day, G-d had set His spirit upon us, a spirit of generosity, so that people volunteer to consecrate themselves to G-d with a full and generous hand, with one increase after another from year to

year, continually rising and excelling themselves in keeping with the measure kodesh haelyon (supreme holiness) - Chochma, which radiates to the Holy Land, and is constantly renewed and increased, as it is written "Forever are the eyes of the L-rd your G-d upon it from the beginning of the year to the end of the year"

...But surely it should have said "everlastingly" (instead of "from the beginning of the year to the end of the year"?)

...The Land of Israel which is known as Eretz Chefetz - The land of G-d's desire..and is called by its name Eretz Hachaim - the Land of Life.

..This radiation and efflux from the supreme Chochmah that irradiates the 'land', is renewed annually by a truly new light....which is called 'the Infinite Ein Sof Light...

..And every year there descends and radiates a new and renewed light, which has never yet shone, from the supreme Chochmah.

...For the light of every year withdraws to its source in the essence of the Ein Sof on the eve of Rosh Hashanah when the moon is covered. Afterwards, by means of the sounding of the shofar, and by means of the prayers, a new and superior light is elicited, to radiate to the Eretz elyonah, and those who dwell upon it, ie to all the higher and lower worlds that receive their vitality from it.....

...Its manifestation, however, depends on the actions of those below, and on their merits and penitence during the aseres yemei teshuvah - the 10 Days of Teshuvah. This will suffice for the initiated."

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing for Klal Yisrael to hold on to every inch of our Precious Land. And wishing all a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a sweet and happy New Year

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

DEEP REFLECTION

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 15 September 2022 · Shabbos 17 Sep 2022 · כ"א אלול תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

BH we have good news that both Renee and Brian have made good improvement in their health. Renee still has a long road to full recovery but her treatment is proving successful BH!

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff for her upcoming birthday on Sunday. Wishing you a wonderful year, and hopefully more celebrations in the Family Talya!

Thereafter is Freida's birthday. Mazal Tov Freida. Wishing you continued growth and happiness, and much nachas from your whole Family, and with much joy!

And at the end of the week is Chava's birthday. Mazal Tov Chava. Wishing you continued successes in everything that you are doing, and with much happiness!

This week's inspiration came as a combination from the Sedra, and the Chassidic holiday of Chai Elul (18th of Elul), which is the birthday of both The Baal Shem Tov, and The Alte Rebbe

Our Sedra Ki Savo, starts - Vehayah ki savo - "It shall come to pass, when you come to the land.(26:1)

(The Rebbe - abridged from a correspondence 10th Kislev 1953, discusses this as follows)

The Jews' entrance into the land of Israel is symbolic of the soul's descent into the body, and it's being forced to live in the physical world. The Midrash teaches that the words "and it shall come to pass" are always used to denote something of great joy. Though the G-dly soul is saddened when it temporar-

ily leaves its place under G-d's throne, to dwell in a Jewish body for a certain number of years, it is a joyous occurrence, since the descent is to elevate the corporeal world through doing Mitzvot.

When the soul fulfils this mission, all the transient pain and suffering connected with the soul's descent and life on this earth are not only justified, but infinitely outweighed by the great reward and everlasting bliss which the soul enjoys thereafter...

From the above one can easily appreciate the extent of the tragedy of disregarding the soul's mission on earth. For in doing so one condemns the soul to a term of useless suffering not compensated for, nor nullified by that everlasting happiness which G-d had intended for it..

REFLECTING upon the greatness of the Torah and Mitzvot, specifically pertaining to this life, and reflecting also that the Torah and Mitzvot are the only means to attain the soul's perfection and the fulfilment of the Divine purpose, one will experience a sense of real joy at our fate and destiny, despite the many difficulties and handicaps, from within and without, which are inevitable on this earth...

Only in this way can one live up to the injunction: "Serve G-d with joy," (this week's Sedra 28:47) which the Baal Shem Tov made one of the foundations of his teachings, and which is expounded at length in Chabad, as stressed by its founder, The Alte Rebbe, in his monumental work, the Tanya (chapters 26 seq., 31 seq.)...."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and to use the last 12 days of Elul to do our own reflection on the previous year (one day for each month) and to make new good resolutions.

Kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Happy New Year to all.

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 31 August 2023 · Shabbos 2 Sep 2023 · ט"ז אלול תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday tonight. Wishing you a great year in both the secular and spiritual Mendel with much joy!

Pirkei Avos gives us so many beautiful lessons. The one I saw this week was from 3:12, which says, 'Rabbi Yishmael said: Be submissive to a head, pleasant and composed to the blackened, and receive every person with joy.'

Rambam explains this very cryptic statement as follows

• Submissive to a head

In the presence of a distinguished person, leave your pride and self-importance behind. Be acquiescent.

• Composed and pleasant to the blackened

Blackened refers to the black-haired ie the young. - When in the presence of the young who are joking around, be composed, and don't belittle oneself with jokes and the like. HOWEVER IT SHOULD STILL BE WITH PLEASANTNESS!

• Receive every person with joy

This joy extends to every person great or small, indeed to every human being.

In addition, this joy is more than just a friendly face as described Shammai in V 1:15.

But we should greet people with actual joy, not just external.

Rabbi Yishmael was following in the footsteps of his ancestor Aaron HaKohen Gadol, the man who loved peace and pursued it (The Rebbe)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

COMPLETE SETTLING WITH JOY

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 19 September 2024 · Shabbos 21 Sep 2024 · י"ח אלול תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Chai Elul (18th of Elul) is coming up on Shabbos.

This day has many important connections, some of which are as follows:

- (To start with the simplest). There are 12 days to go to Rosh Hashanah and it is customary to take account of how the past year has been, and to assess how we can improve in the New Year. The 12 days relate to looking back one month at a time over the last 12 months.
- Birthday of the Baal Shem Tov (founder of the Chassidic Movement)
- Birthday of the Alte Rebbe (founder of Chabad Chassidus)
- Link of Chai Elul to this week's Sedra, Ki Savo.

Chai Elul invariably occurs close to or on the Shabbos of Ki Savo.

The Rebbe finds this link in the word Savo (26:1) - "It will come to pass when you come into the land..You will then take of the first fruits." - which refers to a COMPLETE SETTLING (7 years of conquering and 7 years of dividing the land). Thereafter they started to do the Mitzvah of the first fruits.

In the same way Chassidus has the ability to FULLY AROUSE our spirit, mind and heart, so that our Service is in a COMPLETE MANNER.(much summarised)

The Rebbe also explains in another Sichah, that Ki Savo ("It will come to pass, when you come into the land...") is symbolic of the soul's descent into the body, and it's being forced to live in the physical world.

The Midrash teaches that the words "and it shall come to pass", are always used to denote something of GREAT JOY.

Although the G-dly soul is saddened when it temporarily leaves its place under Hashem's throne to dwell in a Jewish body for a certain number of years, it is a joyous occurrence, since this descent is to elevate the corporeal world through doing Mitzvot.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year.

OUR HERITAGE AND CAPABILITY

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 12 September 2025 · Shabbos 13 Sep 2025 · כ' אלול תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Freida with much continued achievement with all the work that you do. I would like to make mention here that Freida is running a very successful Mothers and Babies Group in Longbeach with mothers from all backgrounds. Michayil el Chayil Freida!

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff on her birthday next week. I hope that all is going well with you Talya, and wishing you a very successful year BEH!

Today is Chai Elul (18th of Elul), and we are in the Sedra of Ki Savo.

In today's Hayom Yom there is a link between these 2 subjects which I would like to share.

Chai Elul is a very important day, and 2 of the main events that occurred on this day, are the birth of the Baal Shem Tov in 1698, and the birth of the Alte Rebbe in 1745.

The following explanation was heard from the Baal Shem Tov on the passage in Ki Savo:

"When you will come into the Land..and you will dwell in it.... you shall take the first of your fruits...and place it in a basket... Then you will go to the place which your G-d will choose... To cause his Name to dwell there"

The simple meaning of this verse is that when you come to Eretz Yisrael you will take your first fruits to the Temple in Yerushalayim in praise of Hashem.

But the Baal Shem Tov gives a deeper explanation as follows:

- "When you will come into the land (eretz) which G-d gives you as an INHERITANCE"

The Midrash explains the Hebrew word eretz is linked to running (merutzah) and desire/ will (ratzon) ie every Jew has the INHERITED capability to attain the level of desiring Hashem and fulfilling His will. And so, when one reaches to the level of desiring Hashem and His Will..

- "You will dwell in it"

You will bring down into oneself, this love of Hashem, in an internalised and settled way

- "You shall take... and place it into a basket"

And then we take this inspiration and light, and bring it to a practical level ie doing the practical Mitzvos

- "You shall go to the place which the Eternal your G-d will choose"

Wherever we find ourselves, is not by accident. Hashem is with us there, and is guiding us along our journeys. These are our destined places. And the purpose of this is....

- "To cause His Name to dwell there"

To make G-d known in his (that Jew's) locale.

Later the Baal Shem Tov clarified that the way to reach this level of will and desire, is with the saying of a bracha (blessing) and a verse of Tehillim.

He was referring here to the fact that this INHERITED will and desire for Hashem within every Jew can be hidden, and the way to wake it up and reveal it, is to say, with sincerity, brochos and Tehillim .

It is not difficult!

Gut Shabbos, and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

Ki Savo ↑ Ki Savo · Contents · By date כי תבא

GOOD RESOLUTIONS

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 27 August 2026 · Shabbos 29 Aug 2026 · ט״ז אלול תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Gareth Sacks on his marriage to Liraz Elbaz in Eretz Yisrael last week! And Mazal Tov to mother Froma and sister Kerry Lee and Families! BH this is such wonderful news. Wishing the couple a very happy life together and to build a binyan adei ad!

We also wish the Stein Family from Uncle Henry ah side, long life for Aunty Maisy ah, whose yohrtzeit is tonight. We remember Aunty Maisy so well. She always had a smile and ready giggle, and was a deep thinker who enjoyed searching for the truth, which we sometimes discussed together.

Also in the Stein Family, Gavin Milner and his son Creed have upcoming birthdays close to each other coming up. Mazal Tov to both and wishing you a year of much success and happiness with many new good developments BEH.

Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful year Leslie. I hope that all is going well!

Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Levy for his birthday tonight. Wishing you a happy and successful year Mendel in both your continued Yeshiva studies and gashmius activities!

We want to wish Shlomo Levy much success with his move to Melbourne to further his Yeshiva education, and to assist with communal Jewish activities there. We are all proud of you BH!

And again in the spirit of Elul I found a few interesting points this week:

Teshuvah – Tanya Chap 7

Teshuvah out of love arises from the depths of the heart, with great love, desire, and a craving soul to cleave to G-d. The soul thirsts for G-d like a parched and barren soil, because, up until now, it was in a barren wilderness and in the shadow of death... very distant from the face of G-d... It is regarding repentance out of such great love that it has been said that premeditated sins become, for him, like virtues, since through them he attained this great love...

Making resolutions

Someone was speaking to the Rebbe in a private audience and he mentioned that he had made a resolution but was not confident about his sincerity and if he would be able to fulfil it.

The Rebbe answered by quoting from Rambam's Mishneh Torah as follows:

Deep down, every Jew sincerely wishes to follow the Torah, even although at times a person can be compelled by their own inclination to do the wrong thing.

So when a person resolves to follow the Torah, even if it may seem that it is not whole-hearted, or with all the right motivations, *ultimately this decision is considered by Jewish Law to be sincere!*

This coming week we reach the 18th of Elul which is known as Chai Elul (the life of Elul)

Which means that there are 12 days to go to Rosh Hashanah thereafter.

It has been recommended to use these 12 days, referring to the past 12 months, to take account of how our year went, to consider what improvements we could make, and to thereafter implement NEW RESOLUTIONS.

Gut Shabbos and wishing all a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

נצבים

Nitzavim

Devarim 29:9 · parsha 8 of 11 in Devarim · 51 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5776 — A LOVING JUDGE 1267
2017 / 5777 — PURITY 1269
2018 / 5778 — EDUCATION 1272
2019 / 5779 — ROSH HASHANAH 1274
2020 / 5780 — JOYOUS SERVICE 1276
2021 / 5781 — STANDING UPRIGHT 1279
2022 / 5782 — BE A MENTCH - A STORY 1281
2023 / 5783 — THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM 1285
2024 / 5784 — SHANAH TOVAH 1288
2025 / 5785 — INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH 1291
2026 / 5786 — HIDDEN JOY 1293

A LOVING JUDGE

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 September 2016 · Shabbos 1 Oct 2016 · כ"ח אלול תשע"ו

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Chava on her birthday today. And wishing you a safe flight Chava. Looking forward to seeing you.

Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchok on his birthday WHICH IS ON ROSH HASHANA!, and which is also the birthday of the whole of mankind. We love you Daniel.

Today is now the Yohrtzeit of my mother, and I wish Chanan and Reuven long life.

IyrH I will be going to the Beis Olam tomorrow, and I will have everyone in mind.

I remember so clearly how she knew she was passing away, and recognised that it was Erev ROSH HASHANA without looking at the calendar.

We wish her Neshama to have an Aliya, and thank her for all she gave us.

A snippet from a talk by Rabbi Yossi Jacobson came to my ears while I was in the car this week which was very interesting.

The subject was about a person who was saying that they dread Rosh Hashana because of the fear of being judged, and that they really do not look forward to this time of the year.

Does this sound familiar?

And I really liked his answer.

He said that being judged on Rosh Hashana is not like being judged by another person, or a Judge or a Prime Minister, or a King

Our Judge on Rosh Hashana knows us better than ourselves.

He knows every tiny intricate functioning of our whole being, physical, emotional, intellect, every thought, and all our drives and intentions, loves and fears.

AND HE LOVES US MORE THAN WE LOVE OURSELVES, 'HE LOVES US TO BITS'

When we judge ourselves, we always judge favourably

How much more so when Hashem judges us !!

AND SO WE SHOULD REALLY GO INTO ROSH HASHANA WITH MUCH JOY, BEING OPEN TO HASHEM WITH A FULL HEART, AND WITH A MASSIVE GRATITUDE THAT HE HAS GIVEN US THE OPPORTUNITY TO STAND BEFORE HIM AND BE JUDGED, AND SERVE HIM WITH A FULL HEART.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shana Tova, with Good that even we recognise as Good.

Rambam 5 minutes per week Sefer Tahara Hilchos Shear Avos Hatuma Chaps 1-8 (P 20)

PURITY

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 14 September 2017 · Shabbos 16 Sep 2017 · כ"ה אלול תשע"ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is tonight! Wishing you a wonderful year Freida, and looking forward to seeing you and Mendel soon BEH.

Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is also this coming week. Wishing you also much Hatzlocha with all the new pursuits that you are doing here in London this year Chava.

And right on First Night of Rosh Hashana is the birthday of Daniel. Mazal Tov Daniel. What a beautiful day to have a birthday which is also when Man was created in 6 Days of Creation.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on the engagement of her sister. Wishing you many simchos.

And last but not least is the Yohrtzeit of our mother Nechama bas Chasha.

It is interesting that her Yohrtzeit is chof zain Elul (27th Elul).

And the letters chof zain also spell the word zach (zayin chof) which means PURE

And the additional Chapter of Tehillim that we say throughout the month of Elul and till end of Sukkos is Chapter 27 (LeDovid Hashem Ori - Hashem is my light...)

And hence the theme of this week.

In connection with this, and in memory of my mother, a few aspects of PURITY came up this week.

The PURITY of Loving others

On the first verse in this week's Sedra Nitzavim- Vayelech, it says 'You stand all of you today before Hashem your G-d' ie all different levels of Jews together.

I saw the following points from 2 sources this week ie a Sicha of The Rebbe, and a Maamer of The Alte Rebbe:

1. Impurity is when there is separation between people, PURITY is when there is Unity and Holiness.
2. Moshe told us that in order to merit Hashems unconditional Love, we must love one another unconditionally.
3. Who is to say who is higher on the ladder of achievement than another. Appearances can be deceiving as we tend to over-evaluate ourselves, and under-evaluate others!
4. Even if we evaluate ourselves correctly and we have a unique contribution, someone else will excel in some other area which is beyond our own capabilities.
5. In comparison to the Creator we are all so tiny and insignificant, in case we have feelings of superiority.

When we consider this we can truly stand together united, and with feelings of LOVE TO EACH OTHER.

PURITY of Love for Hashem

Again in this week's Sedra:

1. 'You will return to Hashem your G-d... and obey Him whole-heartedly with your whole being'
2. 'See I have placed before you today life and good, and death and bad...to love Hashem, to go in His ways...

Rashi says - one hinges on the other. If you act with goodness then you have life, but if you act wickedly then you have death (chas veshalom).

Ie if you act with 'love', here you have goodness 'so that you will live and flourish', but 'if your heart strays', here you have wickedness.

PURITY of JOY

The Rebbe questions in another Sicha, that we are now 7 generations on since the Baal Shem Tov instructed us to 'spread the Wellsprings of Torah' to bring Mashiach, and we have followed these instructions, and are succeeding in this work.

So why has Mashiach not yet come?

The Rebbe suggests that we needs improving, is to add the element of JOY to this work.

In general JOY is known to break through barriers, but in addition, the PURE JOY of doing the work with the intention to the Coming of Mashiach, is what is needed.

We should know only Joy and Purity, and wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shanah Tovah.

EDUCATION

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 September 2018 · Shabbos 8 Sep 2018 · כ״ח אלול תשע״ח

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniel who has the most amazing birthday, on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, which is also the birthday of mankind ie Adam Harishon. Wishing you a year of growth and you should give your Daddy and Mommy much nachas, Daniel.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of our dear Mother AH.

Mommy and I visited the beis olam this past Sunday. It is customary to visit the beis olam before Rosh Hashana anyway if one can, and this of course fits in very well with her yohrtzeit. So I spent time at her grave and I brought regards from all of us.

The first thing I want to say, and I probably say this every year, because it is so powerful in my mind and also because it carries a strong lesson for all of us, is relating to her last words (or almost last words) 'It is erev Rosh Hashanah.'

Now to understand this better we need to realise better her state at that time.

She had been living with us for the last few months of her life, and she had started struggling very much with her breathing, to the point that she had to wear an oxygen mask day and night which was very uncomfortable. Prior to this we all know that she had been struggling in general with her health. And she was taking sleeping tablets etc.

I don't want to go into details, but only to say, she was not interested what day of the week it was, nor what day in the month. nor what year. And she wasn't frum in the way we understand it. The only thing she wanted was the

arrival of Chanan and Reuven, so that we should all be there before she parted.

AND YET HER NESHAMAH KNEW THAT IT WAS EREV ROSH HASHANAH. And she said it in such a knowing and clear way as if to say 'my passing is on Erev Rosh Hashanah.'

Secondly, she dedicated her whole life tirelessly, to the EDUCATION of her children, in the best way that she understood, and even beyond what she understood.

And so, in her honour, I am attaching a half hour talk that I heard this week, related to the education of children in relation to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

I think it will be very useful for all those with young children, but it also helps in our own education, wherever we are up to.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/KBMwVIYwogc?rel=0&autoplay=1> https://www.youtube.com/embed/KBMwVIYwogc?rel=0&autoplay=1

wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shanah Tovah where we connect with our inner natural neshamah, and carry out the mitzvos which Hashem has commanded us with a full heart and much joy.

ROSH HASHANAH

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 26 September 2019 · Shabbos 28 Sep 2019 · כ"ח אלול תשע"ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

At this time of the year, there are 2 events which stand out prominent, and that is the Yohrtzeit of my (and Chanan and Reuven's) mother which is tonight, and the birth of Daniel Yitzchok on the first night of ROSH HASHANAH.

I believe that it is also Claude's mother's Yohrtzeit at the same time tonight, and we all wish you long life, and that both neshama's should have an aliyah!

And of course we wish Daniel Mazal Tov on having a birthday at such an amazing and auspicious time. Have a happy birthday, a happy year and give your parents a lot of nachas Daniel!

I probably say this every year, but for the last few weeks of my mother's life she had been struggling very much, and certainly for the last few days before she passed away her consciousness was very limited and she was needing a continual supply of oxygen.

And she knew that she was leaving the world soon, and she just fought to stay alive until Chanan and Reuven arrived from America to our home in London, where she was at that time.

And the last words that I heard from her were 'It is EREV ROSH HASHANAH.' How did she know this, and why was she even thinking about this in the state that she was in?

I always marvel at the deep connection we all have to our roots, and how real these roots are, no matter what external level we are up to!

The Frierdike Rebbe writes,

'The main avodah (work) of Rosh Hashanah, is to accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Therefore, even for Chassidim of stature, this avodah would be, SIMPLY TO SAY TEHILLIM, TO SLEEP AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE, AND TO TAKE CARE NOT TO INDULGE IN IDLE TALK.

This is like a servant, whose service to his master, leaves him with no free moment.

Or, like a son preoccupied with the joy of welcoming his father whom he has not seen for a whole year.' - Igros Kodesh, Part 10, p425.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shanah Tovah full of sweetness and joy in both physical and spiritual matters.

Nitzavim, Vayeilech ↑ Nitzavim, Vayeilech · Contents · By date נצבים - וילך

JOYOUS SERVICE

2020 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 September 2020 · Shabbos 12 Sep 2020 · כ"ג אלול תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida on her birthday next week. Wishing you a year of happiness, with nachas from your Family, and much achievement.

Mazal Tov to Chava who also has a birthday next week. Wishing you a happy and exciting year Chava.

Mazal Tov to Joy on your birthday next week. I hope you are well. Wishing you a happy and healthy year.

Our mother's (Nechama bas Chasha) neshamah should have an Aliyah. It is her Yohrtzeit next week, and we all remember her with fond memories. BEH I will be visiting the Beis Olam next week.

I believe that Claude's mother passed away on the same day as my mother, and we wish her neshama to also have an Aliyah.

There are another two important birthdays which we celebrated last week, and these are the Baal Shem Tov and the Alte Rebbe.

The Baal Shem Tov was born in 1698 and the Alte Rebbe in 1745, both on Chai (18th) Elul, and both giants of our People.

The Baal Shem Tov

The world at the time of the Baal Shem Tov was chilled and dreary, and he set it alight.

He taught that even the simplest soul can bond to the Infinite Creator with LOVE AND JOY.

For the Baal Shem Tov, joy was more than just a detail of Jewish Life. It was a path of it's own - a key and central Path

And this joy was not only limited to Prayer, Study and performance of Mitzvos, but could be found under all circumstances.

He taught that every event that befalls a person, and everything he sees or hears, are all opportunities to know the Creator and to serve Him.

The Alte Rebbe

In this week's Sedra Nitzavim- Vayelech, we see the pasuk 'Ki karov elecha hadavar meod, befichah uvilvavechah, laasotah - This thing (which I am commanding you today ie the commandments and statutes), is very near to you, to carry out with your mouth and with your heart (they are not up in the Heavens, or across the sea.)

It was on this pasuk that the Alte Rebbe based his now famous Book called The Tanya, which is the basis of Chabad Chassidus, which derived from the Baal Shem Tov

And an extract from the Baal Shem Tov's sayings in the book 'Tzavaat HaRivash - 46' -Better Happy than Strict:

Don't get carried away with excessive details in everything that you do. Because one's evil impulse can use this to insist that you have not fulfilled your obligations, so as to make you depressed.

And depression is the greatest obstacle to serving the Creator.

Even if you stumble in sin, there is a way out. Be saddened by the sin, ashamed, and plead with Him to absolve the bad you have done.

BUT THEN GET BACK TO REJOICING IN THE CREATOR, since you regret what you did, and have resolved to never do such foolish things again.

Consider that Hashem knows and examines all hearts. He knows that you wanted to do things in the best possible way, but were not able.

Strengthen yourself with JOY.

And isn't it interesting that in the personal events of this week, most of the names referred to JOY and HAPPINESS!

Gut Shabbos to all, and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a happy and sweet New Year.

Nitzavim ↑ Nitzavim · Contents · By date נצבים

STANDING UPRIGHT

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 2 September 2021 · Shabbos 4 Sep 2021 · כ"ז אלול תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and preparing for Rosh Hashanah.

Mazal Tov Chava whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a wonderful year with much achievement away from home in New York, and with much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Daniel whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah! (Also the birthday of Adam Harishon). Have a happy year Daniel and work hard with both school and play.

On Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of mine, and Chanan and Reuven's mother AH. May her dear neshamah have an Aliyah. We will BEH be visiting the Bes Olam on Sunday, and will have the whole Family in mind.

We wish everyone who is travelling for Yom Tovim, safe and healthy trips.

Todays Hayom Yom speaks about Rosh Hashanah, which is also connected to this weeks Sedra, Nitzavim:

The Alte Rebbe related that when he was in Mezeritch, he heard from his Rebbe, the Magid, in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, that the seventh month (Tishrei), first of the months of the year (marking the years since Creation), is blessed by G-d himself on Shabbat Mevarichim - the last Shabbat in the month of Elul. With this power, israel blesses the other months 11 times per year. (In the festival Calender, the first month of the year is Nissan, when Pesach occurs)

It is written (in this weeks Sedra 'Atem nitzavim hayom' - You stand this day.

'This day' refers to Rosh Hashanah, which is the day of Judgement. -Iyov 2:1

And you remain 'STANDING FIRMLY', AND UPRIGHT - meaning you will be vindicated in judgement.

Because Hashem has already blessed the month of Tishrei, and this blessing then spreads to all the months of the year.

The Hebrew word for 7 (the 7th month) is sheva, which has the same root as sova (satiated)

And so the 7th month Tishrei is satiated, and it in turn satiates all Israel - with an abundance of good for the duration of the coming year.

May this be for all of us!

Shabbat Shalom to all and Shanah Tovah!

BE A MENTCH - A STORY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Shanah Tovah · sent Thursday, 22 September 2022 · Shabbos 24 Sep 2022 · כ"ח אלול תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

BH, both Brian, and Renee continue to improve in their health, and also Mommy is recovering well BH from her small operation that she has had.

Wishing everyone a Healthy New Year BEH

Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchok whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah itself! See below what a special birthday you have Daniel! Wishing you a wonderful year and you should grow up to be a mentch!

Mazal tov for the wonderful successes we have had at our local Girls School and our Dental Office this week, where the government conducted rigorous inspections. Well done for all your hard work Mommy and Shmuly. Michayil el Chayil!

In relation to Rosh Hashanah and the Yohrtzeit tonight of our mother (Chanan, Reuven and I), I heard a powerful story which I would like to share. It was related by a Lubavitch shaliach in Gothenburg Sweden, Rabbi Namdar.

It is also the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother, and we wish him and his Family long life.

The first day of Creation of the world actually took place on the 25th of Elul

It is the Creation of MAN which took place on Rosh Hashanah 6 days later.

Without going into detail it is known that Hashem is recreating the world every day, but on Rosh Hashanah a brand new light comes down to the

world which has never been seen before, and this is related therefore, specifically to Man.

Rabbi Namdar took up this theme of the speciality of man (and woman) to discuss what it means to "BE A MENTCH" (a MAN). A mentch is not someone with only a big intellect in Torah, but he is someone who also prays, and is therefore obedient to a higher authority, and whose whole life, including his most insignificant of actions, is permeated with decency and good deeds.

And our dear mother Nechama bas Yisroel Tzvi Hirsh ah, whose yohrtzeit is tonight, wanted her boys to be MENTCHEN. We remain most grateful for her efforts. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Rabbi Namdar told the following amazing story in relation to this theme, which I will try to summarise.

On Shabbos at their Chabad House they invariably have lots of guests, and they have a tradition that each guest should give over a story, or a dvar Torah or a Jewish joke etc.

One guest was a woman from Uruguay. Uruguay supplies a lot of meat to the world and she told the story about a group of 43 Rabbi/shochtim who had convened there, relating to meat and shechitah. They were all staying together at one hotel. One evening, after they had returned to the hotel, the guard at the hotel mentioned that there was someone missing. The group were shocked to hear this but on closer examination they did find that one of the Rabbi's was actually not there, and they had not realized!

On returning to the slaughter house they found the Rabbi locked in one of the fridges and was not at all well. BH he was taken to hospital and recovered.

The obvious question was, how did the guard know that someone was missing?!

When asked, he replied, that mostly people took no notice of him, but this Rabbi went out of his way to greet him and make him feel good with a bit of conversation. When the Rabbis had come back that night he had been looking out for him, and therefore noticed that he was not there!

And what was the story of the Rabbi?

He said that when he was young he lived in Crown Heights, the same neighborhood where the Lubavitch Rebbe lived, and he used to observe the Rebbe walking from his home to Shul (770), which was about 2 blocks away, and he was amazed to see how the Rebbe would greet the black children playing in the street, and give a friendly word to local officers etc, which impressed him very much. The Rebbe who had such a high position, running a huge worldwide organization, and with so much responsibility and time pressures, still had time to go out of his way and recognize and appreciate the neighbours, even little children, who seemingly had no connection to him.

Through these observations this Rabbi decided to emulate what he had learnt from the Rebbe whenever he could get the opportunity, and this actually saved his life!

Part 3 of the story. That night when all the guests left the Chabad House, Rabbi Namdar was reflecting on the evening while looking at the new picture of the Rebbe in his Chabad House, and he decided that this story which he had heard, was not just another story, but was an actual message for himself.

And so he also made a decision to greet and befriend all his non Jewish neighbors and local police etc.

A few years later he was travelling to New York with his 8 year old son and they were carrying 500 small menorahs for free distribution for Chanukah in NY.

He had never been stopped by customs in the past, but this time they did stop him, and of course they did not believe his story. He was now going to

be set aside for interrogation and who knows what the outcome would be, maybe even imprisonment.

Suddenly one of the officers said to him 'Are these the same candles that you light every December at your institution in Gothenburg?' Rabbi Namdar was shocked, but on looking closer, he recognized the officer as having been one of his befriended neighbors!

And you are right to conclude that the story ended well!

Gut Shabbos, and wishing everyone a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a god, sweet and healthy New Year!

THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM

2023 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 7 September 2023 · Shabbos 9 Sep 2023 · כ"ג אלול תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday this week. Wishing you a wonderful year Freida, with success in the chinuch of your children, together with Mendel, and achievements in both gashmius and ruchnius, and with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is 2 days later. Wishing you a year of continued success in New York Chava and with much joy!

It is the Yohrtzeit of Mommy towards the end of the week. I plan to visit her kever then and speak about her next week BEH. Her neshamah should have an aliyah, and wishing long life to Chanan and Reuven (Ashley and Ravin)

Wishing long life also to Claude on the yohrtzeit of his mother. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva for receiving her Israeli Citizenship. Welcome to the first Israeli in our Family!

This week has also been the birthdays of 2 Giants of our People, the Baal Shem Tov and the Alte Rebbe, both born on the 18th of Elul, and so I thought to mention some points about their lives and some connections about them which came up in this weeks Sedra Nitzavim.

The Baal Shem Tov - From an article by Rabbi Menachem Posner in Chabad.org

A number of events are said to have occurred on the 18th of Elul in his life

He was born 18th Elul 1698.

By the time he was 5 years old he had lost both of his parents.

On his 16th birthday, Elija the Prophet appeared to him and described how much Hashem treasures the unsophisticated, sincere prayers of simple folk. This encouraged him to reach out to these people, who were largely disregarded by the scholarly elite.

On his 26th birthday he was visited by Achia Hashiloni the Prophet, who taught him many secrets of the Torah over the next 10 years.

On his 36th birthday he was told that the time had come to finally make his identity public, and let the world know about his electrifying teachings, and new approach to serving Hashem.

He founded the Chassidic Movement and re-introduced the mystical dimension of Torah.

The Alte Rebbe

The Alte Rebbe was born on 18th Elul 1745

He was a follower of the Baal Shem Tov and his successor the Magid of Mezeritch, and started the Chabad Branch of Chassidism.

In this weeks Sedra Nitzavim, verses 30:11 to 30:14 are about Hashem saying that the Commandments that He is commanding us are not concealed or far away. They are not in the heavens, nor across the sea. BUT THIS THING IS VERY NEAR TO YOU, FOR YOU TO CARRY OUT WITH YOUR MOUTH AND WITH YOUR HEART TO DO IT.

In his famous book The Tanya, he spent 53 chapters explaining this verse!!

He also authored the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, and many other works.

A small snippet from the Alte Rebbe appeared in this weeks Hayom Yom of 19th Elul, interpreting the opening verse of Sedra Nitzavim as follows:

"You are standing today....even from your woodchoppers (chotev eitzecha) to your water drawers (shoev meymecha)...."

The Hebrew word for advice is eitza, with same root as eitz relating to wood ie we should work on 'chopping out' the many thoughts in the heart of man.

The Hebrew word mayim - water which makes enjoyable things grow, also refers to appetites for pleasures ie we must control these appetites.

Wishing everyone a gut Shabbos and a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a good and sweet New Year.

Nitzavim, Vayeilech ↑ Nitzavim, Vayeilech · Contents · By date נצבים - וילך

SHANAH TOVAH

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 26 September 2024 · Shabbos 28 Sep 2024 · כ"ה אלול תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a year of much happiness, Freida, with nachas from children, and achievements in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Chava on her birthday next week. Wishing you also a year of much happiness Chava, and continued success with everything that you do! Thank you for all the work that you put in for us!

Mazal Tov to Daniel for his birthday on the first night of Rosh Hashanah. What a beautiful day to have a birthday Daniel, and wishing you a beautiful year.

We have the Yohrtzeit of my mother on Monday, and I will be going to visit her at the Beis Olam on Sunday. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah, and wishing all the Family long life.

It is also the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah, and long life for her Family.

It's been a week of re-uniting with more members of our Family BH, and I was just thinking that my mother ah would be so happy about this.

Janine Milner is in London visiting her daughter Mel and David Glickman and their children who live in Golders Green.

And Janine is the daughter of Uncle Henry ah, who was the brother of my mother ah.

It was so nice to spend time with you and your Family Janine, and to bring back memories of our young years in SA in Linksfield, Houghton, Uncle Henry ah, Aunty Maisie ah etc etc.

Welcome to our Family group Janine!! And thank you Mel and David for hosting us in your beautiful home, and Shmuly's Family, who also joined in the re-union.

Hopefully we will have a Family Tree ready next week to help introduce you, Janine, to all the members of our Family Group - see below

This was the next highlight of the week in relation to Family. Kevin (Marks) came forward following my request for a Family Tree, linking all the members of our Group. He has already produced a draft XL spread-sheet. This is so great Kevin, and we thank you with much gratitude! Hopefully we can attach the first version onto next week's email, and hopefully it will continue to develop with time BEH! Very exciting! Many thanks Kevin!

There were some interesting points about ROSH HASHANAH linked to this week's Sedra Nitzavim- Vayelech, in Hayom Yom, as follows (from the Baal Shem Tov):

- Tishrei is the seventh month of the year, even though it is the beginning or Head of the year. Ie years are counted from Tishrei, but months are counted from Nissan. So Nissan is the first month of the Jewish year.
- This week's Torah portion (which always falls on the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah) begins with the words "Atem nitzavim hayom.." - You are standing firm today

"Today" alludes to Rosh Hashanah.

"Standing firm" - Torah tells us that we will be vindicated (cleared) in judgement.

- The Hebrew word shevii can mean "7" as in the seventh month (above), but it can also mean "satiated". Hashem blesses this month on the Shabbos

before Rosh Hashanah. (this coming Shabbos). The whole month becomes satiated. And this then satiates the entire Jewish People with abundant good for the entire Year!

Gut Shabbos and wishing everyone a Kesivah Vechasimah Tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year!

INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 18 September 2025 · Shabbos 20 Sep 2025 · כ״ז אלול תשפ״ה

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

We wish enjoyable flights to all who are travelling for the Yomtovim!

Mazal Tov to Chava, whose birthday is tonight, and we just celebrated with her this evening BH. It was beautiful, and we all wish you a beautiful year Chava in both gashmius and ruchnius!

Mazal Tov to Daniel whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah itself (on the first night). What a great day to have a birthday Daniel, and wishing you a very special year.

Last but not least is the upcoming yohrtzeit of our dear mother on Shabbos. Through all her suffering just before her passing, she held on until her 3 boys were all by her side. Her last words were, as I remember, "It is Erev Rosh Hashanah." She wated there to be the unity amongst her children, and she was tuned into spirituality. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah. We all miss you very much!

Recently in our Tanya learning (Igeres HaKodesh 14), the Alte Rebbe gave a very beautiful and deep explanation about Eretz HaKodesh (The Holy Land) and Rosh Hashanah which I would like to share, with Rosh Hashanah coming up in a few days.

I will try and summarise, and keep it as simple as possible.

There is the concept of Eretz Haelyonah, the Higher Land (which is the heavenly model of the terrestrial Holy Land), and THE LAND OF ISRAEL itself, which truly corresponds to its Heavenly counterpart

From the verse "G-d by Chochma established the earth " it has been derived that Chochma effuses it's creative light upon the Higher Land and from there to The Land of Israel.

Hashem and His Chochmah are one in an absolute unity, which is called the (INFINITE LIGHT) - OR EIN SOF.

This radiation to both the lands is renewed annually

And every year on ROSH HASHANAH, there descends and radiates A NEW LIGHT which has never yet shone to the Higher Land

On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, there is a withdrawal of the light of the past year when the moon is covered.

Afterwards, by means of the sounding of the shofar, and by means of the prayers, a new and superior light is elicited, a light of a yet higher rank in the sphere of the supreme Chochma, to radiate to the Higher Land, and to all the higher and lower worlds which receive their vitality from it...(I presume that the rest of the world receives this light thereafter)

The manifestation of this light, however depends on the actions of us below, on our merits and our teshuvah (returning to Hashem) during the 10 Days of Teshuvah between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

In this respect the Alte Rebbe hints about the power of giving charity, and especially charity to the Land of Israel.

Gut Shabbos, and wishing all a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year, with much light.

HIDDEN JOY

2026 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 September 2026 · Shabbos 5 Sep 2026 · כ״ג אלול תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday next week. Wishing you much continued growth Freida, with all your activities both in gashmius and ruchnius and with much joy for you and your whole Family BEH!

Mazal Tov to Chava on her upcoming birthday a few days later. Nice to have you back home Chava, and wishing you a successful year, with all your wishes fulfilled both in gashmius and ruchnius, and with much joy BEH!

Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman who has a birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a great year Leslie in good health and happiness!

At the end of the week, erev Rosh Hashanah, is the birthday of Gavin Milner. Wishing you a year of much success Gavin BEH!

We wish Batshevah much success in her move towards a new career and a new place. Meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal letovah!

Mazal Tov to Ariel who received his IDF uniform this week. We are all so proud of you Ariel!

At the end of next week is my mother ah yohrtzeit. We wish her neshamah to have an aliyah. I plan to visit her at the Bet Olam next week, and will give over to her news from the whole Family BEH. It has been 28 years.

On the same day is the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother ah, and we wish her neshamah to have an aliyah.

This week I came across 2 teachings which I found interesting, because I had never understood them as being connected to JOY, as follows:

Teshuvah (As heard in this week's Living Torah from Jem Programme 1147)

The Rebbe explained that even although the initial stage of Teshuvah has to be based on recognising the we have misbehaved in some way, and that we resolve to improve, the process has to be done with a GREAT JOY, and it also brings about a great joy, for the following reasons:

· Doing Teshuvah is one of the 613 Mitzvos, and all Mitzvos, including Teshuvah, should be done with joy

· The process of Teshuvah cleanses and frees us of many burdens. In addition to correcting specific faults it also corrects more general deficiencies, and raises us to a higher level.

· The difficulties that we have experienced in life, actually act as a catapult to bring us much closer to Hashem. So the difficulties themselves convert to, and cause this great joy! As it says, that a complete Tzadik cannot reach the heights attained by a sinner who does Teshuvah. This knowledge can only allow us to do the Mitzvah of Teshuvah with an even greater joy.

Shofar (Maamar from 29th Elul 1979)

This year Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbos and we don't blow the shofar on Shabbos as decided by our Sages.

One of the points mentioned in the maamar was as follows:

The Hebrew word for shofar has its root in *shefer * which means pleasure, and our blowing the shofar on Rosh Hashanah arouses this *taanug* (pleasure) from its core source Above.

Every week, Shabbos expresses this *taanug.*

And therefore on a Rosh Hashanah when we can't blow the shofar to elicit the downpouring from Above, Shabbos itself compensates, drawing down the *taanug.*

We therefore see again how the Awe of Rosh Hashanah and the blowing of the shofar, also has a link to JOY!

And may the memory of my mother ah also be a source of JOY to all of us.

Gut Shabbos and wishing all a kesivah vechasimah tovah for a Good and Sweet New Year

וילך

Vayeilech

Devarim 31:1 · parsha 9 of 11 in Devarim · 52 of 54 in the Torah
6 letters

2016 / 5777 — NEVER TOO LATE - DROP BY DROP - A REFLECTION 1297
2018 / 5779 — TO HIM WHO HAS COMPASSION ON HIS PEOPLE 1300
2019 / 5780 — THE JOY OF MOVEMENT 1302
2021 / 5782 — SEEING VIRTUE 1304
2022 / 5783 — PATHS OF TESHUVAH 1306
2025 / 5786 — RECOVERY AND CORRECTION 1308

2017: read together with Nitzavim, see PURITY

2020: read together with Nitzavim, see JOYOUS SERVICE

2023: read together with Nitzavim, see THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM

2024: read together with Nitzavim, see SHANAH TOVAH

2026: read together with Nitzavim, see HIDDEN JOY

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

NEVER TOO LATE - DROP BY DROP - A REFLECTION

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 6 October 2016 · Shabbos 8 Oct 2016 · ו׳ תשרי תשע״ז

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had a Good Rosh Hashana.

Many members of our Family are also doing lots of travelling to be with different members of Family and extended Family and we wish all enjoyable flights.

Something came to my notice last week, and I thought that it was important , and wanted to share it.

This time of year, before, during and after Rosh Hashana. Is a time for REFLECTION.

A Reflection of looking back at the past year, and thereafter making resolutions for the New Year.

I find it interesting how appropriate this is for this time of the year, it being Autumn, when the energies of Creation (at least in the Northern Hemisphere) are quietening down as we head into the quiet of Winter.

It is a custom in Lubavitch to look back at the 12 months of the previous Year in the last 12 days of Elul in preparation for Rosh Hashana

I have over the years grown a system whereby I think through each week on Saturday night, Motzei Shabbos, and I write a few notes about this.

At the end of the year I gather all these 50 + notes and arrange them in month order.

This gives me the opportunity to look back at the year more clearly.

But what struck me last week was 3 things:

1. The day when I went to visit the Beis Olam last week, I had a few months to catch up, and I decided to reflect on these months while driving there.

And I could not remember anything what happened in this period of the year, no matter how hard I tried. It was so vague and hazy.

This made me realise how important my notes were - all those small weekly acts, when they are done in a consistent and regular manner.

Over the year this added up to give me a powerful view of the whole year, which would have been lost without those efforts.

2. Everyone knows that when a tree grows, it lays down a new circle each year

And so as we consider each circle of our own year, we can come to an accurate summary of our behaviour to label that circle, and to make the appropriate resolution on how best to advance in the New Year.

We could also label each circle which gives us an even longer term look at how we are progressing over many years.

And the beauty is, THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE. We can start now.

3. This also showed me the power of a Project

One can choose any long term Project of ones fancy, and if one will dedicate a small period to it each day, or each week, or each month, then we will be amazed at how big it grows each Year.

One can choose the amount of time that is comfortable, and then discipline oneself to move forward DROP BY DROP (this was what Rabi Akiva learnt when he saw water dripping on a stone in a cave, and the soft drop of water was making a hole in the hard stone over a long period. This encouraged him to start learning Torah from 'scratch' at the age of 40, to become one of the greatest of our Torah giants, and returning home with 24000 students)

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Kippur

Rambam 5 Minutes per week is Sefer Tahara - Book 10, Hilchos Shear Avot Hatuma Chaps 9-15, Page 22 in Short Summary

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-Hub4PlNwQtRe35VHCtu6S-vuJcLSXD8bxKyb6MLX -y4/edit

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

TO HIM WHO HAS COMPASSION ON HIS PEOPLE

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 September 2018 · Shabbos 15 Sep 2018 · ו׳ תשרי תשע״ט

Dear Family,

I hope everyone one is well and had a meaningful Rosh Hashanah

Mazal Tov to Joy Comaroff (ne Davidoff). So happy to have you with us on our group Joy. Wishing you a happy year in all areas.

Also to mention that Joys husband Claude also had a yortzeit last week for his mother on the same day as Mommy's Yohrtzeit. We wish you long life Claude.

Mazal Tov to Talya on her birthday which is also next week. Wishing you a wonderful year with much good Talya.

It feels to me to share something from the heart this week, rather than the head.

So I am attaching a heartfelt song to do with Rosh Hashanah and the days leading up to Yom Kippur, which I heard this week.

I am also attaching the translation of this beautiful Prayer.

With wishes that our hearts should open up to our Creator during the 10 days of Teshuvah.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrY-MXJwCp0

Gut Shabbos to all

Attached to this letter

Translation of the Rosh Hashanah prayer (scan)

קהלות Holy congregations sanctify aloud: The Lord is King.
Myriads upon myriads [of angels] sing aloud: The Lord was King.
Glittering, flaming angels repeat aloud: The Lord shall be King.
יהוה The Lord is King, the Lord was King, the Lord shall be King forever and ever.

תומכי Those who are sustained by the praiseworthy One constantly say aloud: The Lord is King.
Those who strongly proclaim Your glory say aloud with a perfect heart: The Lord was King.
Those who are perfect in the Torah recount aloud: The Lord shall be King.
יהוה The Lord is King, the Lord was King, the Lord shall be King forever and ever.
ובכן *Chazzan and Cong:* And thus shall all crown You as King.

לאל To the Almighty who arranges judgment;
To Him who probes hearts on the day of judgment; to Him who reveals hidden things in judgment;
To Him who speaks justly on the day of judgment; to Him who analyzes attitudes in judgment;
To Him who is benevolent and acts kindly on the day of judgment; to Him who remembers His covenant in judgment
To Him who has pity on His creatures on the day of judgment; to Him who purifies those who trust in Him in judgment;
To Him who knows [hidden] thoughts on the day of judgment; to Him who suppresses His wrath in judgment;
To Him who garbs Himself in righteousness on the day of judgment; to Him who forgives iniquities in judgment;
To Him who is awesome yet accepts praises on the day of judgment; to Him who pardons those borne by Him, in judgment;
To Him who answers those who call upon Him on the day of judgment; to Him who performs His acts of mercy in judgment;
To Him who beholds what is concealed, on the day of judgment; to Him who acquires His servants in judgment;
To Him who has compassion on His people on the day of judgment; to Him who watches over those who love Him in judgment;
To Him who supports His sincere ones on the day of judgment.
The Ark is closed.

For the Second Day of Rosh HaShanah

כל קדושי All the holy angels of the holy One sanctify Him with *kedushah:* The Lord is King.
All the assembled congregations adorn Him with truth: The Lord was King.
Both the former and the latter extol Him with delight: The Lord shall be King.
יהוה The Lord is King, the Lord was King, the Lord shall be King forever and ever.

כל חשמלי All the sparkling angels, as they are newly created each morning, declare: The Lord is King.
All the lofty angels in a gentle whisper proclaim: The Lord was King.
They all affirm with threefold sanctification: The Lord shall be King.
יהוה The Lord is King, the Lord was King, the Lord shall be King forever and ever.
The Ark is closed.

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

THE JOY OF MOVEMENT

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 3 October 2019 · Shabbos 5 Oct 2019 · ו׳ תשרי תש״פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had a good Rosh Hashanah.

It should be a gmar chasimah tovah for everyone.

This week's Sedra is Vayelech - He TRAVELLED (or WENT)

This term implies MOVEMENT.

Physical movement is through steps, and these steps could have many varieties of style and character.

When Bnei Yisrael used to go up to Yerushalayim for the Shalosh Regalim (Pilgrimage Festivals) it is said that they would be accompanied by thousands of angels. These angels were created at each STEP that was taken on the journey, and the thousands of people and myriads of angels, arrived in Yerushalayim with GREAT JOY.

I don't know exactly why, but I often associate the process and experience of tefillah (prayer) with movement.

With a journey, we reach our destination taking one step at a time and it is these steps which carry us.

In truth we could just relax and let the steps transport us.

And with tefillah, there are the WORDS.

The words are the steps which carry us through the journey of the prayer.

Even if one does not know the meaning of the words, they are holy and pure and transport, and we can just enjoy this movement and good company.

And the steps should be sure by saying the words properly.

Yom Kippur is coming up at the end of these 10 days of Teshuvah between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and the length of davening on Yom Kippur is like a 'marathon'.

This involves many hours of looking in at the words of the prayers, which is a challenge.

But I know that our Family is not afraid of a challenge!

The pace and style of the movement can be varied and there can also be singing.

And on the holiest day of the year, these prayers can be achieved, and also accomplished WITH GREAT AWE AND JOY.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

SEEING VIRTUE

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 9 September 2021 · Shabbos 11 Sep 2021 · ה' תשרי תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and had a meaningful Rosh Hashanah.

Mazal Tov to Joy on your birthday this coming week. Wishing you a healthy and happy year Joy, together with Claude. We hope all is well in SA!

We are now in the 10 day period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur called aseres yemei teshuvah – The 10 days of teshuvah, and 2 interesting related items came to my attention, which I wanted to share.

The first was an excerpt from a sicha of the Rebbe (Sefer Hasichot 5705, p92) discussing how to deal with faults.

We are naturally disposed to overlook our own faults.

Or, if we do acknowledge them, we usually try to rationalize and justify them to ourselves.

So we see in this week's Sedra Vayelech, that in order to show us our own faults, Hashem shows them to us in other people.

This is seen in V31:17 – (Hashem tells Moshe that the Jews wil say, during their misfortunes) "Is it not because our G-d is no longer amongst us that these evils have befallen us?"

And explained as follows – Because I am not spiritually mature enough to be sensitive to my own short-comings ("Because my G-d is not within me"), "this evil has befallen me" ie I have been forced to see my own vices reflected in my fellow Jew.

Therefore rather than focusing on other's faults, we should try to focus on their virtues, and we should excuse their short-comings.

Not only should we focus on their virtues in our mind but we should also praise them, and praise them to other people.

This love of our fellow Jew leads us to love of G-d (and fosters mutual love and respect)

The second was a slogan going around as a forward, which really is a joke, but when one thinks about it deeper, it very much reflects the above concept, ie are we prepared to learn.

The slogan said "Real Men Marry Teachers" 😊

Wishing everyone a meaningful continuation from Rosh Hashanah and a Gut Shabbos.

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

PATHS OF TESHUVAH

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 29 September 2022 · Shabbos 1 Oct 2022 · ו' תשרי תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

Renee is back home from hospital but is in a critical condition, and we need to continue saying Tehillim for her - Rivkah bat Sarah Zlata

We are now in the Aseres yemei TESHUVAH - The ten days of Teshuvah between, and including, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

I saw an interesting analysis of Teshuvah in the current Hayom Yom Teachings, where the Tsadik Reb Meshullam Zusya of Hanipoli, a disciple of The Magid of Mezeritch, divided out 5 components of Teshuvah by using the 5 letters of the word Teshuva.

For each letter, he chose a pasuk starting with that letter, which describes 5 different PATHS OF TESHUVAH

The one that attracted me which I wanted to share was the vav of TeshUvah, and the pasuk that he used was - Veahavtah lereacha kamocha - Love your fellow as yourself.

The Rebbe Rashab explains (in summary) how this third approach is linked to Teshuvah:

Fulfilling this mitzvah is a medium for attaining the level of Loving Hashem.

It also underlies the principle, that 'anyone, with whom his fellowmen are pleased, Hashem is pleased with him.'

To love your fellow as yourself is the path of Teshuvah that comes from a good heart.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gmar Chasima Tovah for a Good New Year!

Vayeilech ↑ Vayeilech · Contents · By date וילך

RECOVERY AND CORRECTION

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 25 September 2025 · Shabbos 27 Sep 2025 · ה' תשרי תשפ"ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and have had an inspiring Rosh Hashanah!

Refuah shleimah to Yechezkiel ben Ester.

We have 2 important Yohrtzeits coming up this week.

The first is Renee this coming Sunday. This is also the Yohrtzeit of the Rebbes mother and is a well known date in the Chassidic calendar. I always feel so impressed that Renes yohrtzeit is on the same day. Renee was always so conscious of Family and extended Family, and we also remember how well she looked after Aunty Lottie. She is much missed by all of us. We wish all of her Family, and Roy, long life. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

One day later, on Monday, is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Maika, which I only found out about recently through Selma. I believe that he passed away on Friday, and Kol Nidrei was that Sunday night.

I am also wondering if anyone says kadish for him. Please let me know. Wishing all his Family long life and also wishing his neshamah an Aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin on his graduation from High School. Wishing you much continued success for your future Ariel!

At the end of this week's Parshah Vayelech, Mosheh makes a 'disturbing' comment about our Nation at the conclusion of his leadership and life, as follows:

"For I know your rebelliousness and stiff neck. Even while I am yet alive with you today you have been rebellious against G-d. How much more so will it be after my death?" (31:27)

Could it be that Moses is speaking with pessimism and despair on the last day of his 40 years of leadership!?

In an article that I saw this week by Rabbi Steinsaltz, he gives the explaination.

Really Mosheh's words, far from being despairing and pessimistic, were having the intention to strengthen the Jewish People – ie instead of providing them with a false comfort, he was giving them the strength to endure reality

Torah does not encourage us to live in a sheltered world of naïve optimism.

Instead it begins with the acknowledgement that "the inclination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21). It prepares us for the inevitable descents, among the ascents of life.

And this is connected to the Command we find in this weeks Sedra, and also in Psalm 27 which we say every day throughout Elul and part of Tishrei ie "BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE" – "Chazak veematz"

It is said by our Sages that the righteous fall 7 times, and keep rising up, while the wicked ....(Prov 24:16)

The difference lies not in avoiding failure, BUT IN THE CAPACITY TO RECOVER, OVERCOME AND CORRECT. We possess the sacred ability, and have been given free choice, to rise again!

Gut Shabbos and gmar chasima tovah to all. Wishing everyone an inspiring Yom Kippur

האזינו

Haazinu

Devarim 32:1 · parsha 10 of 11 in Devarim · 53 of 54 in the Torah
11 letters

2016 / 5777 — A ONE WORD INSTRUCTION BOOK 1311
2018 / 5779 — JOY 1313
2019 / 5780 — JOY OF SUKKOS 1315
2020 / 5781 — LOVE OF AWE 1318
2020 / 5781 — TEHILLIM 1320
2021 / 5782 — NEW RESOLUTIONS 1322
2022 / 5783 — BEARING OPPOSITES 1323
2023 / 5784 — RETURN 1325
2024 / 5785 — OUR FAMILY TREE! 1326
2025 / 5786 — JOY AND DANCING 1328
2026 / 5787 — DISCOVERING FAMILY 1330

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

A ONE WORD INSTRUCTION BOOK

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 13 October 2016 · Shabbos 15 Oct 2016 · י"ג תשרי תשע"ז

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well and had an uplifting Yom Kippur.

Welcome home Rivky with Dovi, Shlomo, Mendel and Nechama, and Mendel and Freida.

BH the house is filling up again, and we are also looking forward to the arrivals soon of Shmuel and then Avi and Penina IYrH.

We also look forward to seeing Pesach and Family and Shmuly and Family on Yom Tov.

And obviously all those who are already at home!

We are now heading into the Yom Tov of Sukkos, and part of Sukkos is that we have to live in a Sukkah (a temporary hut) for 7 days.

And so how do we build this Sukkah?

It is interesting to see how the Hebrew word SUKKAH itself gives us a very good idea and instruction.

The Halacha is that the Sukkah has to have a minimum of 2.5 walls.

It can also have 3 or 4 walls

סכה

If you look at the Hebrew letter you will see

1. The heh has 2.5 walls.

2. The chof has 3 walls

3. The samech has 4 walls

Ie ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO BUILD THE SUKKAH IN ONE WORD!

And then the schach goes on top.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a very Happy Sukkos

Reminder to look at Rambam 5 minutes per week

The weekly Chaps can be found in the Learning section of Chabad .org

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

JOY

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 20 September 2018 · Shabbos 22 Sep 2018 · י"ג תשרי תשע"ט

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and had a special Yom Kippur.

Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah whose sister Esther had a daughter last week. Wishing you and Shmuly many simchos Devorah Leah.

Mazal Tov to Janine and Michal Milner who became grand-parents BH. Their son Gavin had a son. Wishing you much nachas from them and all your children. Mazal Tov Gavin! And we are expecting Mel and David to join us for one of the meals on Sukkos BEH!

Sukkos is called zman simchasenu - the time of our JOY, and there are many facets of joy through Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

But this week I would like to focus on the SUKKAH.

I remember once my mashpiah (mentor) said to me that neither JOY nor MIKVEH are direct mitzvos. Ie Torah does not command us to be happy, nor to use the mikveh. But by not keeping these, they have the capability of causing more damage chas veshalom, than doing an aveirah.

When there is a happy event, it is natural and easy to be happy.

But how do we stay happy for the rest of the week?

We are all constantly looking for ways to find happiness.

One way is to express gratitude.

And the way we express our gratitude to Hashem for all the kindnesses He showers on us each day, is by performing as many of His mitzvos, which we have been commanded by Him through Torah, each day.

And the mitzvah of Sukkah is such an easy one.

Every second that we sit inside the sukkah, no matter what we are doing there, is counted as mitzvah!- every second continuously, even if we are 'doing nothing'!

Providing for us opportunity for continual expression of gratitude and REAL JOY.

In the book Kesser Shem Tov, the Baal Shem Tov says the following:

'When one immerses in a MIKVEH, one is entirely enveloped in its spiritually purifying waters.

When one sits in a SUKKAH during the festival of Sukkos, one is entirely surrounded by the sukkah walls and enveloped in its spiritually charged atmosphere.

Immersing in a mikveh and sitting in a sukkah are spiritually related activities - they make us more receptive to spirituality.

And they are similar in the Divine lights that they draw down upon us.'

Inner happiness can be felt alone, but with exuberant happiness, one wants to share this joy with others. And our Rabbis stressed the importance of sharing the joy of the Festivals by inviting guests.

The Zohar teaches us that on Sukkos we have additional guests in our sukkah, who are not visible, from the spiritual realm - the 7 ushpizin.

On the first night these are Avraham Avinu [and The Baal Shem Tov (added by the Frierdike Rebbe)]!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a wonderful Sukkos

JOY OF SUKKOS

2019 / 5780

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 10 October 2019 · Shabbos 12 Oct 2019 · י"ג תשרי תש"פ

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

I would like to mention here that Joy Comaroff had a car accident, and is in need of our Tehillim. Her Hebrew name is Josepha bas Bracha.

Wishing you a speedy recovery Joy!

I also hope that everyone had an inspiring Yom Kippur.

Mazal Tov to those who got through the 'marathon' davening successfully.

As with everything, to succeed one needs training and practice, and we have the opportunity for this 3 times a day (at least) at Shacharis, Minchah and Maariv, every day of the year!

We now move on to Sukkos which is Zman Simchaseinu - The FESTIVAL OF OUR JOY

All the Yom Tovim are times of joy, but joy is particularly emphasised for Sukkos, where we move out to the Sukkah, gather our lulavim and esrogim etc

The first 10 days of Tishrei from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, is a period of earnestness, and this now translates into the JOY OF SUKKOS.

In a sicha in Book 2 of Likutei Sichos, the Rebbe explains this connection as follows:

Rosh Hashanah connection to Schach (which covers the Sukkah)

Rosh Hashanah

We blow 100 notes on the shofar

60 tekios

20 shevarim

20 truos

Sukkos

The Hebrew word for schach has 3 letters:

The samech of schach (first letter), has the numerical value of 60.

The second letter of schach is chof, which has the numerical value of 20

The third letter is end of chof, which again has the numerical value of 20

Clouds of Yom Kippur and Sukkos

Yom Kippur

On Yom Kippur the Kohen Gadol created clouds of incence by burning it on the Golden Altar

Sukkos.

The covering of the Sukkah is a reminder of the 'Clouds of Glory' which protected Bnei Yisrael in the dessert.

The 7 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and the 7 days of Sukkos

Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur

Each of these 7 days does teshuvah for all the year eg Sunday will do teshuvah for all the Sundays of the year, Monday for all the Mondays, etc

Sukkos

Now those 7 days of teshuvah translate into JOY in each of the 7 days of Sukkos

AND FROM HERE, SUKKOS SPREADS THIS JOY TO ALL THE DAYS OF THE UPCOMING YEAR.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all with MUCH JOY.

LOVE OF AWE

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 17 September 2020 · Shabbos 19 Sep 2020 · א' תשרי תשפ"א

Shabbos 2020-09-19 is Rosh Hashanah (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Shabbos 19 Sep 2020 was Rosh Hashanah; the text discusses "this week's Sedra Haazinu", so it is also listed under Haazinu.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchak for his birthday on Rosh Hashanah, the same day as the birth of Adam HaRishon! Wishing you much success with school Daniel, and with much happiness.

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff who has a birthday tomorrow. Wishing you a year of much opportunity Talya.

This week, the AWE of Hashem kept coming up, and so I would like to share these.

Tanya (Letter 18 Igere Hakodesh)

In yesterdays Tanya we learned that we have to labour in this world with much effort to achieve an AWE of G-d.

This is like searching for a hidden treasure, which needs great and intense exertion.

It is also described as 'It is the way of a man to search for the woman.' This means that the Love of G-d searches for the Awe of G-d, and dwells with it.

The result achieved by searching and working on this awe, is reaching a level of LOVE called Ahavah Betaanugim, meaning one delights wonderously in

G-d with a great and immense joy, which is as delightful as wonderously sweet delights, and is a foretaste of The-World-To-Come

Gemorra Shabbos (P 30a and 30b)

This described AWE in a parable as follows:

A person said to his emissary to take his wheat to the attic for storage.

Afterwards he enquired from the emissary if he had added homton into the storage? (which is a preservative to keep away the worms)

When the emissary replied in the negative, he said, 'It would have been preferable that you would not have brought the wheat to storage (of what use is worm-infested wheat?)

Likewise all our toil in Torah and Mitzvot, is only valuable if we add AWE of G-d to the mixture

Chumash

In this week's Sedra Haazinu one of the points mentioned in (V18 and onwards) was 'You ignored the Rock who bore you, and forgot G-d Who brought you out of the womb....Are not all of their actions stored away with Me, secured in My storehouses!?'

Wishing all a delightful Shabbos and a Sweet and Happy New Year with good health

TEHILLIM

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Kippur · sent Thursday, 24 September 2020 · Shabbos 26 Sep 2020 · ח' תשרי תשפ"א

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had a good Rosh Hashanah.

Gmar chasimah tovah to all.

The saying of extra Tehilim (Psalms) is very much emphasized throughout Elul, and especially on Rosh Hashanah, the 10 days, now, before Yom Kippur, and on Yom Kippur itself

Anyone can do this even without any understanding.

The Rebbe explains that even when Tehilim are said without much attention and at a quick pace, this nevertheless HAS A TREMENDOUS EFFECT.

It is said (in the introduction to saying of Tehilim), that when we say Tehilim it is considered as if it is coming direct out of the mouth of Dovid Hamelech himself (who composed the psalms) to Hashem.

There was the story of the wife of the Tzemach Tzedek (Rebetzen Chayah Mushkah), who would recite a lot of Tehilim, but with many mistakes.

When one of her sons pointed this out to her, she asked her husband whether she should perhaps stop saying Tehillim.

The Rebbe advised her to continue.

And then he called his son and admonished him, saying that it was her Tehilim that had protected him in the Rabbinic Conference in Petersburg in 1843.

On another occasion, when a libel was plotted against him, the Tzemach Tzedek asked his wife to recite Tehilim for him - Sichos Kodesh Part 2 1979

On a personal note, besides all the damage that the pandemic has done, it has also stirred up hidden powers and created so many acts of kindness.

I am part of an organization for Jewish dentists called Alpha Omega. It is made up of mostly secular dentists.

Yet the organization set up a Whats App group to say DAILY TEHILLIM for colleagues and their families who were ill, many of them severely, from the virus.

2 groups of 30 dentists volunteered, because the Book of Tehillim is divided up into 30 days of about 5 psalms per day.

So each week we are allocated our day, which we repeat for each day of the week

This means that every day the whole Book of Psalms is shared by the 30 dentists. And there are 2 groups.

It has been running now for 22 weeks.

We have had so many grateful thanks from families, and seen many videos of people returning home from hospital BH.

Our simple prayers can be very powerful. Besides helping others, we become connected.

Wishing all a Gut Shabbos and a Holy Yom Kippur, where we are all sealed for a Good and Sweet Year

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

NEW RESOLUTIONS

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos · sent Thursday, 16 September 2021 · Shabbos 18 Sep 2021 · י"ב תשרי תשפ"ב

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and has had a meaningful Yom Kippur

Mazal Tov to Talya who has a birthday on Shabbos. Wishing you a wonderful year Talya. I hope all is going well - we haven't seen you all in a while!

I have been learning Amud Yomi (0ne page of Gemorra per day), with a group and we are now learning Brochos.

I saw something interesting on p7a which has some connection to Yom Kippur and Teshuvah.

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei : A single regret in one's heart is preferable to many lashes.

Rabbi Steinsaltz notes:

"With this expression the Sages display a profound understanding of the essence of education.

One does not learn a lesson by having it beaten into him.

Rather one learns when one is approached in a sensitive manner.

Genuine awe of G-d does not come through fear, but through profound love.

This method of teaching, which is widely accepted in the contemporary world, has its roots in the prophetic statements of the Sages (Ein Ayah)."

And on Yom Kippur we make new resolutions.

Gut Shabbos and Shanah Tovah to all

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

BEARING OPPOSITES

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 6 October 2022 · Shabbos 8 Oct 2022 · י"ג תשרי תשפ"ג

Dear Family,

I would like to dedicate this week's Dvar Torah to Renee ah who passed away this last Shabbos on vav Tishrei. She often mentioned to me how she used to enjoy our weekly Dvar Torah and news of the Family. We would like to wish long life to all her Family - Roy, Brian, Sidney and Adam who are on our group, and her children and their Families who I have now included, Jody, Sheli, and Gavin. HaMakom yenachem eschem besoch shear avalei Tzion bi-Yerushalayim.

As I am now travelling, I apologise if I am omitting any Mazal Tovs this week. But there are 2 Barmitzvos. Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy who is celebrating his Barmitzvah in Yerushalayim. This should be the start of many great things in your life Mendel in both gashmius and ruchnius. And with much joy. Mazal Tov to Gavriel who started putting on tefillin last week. Wishing you also to move michayil el chayil Gavriel with joy.

Renee was niftar on vav Tishrei which is also the day of the passing of the Rebbe's mother Rebetzin Chana and it was on Shabbos. This is a famous date on our calendar..

When thinking about this email I was trying find a way to express my combined feeling of sadness and joy. We are moving now from Yom Kippur , a time of awe, to Sukkot which is a time of joy, and how do we reconcile this with the passing of someone dear to us? And I came across a brilliant answer, based on a talk of the Rebbe, where this paradox is addressed.

Haazinu is a poem where Hashem asks us to listen to His words. He asks us to learn from history and warns us of the consequences of violating the terms of his covenant. He finally reminds us of the purpose of all of our troubles through history, to bring us to our ultimate goal, the final Redemption.

But the question is that Haazinu is a poem, and just a few sedras before this, we already had a full admonition? So how does a poem add to this? And every Shabbat in the Temple one sixth of Haazinu was sung by the Leviim at Musaf. And it is expressly forbidden to be sad on Shabbat?

Therefore the purpose of the poem is not just to review the contractual terms of our contract , but as Mosheh says immediately after the poem 'Pay close attention to all of the words that I testify to you today.' We are being asked to consider all these things and draw the proper conclusions. This poem, where Hashem takes our commitment to Him seriously, and that our behaviour can determine the course of history, are meant to infuse our lives and our relationship with Hashem, with enthusiasm, focus, and yes, even joy!

The same applies to our own personal lives with all its challenges and difficulties, leading to our eventual maturation, fully devoted to our Divine mission.

But more than this, the fact that Haazinu is a poem of praise, teaches us that the highest form of returning to Hashem (Teshuvah), is the return motivated by joy, and performed with joy, focused optimistically on the happy ending awaiting us at the conclusion of the drama we are all living!

Wishing Renee's neshamah an Aliyah, and that we will soon reunite with all our departed ones with the coming of Mashiach.

Gut Shabbos to all and a Gut Yom Tov!

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

RETURN

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 21 September 2023 · Shabbos 23 Sep 2023 · ח' תשרי תשפ"ד

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

We are now in the 10 days of TESHUVAH between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. (The Hebrew word for teshuvah means RETURN. Ie finding our way back to the land of our soul, which naturally wants to fulfil Hashem's commandments)

And as we head towards Yom Kippur, we have been hearing so many facets on the meaning of Teshuvah and how to do it practically.

One of these (a beautiful vort), came up in today's Hayom Yom:

"Veahavta lereechah kamocha - Love your fellow as yourself.

The Alte Rebbe taught that this love is an instrument, to "Love the Eternal your G-d"

This is explained by the statement "Whoever is pleasing to man, is pleasing to G-d." - Pirkei Avot 3:10

This SERVICE OF TESHUVAH stems from a GOOD HEART."

Wishing everyone a Gmar Chasima Tovah for a Good, Sweet and Healthy Year, and a meaningful Yom Kippur

OUR FAMILY TREE!

2024 / 5785

Shanah Tovah · sent Tuesday, 1 October 2024 · Shabbos 5 Oct 2024 · ג' תשרי תשפ"ה

Dear Family,

Because Rosh Hashanah will be Wednesday night, I am sending out our email tonight, and keeping it very short. I am basically just sharing the beautiful work that Kevin Marks has done in making a FAMILY TREE for all of our Families, and specifically tailored to our current Group.

Mazal Tov again for Daniel Davidoff whose birthday is on the first day of Rosh Hashanah.

Mazal Tov to the naming of Daniella and Ariel's son - Yona. What a beautiful name BH. Wishing you and Grandparents much nachas and happiness from him!

And on Vav Tishrei we remember fondly, Renee on her Yohrtzeit. We wish Roy, Jody, Sheli, Gavin, Sid, Brian, Adam, and all the Family long life, and only happy occasions in the future.

See the attached XL Spreadsheet which Kevin has spent many hours creating.

I was so excited to receive this!

Many grateful thanks Kevin

A few points about it:

- The sheet has been split into the 4 current Families on our Group to make it easy to understand and handle.
- Please check that all details are correct, and if anything is missing

- Kevin is happy for us to write direct to him with any changes that are needed, or to discuss anything with him. He would like to be the sole person to do changes. Otherwise it will become messy.
- It is important that spellings are correct. This will make it easy to search for names.
- To search do Ctrl F and type in the name. The appropriate block will get a green outline. Press Next to find other places with the same name.
- All current people on our Group who have emails are written in red.
- The 4 current Families are on different tags at bottom of sheet. Just click there for the appropriate one. A search will look in all families

So now when there are announcements on our Group about different people, it will be very easy to locate who belongs to who, and to get to know each other better.

I am so grateful to you Kevin for this work! Thanks again

Shanah Tovah to all!

JOY AND DANCING

2025 / 5786

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 2 October 2025 · Shabbos 4 Oct 2025 · י״ב תשרי תשפ״ו

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and that all have had a meaningful Yom Kippur.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

As we are now moving towards Sukkot I saw an interesting article from Rabbi Butman explaining the transition from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, a time of awe, prayer and fasting, to Sukkot and Simchah Torah, a time of being joyful and DANCING.

According to Chasidut, all of the spiritual goals that we try and achieve on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, are equally attainable on Sukkot and Simchat Torah by simply being joyful!

On both Sukkot and Simchat Torah we are commanded to be happy.

But how are we supposed to just turn on our emotions(or off), and how are we supposed to be happy just because Torah tells us to?

There are 2 ways to arouse a feeling of joy

- Through the mind

We can meditate on things that make us happy, and the heart will follow. And really every Jew has what to be joyful about all the time. Just thinking about the enormous love that Hashem has for every Jew, to have given us a Jewish soul. This can make us appreciative and thankful, and when we are happy

about this it expresses our trust and faith in G-d, that whatever happens, good or the opposite, are all for the good.

• Through action - Dancing (or other physical manifestations of joy)

If we get up and start to dance the joy of the heart will follow.

We will have many opportunities to dance on Sukkot at simchat bes hashoevah celebrations.

But more so, we will have the opportunity on Simchat Torah WHEN WE DANCE WITH THE SEFER TORAH!

This year especially, we should come out on Simchat Torah and join the millions who will be dancing with Sifrei Torah, at least in support of our brave Israeli soldiers, who are fighting those who tried to prevent us from celebrating Simchat Torah 2 years ago.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, and a Gut Yom Tov, with MUCH HAPPINESS

Haazinu ↑ Haazinu · Contents · By date האזינו

DISCOVERING FAMILY

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 17 September 2026 · Shabbos 19 Sep 2026 · ח' תשרי תשפ"ז

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and have had a Good Rosh Hashanah

This Shabbos is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Maika ah. We wish long life to all his Family on our group -Selma, Joy and Avri and Families. We have such fond memories of Uncle Maika ah and life in Vereeniging. His neshamah should have an aliyah.

Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Renee ah, and we wish long life to all her Family – Jody, Shelley, Gavin, Roy, Sid, Brian and Adam and Families. Renee has such a special yohrtzeit being the day on which the Rebbe's mother also passed away. Renee was special and is remembered fondly by all of us, having attended many of our children's simchos. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

Mazal Tov to Talya (Ne Davidoff) on her upcoming birthday tomorrow. Thinking of you warmly Talya, and wishing you a wonderful year.

One of the highlights of this week was my discovery of a link of our Family to Lubavitch Rebeeim, linked to the Schneerson Family.

And this is thanks to Avrum Pollack who is married to Tracy, who is the daughter of Shirley Isaacson from Uncle Morris ah.

So I would like to share how this story unfolded, and also to give over a life lesson from Rebetzen Chana, the Rebbe's mother.

First of all a big welcome to Avrum, on our Group. So happy to have you with us Avrum BH!

Discovery

On the 24th of Elul this year (about 2 weeks ago) Mrs Hadassah Carlebach passed away in New York.

A few days later at the yohrtzeit of my mother on the 27th of Elul, Rabbi Citron had a lechaim with me, and there was a conversation about the passing of his grandmother Mrs Carlbach a few days earlier. I vaguely remembered that there was some connection between Rabbi Citron and Avrum, and Rabbi Citron reminded me of this, also vaguely. So I decided to investigate further, and got in touch with Avrum through Tracy.

And then it came to light that Mrs Carlbach was a daughter of the famous Lubavitch Chosid, Rabbi Shneur Zalman Schneerson, and that his wife, Soroh Levine, was a sister of Avrums forebears. (without going into the details. I am sure Avrum could elaborate if needed)

Avrum also sent me a link telling us more about the life of Mrs Carlbach and her father Rabbi Schneerson, and some of their amazing achievements, which I am attaching below.

The article and interviews also give some insight into life before, during and after the world war, touching onto the lives of the Rebbe and Frierdike Rebbe, and their close Family.

I feel so proud to have discovered this connection.

Thank you Avrum and Tracy!

https://collive.com/mrs-hadassah-carlebach-99-obm/

The Rebbe and Rebbetzin Chana

As mentioned, Rebetzen Chana's yohrtzeit is tonight.

The following demonstrates the Rebbe's devotion to his mother.

After a difficult life together with her husband who was exiled to Siberia because of his work for Judaism, and then his untimely passing, Rebbetzin Chana spent the last 17 years of her life near to her beloved son in New York.

Despite his crowded schedule, the Rebbe took time* every day * to visit his mother.

The daily visits took place between 6 and 7 and would last 5-15 mins

On Friday afternoon he would visit for a short while before candle lighting, and return for a longer visit after Kabbolas Shabbos.

At times the Rebbe would come for an additional visit on Shabbos day or Motzei Shabbos

Gut Shabbos and wishing everyone an inspiring Yom Kippur and a Gmar Chasima Tovah for a Shanah Tovah

מועדים

Yom Tov & Special Days

Rosh Hashanah · Yom Kippur · Sukkos · Chanukah · Tu BiShvat · Purim · Pesach · Lag BaOmer · Shavuos

ראש השנה

Rosh Hashanah

7 letters

2023 / 5784 — TESTS AND CHALLENGES 1335
2026 / 5787 — ANGELS 1338
2019 / 5779 — ROSH HASHANAH *(under Nitzavim)* 1274
2020 / 5781 — LOVE OF AWE *(under Haazinu)* 1318
2022 / 5782 — BE A MENTCH - A STORY *(under Nitzavim)* 1281
2024 / 5785 — OUR FAMILY TREE! *(under Haazinu)* 1326
2025 / 5785 — INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH *(under Nitzavim)* 1291

TESTS AND CHALLENGES

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Shannah Tovah · sent Thursday, 14 September 2023 · Shabbos 16 Sep 2023 · א' תשרי תשפ"ד

Shabbos 2023-09-16 is Rosh Hashanah (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well. Wishing Reuven a refuah shleimah after his successful knee operation! BH

Mazal Tov to Joy Comarof, my cousin in SA whose birthday is tomorrow. Wishing you a wonderful and healthy year Joy!

Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff whose birthday is this coming week. Hope all going well with you and wishing you a great year Talya!

And then on Rosh Hashanah itself is the birthday of Daniel Davidoff. Saw your football interview and saw your football playing Daniel. They were great! Wishing you a year of much success in both your secular and spiritual work!

Then we have 2 yohrtzeits:

Yesterday was our mother's, ie Chanan, Reuven and mine - see below.

And next week is Renee's. We have very fond memories of Renee and her active participation and devotion to all members of Family, and we wish Roy, Sid, Brian, Jody, Shelly, Gavin and Adam long life. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah! So happy to have you all on our Family group.

Today I went to the Beis Olam to visit the kever of my mother ah. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

One of the lessons she taught us was to NEVER SAY I CAN'T.

This connects with an article that I saw this week from the 'Word of the Week' in Chabad.org. the word being NISAYON - CHALLENGES OR TESTS.

The English language expresses the word test, as a means to determine what someone has achieved prior to taking the test

The Hebrew word for a test or challenge (nisayon) is rooted in the word nes and expresses a very different idea.

- Nes can mean 'to raise up' - The Zohar explains 'G-d tests the righteous only to elevate them to greatness.'
- Lanus means running away. - For such an elevation to occur, we must rise above our natural fear and aversion to challenges, and avoid running away from them. Judaism teaches us to lean in to our challenges, to help us unlock untapped energies and abilities.
- Nes can also mean 'a miracle' - Implying the elevation of the supernatural over the natural. Chassidus teaches us, that from the Divine point of view, every test in our lives provides the exact conditions that are conducive for us to surpass our own personal natural limitations, thus enacting a miracle in our own personal spheres.
- Nes also means 'a banner' - Each person's unique tests in life are like a badge of honour, that represents our own particular journey of personal growth and achievement

Life is full of tests and challenges. No one escapes this fact.

As daunting as our struggles often feel, we must never feel defeatist.

Hashem is never against us. In fact according to Jewish view, any test that we face is not an expression of His doubt in our capacity, but of His faith in our ability.

So as we approach Rosh Hashanah, and we look back at the challenges we faced in the past year, let us make resolutions on how we can improve in the New Year, and 'never say I can't!'

Thank you Mommy ah for all the care and guidance that you always gave us!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shanah Tovah Umetukah!

ANGELS

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 10 September 2026 · Shabbos 12 Sep 2026 · א' תשרי תשפ"ז

Shabbos 2026-09-12 is Rosh Hashanah (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and getting ready for Rosh Hashanah.

Mazal Tov to Joy Camaroff on her upcoming birthday next week. I hope that you and Claude are both well Joy, and wishing you a happy and healthy year!

Mazal Tov to Daniel who has the special birthday on the First day of Rosh Hashanah! Wishing you an amazing year of progress in your studies and sport, in both secular and Jewish studies Daniel. And I believe you will also start preparing for your Barmitzvah this year! Wishing you much success BEH!

We wish long life to Leslie Hyman and the Hyman Family on the passing of Marilyn Gamse Potter ah, who was the daughter of Ben Hyman ah, who was the brother of Nat Hyman ah. Leslie is the daughter of Nat Hyman ah. Wishing you only happy events in the future Leslie!

I saw a short and sweet vort this week relating to Rosh Hashanah which starts this Friday night as follows:

The Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek said:

"After the Evening Prayer of Rosh Hashanah, 2 angels accompany a person.

When they hear how each person greets and blesses his fellow with the blessing, " May you be inscribed and sealed (in the Book of Life) for a Good Year" ("LeShana tovah tikaseivu vetichaseimu"), they ascend Above with a pure

heart to speak favourably on his / her behalf, and plead for a Good and Sweet Year."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Shanah Tovah Tikaseivu VeTichaseimu

יום כיפור

Yom Kippur

4 letters

2017 / 5778 — SCALES OF LOVE 1341

2024 / 5785 — A YEAR OF ABUNDANT GOODNESS 1346

2020 / 5781 — TEHILLIM *(under Haazinu)* 1320

2025 / 5786 — JOY AND DANCING *(under Haazinu)* 1328

Yom Kippur ↑ Yom Kippur · Contents · By date יום כיפור

SCALES OF LOVE

2017 / 5778

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 28 September 2017 · Shabbos 30 Sep 2017 · י' תשרי תשע"ח

Shabbos 2017-09-30 is Yom Kippur (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Wishing all those who are travelling, happy flights, and we are so excited that some of the Family will be with us for parts of Yom Tov!

I saw a very nice dvar Torah today in a maamer of The Alte Rebbe's Likutei Torah, Parshas Netzavim.

It was speaking about SCALES based on the pasuk (which could be from Yishayeh), 'Veshakal bepeles harim, ugevaos bemoznaim.' - 'You shall weigh the mountains with (a scale called) a peles, and the hills with (a regular) scale'

And isn't it interesting that the mazal (zodiac) for the month of Tishrei is SCALES (Libra)!

The Alte Rebbe starts by describing the the meaning of a bris (covenant), and uses the parable of 2 friends who love each other.

What they do is that they decide to make a covenant or pact between them that their love for each other should never end.

Ie even if obstacles come in the way or circumstances change etc, their love for each other will continue regardless, because of the covenant which they set up. (a bit like a marriage)

Through this bris, their love for each other becomes eternal, and they become as one.

That is why Torah calls it koret bris (cutting a covenant), whereby the procedure was to walk through the 2 halves of an animal, ie the 2 people walk through one body to become united.

Similarly Hashem made His Covenant with us, Am Yisrael, and this is mentioned in numerous places in Torah.

Now the Mountains and the Hills spoken about in the above posuk, represent our Forefathers and Foremothers (as spoken about in the prophecies of Bilam) and the love between husband and wife, and between Hashem and us.

The Hills, which are smaller than the mountains, represent an EXTERNAL LOVE of Hashem, brought about by our contemplation of how great is Hashem and His love for us, and our connection to Him through Torah and mitzvos, and this arouses our love to Him.

The Mountains are bigger, and this represents a much deeper, hidden, INTERNAL LOVE to Hashem, (Ahavah Rabah), beyond understanding and reason. One cannot get to this love with Torah and mitzvos, but rather it comes with Teshuva from the depths of the heart. It comes about from the bitterness and pain that we feel when we realise how far away we are from Hashem.

In the above pasuk it says that the Hills are measured with a scale (moznaim) ie when Torah and mitzvos are on the one side of the scale, the LOVE on the other side of the scale rises ie comes into play.

The Mountains are weighed with a peles.

This scale works different from a regular one ie the further away one pushes the weight on the one side, the more it lifts the other side! (see attached diagrams)

How does one do this practically? The more we push away the 'loves of the body' the closer we get to this deep love and unity with Hashem.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all, and we should use the opportunity of Yom Kippur, when we are not eating and drinking etc and not attending to all the loves of the body, to come closer to this Ahava Rabah (the Mountains).

Gmar chasima tovah for a Happy and Sweet New Year.

Attached to this letter

The scale diagrams (2 scans)

אד יוסי אומרי
בזמן שהוא כפתח אחד יז).
(רע"ב) ממולין לתוך.

מז

מח

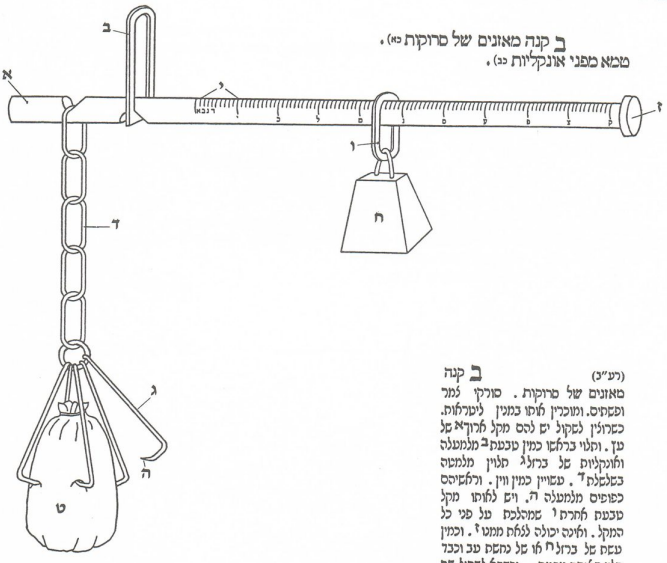
אבל אם היו שנים יח).
(תפ"י יח) שהשלשלת עשוי מב' חוליות. לו לוט לעני. רק בית יד להמזיה.

ח

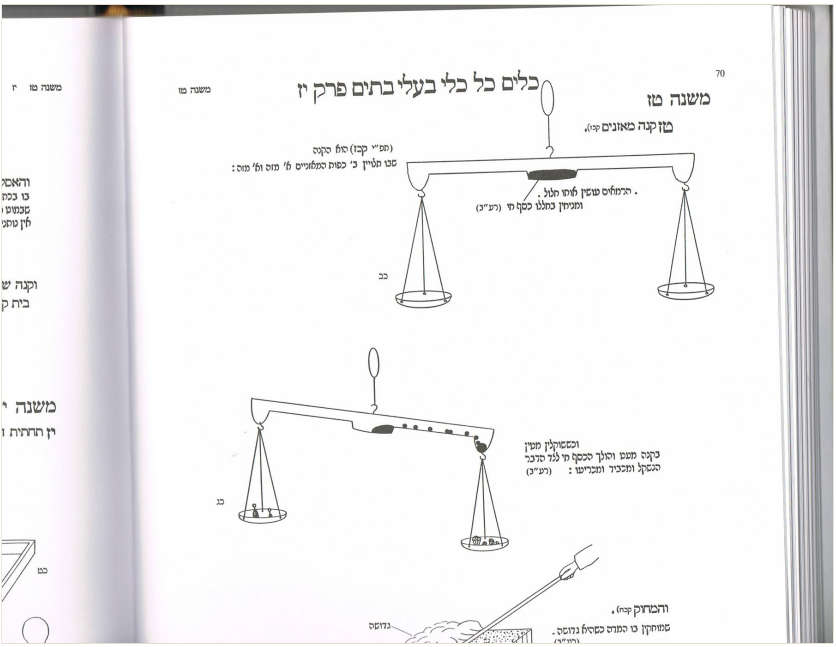
או שקשר חלזון בראשה.
(תפ"י יט) כמלא שמן השלשלת מחובר לשלשלת בחוזק:

משנה ב

ב קנה מאזנים של סרוקות כא).
טמא מפני אונקליות כב).



(רע"ב) **ב קנה** מאזנים של סרוקות. סורקי"ר בלע"ז ופשוטו. ומוכרין לוטו במנין ליטרלוש. כשרוצין לשקול ים לסם מקל תרוי"א של עץ. ושלוי ברלשלו כמין טבעת ב מלמעלה ולוטלים של ברזל ג תלוין מלמטה בשלשלת ד. עשויין כמין ווין. ולשלשה כפופים מלמעלה ה. ויש לשלוח מקל טבעת לתוכן ו שמהלכת על פני כל המקל. ולוכה יכולה לנוע ממנו ז. וכמין עשה של ברזל ח לו של מחשף עב וכבד תלוי בלוכה טבעת. וכשבא לשקול שק של סמרטוטו של מכוס. נוכח לא התוקלין ג בשק. ולוטו בטבעת ב שבגגו למעלה. ומעלהו בלוטו ו. ומטבעת ו שבו העשה של ברזל תלוי. מרמיקה מטבעת ב שלוטו בה ומכבדת על הקנה א עד שיצא כוטר שלא יכריע לשום לד יוכר ולפי הרחקה הטבעת ו שבו העשה של ברזל. יודע חשבון המשקל שיש סימנים במקל ע"כ ליטרא ל'. ע"כ י'. ע"כ ק'.



A YEAR OF ABUNDANT GOODNESS

2024 / 5785

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 10 October 2024 · Shabbos 12 Oct 2024 · י' תשרי תשפ"ה

Shabbos 2024-10-12 is Yom Kippur (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Family

I would like to welcome Shirley Isaacson to our Family Group.

Shirley is a first cousin of mine living in Toronto, and is a daughter of Uncle Morris ah. And Tracy, who joined a few weeks ago, is Shirley's daughter.

But it is now very easy to identify families and their links, from the brilliant Family tree which Kevin designed - see attached. Use the function Ctrl F to search.

So happy to be in touch with you again, Shirley!

There are currently 4 pages on the spreadsheet representing 4 families. If anyone wants to add their branch in addition, please supply details to Kevin. Current members of our group are in red text.

Short Daily Talk on Gemarra by Zoom in Partnership with Studying Rambam (about 20 mins)

A new section about Sukkot is starting next week.

Our Studying Rambam Series is contributing the Rambam halachos for each page of the Gemarra

See details attached

Dvar Torah

On the 13th of Elul 1982, one of the points that the Rebbe mentioned was an explanation of the number 85.

I am not sure in what context this was discussed but the Derher magazine has linked it to our New Year which is 5785, as follows:

85 is 5x17

The Hebrew word tov (good) has the numerical value of 17.

The number 5 represents the 5 levels of Chesed (abundant Heavenly giving of kindness)

Therefore 85 represents an overflow of Hashem's Goodness and Blessings.

And so it should be for all of us this year, and for the whole of Klal Yisrael

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos, a meaningful Yom Kippur, and a Gmar Chasimah Tovah

סוכות ושמיני עצרת

Sukkos

16 letters

2016 / 5777 — SAMECH 1350

2018 / 5779 — SUCCESS POTENTIAL 1352

2019 / 5780 — DANCING 1354

2020 / 5781 — MUSIC 1356

2020 / 5781 — MUSIC CONTINUED 1358

2021 / 5782 — MOISHEH'S VISION 1360

2022 / 5783 — CREATING JOY 1362

2023 / 5784 — JOY 1364

2023 / 5784 — THE JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERES AND SIMCHAS TORAH 1366

2024 / 5785 — JOY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR 1368

2025 / 5786 — HOLY FIRE - A STORY 1370

2026 / 5787 — BEAUTY CONTINUED, WITH JOY 1373

2026 / 5787 — THE JOY OF SIMCHAS TORAH 1375

2017 / 5778 — THE HUG *(under Bereishis)* 27

2019 / 5780 — JOY OF SUKKOS *(under Haazinu)* 1315

2024 / 5785 — SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH *(under Bereishis)* 44

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

SAMECH

2016 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 21 October 2016 · Shabbos 22 Oct 2016 · כ׳ תשרי תשע״ז

Shabbos 2016-10-22 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family

Hope everyone is enjoying the joyous holiday of Sukkos

The highlight of this week on Sukkos has undoubtably been the joyous celebration and coming together of most of our Family this evening celebrating the 60th birthday of MOMMY.

This is not her Hebrew birthday, but close to her English birthday where most the Family were here together on Sukkos.

We missed Baty and Family, and Mariasha and Daniel, but were so happy to see you all, and further extended Family on Batsheva's video!

Similarly we also wish Avi Mazal Tov on his English Birthday a few days before this, which we also celebrated here in London. Mazal Tov Avi!

And thanks Hirshy for the huge surprise visit!

I can quite honestly say that the celebration tonight of Mommy's 60th birthday, is probably the most memorable event I have experienced.

The Chasanas of the Family have of course been huge events, but tonight just seemed to me to be so together , central and absolute.

I hope this email is going to be coherent, because there has also been a lot of alcohol, but it is all connected to MOMMY, and SIXTY and the letter SAMECH – ס

Samech is the Hebrew letter representing 60

The first letter of a word is the most important.

And if we look carefully we will see this running through all the way through the month of Tishrei

On Rosh Hashana we blow the Shofar 100 notes.

This is in the form of 60 – 20 – 20 (tekia, trua, shevarim) representing the letters סכך

סכך sechach is obviously what is on top of the sukkah and related to sukkos

Sukkos is related to the cloud of Glory in the midbar and in relation to Yom Kippur, this is related to the cloud of Ketores (incence) which the Kohen Gadol experienced in the kodesh hakadashim on Yom Kippur

So this links Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Sukkos,

And as we can see the samech – 60 - is closely linked throughout these events of Tishrei ie Shofar of Rosh Hashana (סכך), the סכך of Sukkoos, and the Cloud of ketores of Yom kippur,and the ס of Sukkah and Sukkos.

The word samech also means 'to support' and to be 'close to' as in somech noflim (support for the needy)

And so in short, MOMMY, in the same way as the letter samech is so central to the month of Tishrei, you are so central to our Family, as represented by the number 60.

This was obviously seen by the tremendous beauty and effort of the whole Family tonight BH BH

We love you and wish you long life, in good health and togetherness, with much nachas, and advancement for the whole Family.

Much thanks for all the efforts of whole Family

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov with much joy

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

SUCCESS POTENTIAL

2018 / 5779

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 27 September 2018 · Shabbos 29 Sep 2018 · כ' תשרי תשע"ט

Shabbos 2018-09-29 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and having a very happy Sukkos.

As we are now already familiar, we have different visitors to our Sukkah on each of the days of Sukkos - Ushpizim.

This coming Shabbos we have Yosef Hatzadik, and the Chassidishe one is the Rebbe Maharash.

An interesting quality that they both share is the potential to jump over difficulties and reach very great success in the process

The Rebbe Maharash

He was famous for his saying lechatchileah ariiber -from the outset climb right over to the top.

Ie the world says - if you have a problem try and manoeuvre out of it, and if you cant then try and climb over it.

I say , from the outset climb right over the top.

Ie difficulties should be 'taken by the horns' and overcome.

Yosef Hatzadik

The above adage of the Rebbe Maharsh is not theoretical, but a truth that can be practically applied, as witnessed in the life of Yosef.

He rose from an imprisoned slave to be the viceroy of Egypt

The lesson brought out by The Rebbe is that no individual should feel hampered or handicapped.

WE HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO ATTAIN THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT IN BOTH SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL MATTERS.

GUT Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all.

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

DANCING

2019 / 5780

Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos, and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 17 October 2019 · Shabbos 19 Oct 2019 · כ' תשרי תש"פ

Shabbos 2019-10-19 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and having a wonderful Sukkos!

And I hope that Joy is recovering well.

Over the last 2 weeks we spoke about the joy of movement and taking steps.

Then we spoke about 'running the marathon.'

AND NOW IS COMING UP THE TIME FOR DANCING!

Rabbi Shalom DovBer Schneersohn, the fifth Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch, stated:

'The two days of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are very precious. The 48 hours of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah should be highly treasured. Every moment is an opportunity to draw bucket- and barrel-fulls of material and spiritual treasures. And this is accomplished through dancing.' - Sefer Hamaamorim 5711.

The Rebbe explains the power of dancing in a Sicha from Vol 2 of Likutei Sichos:

On Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah all Jews dance, whether one is a great sage or a simple person.

All are dancing together and rejoicing with the Torah.

We are dancing with our feet, the lowest part of the body, and not with our heads.

And the Sefer Torah is covered, and we can't even see what is written there.

And on these days we don't sit down to learn.

We are all equal.

Each one of us, no matter what our level, even if we do not yet know what is Hashem, and even if we do not yet learn Torah, we do know, that Hashem and the Torah are very precious.

And we understand this until the point that we know that there is nothing more precious in the whole world.

It is this understanding which brings about a great joy, and causes us to dance with the Sefer Torah with a JOY THAT HAS NO LIMIT!

Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos, and Gut Yom Tov!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

MUSIC

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 1 October 2020 · Shabbos 3 Oct 2020 · ט"ז תשרי תשפ"א

Shabbos 2020-10-03 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and had a meaningful Yom Kippur.

Gmar chasimah tovah to all

Mazal Tov to Mel (Geniene Stein's daughter) and David Glickman on the birth of a girl. Wishing you much nachas from her and all your children!

We are now heading into Sukkos, our FESTIVAL OF JOY.

On each day of Sukkos we have the spiritual visitors called the ushpizim, coming in to our sukkah.

On the first day (and night) it is Avraham Avinu together with the Chassidic ushpiz, the Baal Shem Tov. On the second day it is Yitzchak Avinu and the Magid of Mezeritch etc

Each year we have difficulty trying to remember the niggunim (MUSIC) of the Chassidic ushpizim and so I am attaching some of them in advance

The Baal Shem Tov - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbqDy_ZXitY&list=RDQ4Eg2MPr_xc&index=6> Nigun Ha'Baal Shem Tov

The Baal Shem Tov, The Mezeritcher Rebbe, and the Alte Rebbe – 'Shalos Tenuos' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BufVUiJOLI0> Nigun Sholosh Tenuos - Three Stanzas (Chabad melody) - שלוש תנועות

The Alte Rebbe – 'Dalet Bavos' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQWISbJSXFY> Niggun Daled Bavos

Here is another beautiful niggun below, from the Alte Rebbe, related to this week's Sedra, Vezos Habrachah.

Mosheh Rabeinu is giving his brachah to each of the Shevatim on the last day of his life, and the brachah he gave to Gad was, tremendous and fierce physical strength, because they lived by the borders of Eretz Yisrael, to allow them to defend the Land.

'... and they sever their enemies arm and head (with one blow).....'

The Rebbe links this brocha to the placing of tefillin on the head and arm, which also has the effect of instilling fear into our enemies. In fact the Rebbe started the Tefillin campaign just before the 6-Day War in 1967.

In this niggun, The Alte Rebbe is referring to tefillin – vehayu letotafot bein einechah – they should be as frontlets between your eyes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtIlM4zNVWE> ר הזקן"ניגון כאייל תערוג לאדמו - Niggun K'ayol Taarog from the Alter Rebbe.

And to add the beautiful music of Shlomo Carlbach AH singing a niggun from the dynasty of Ruzin which derived from The Magid of Mezeritch - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=RD-BziayMHPYAo&v=BziayMHPYAo&feature=emb_ rel_end> The Ruzin Nigun - Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach - ניגון רוז'ין - רבי שלמה קרליבך

Wishing everyone a joyous Shabbos and Yom Tov with much song!

MUSIC CONTINUED

2020 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Wednesday, 7 October 2020 · Shabbos 10 Oct 2020 · כ"ב תשרי תשפ"א

Shabbos 2020-10-10 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and enjoying Sukkos.

As a continuation from last week's email where we spoke about the ushpizin which relate to each day of Sukkos, here follows the rest of the chassidishe ushpizin, with one of their personal well known NIGGUNIM, SONGS

Yesterday was the Mitteler Rebbe, the son of the Alte Rebbe, The 2nd Lubavitcher Rebbe - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEtujqzGfSg> The Lubavitcher Rebbe: "The Mittler Rebbe's Ensemble"

Today is the Tzemach Tzedek, the 3rd Lubavitcher Rebbe, who was the grandson of the Alte Rebbe - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW6jc7oy4Is> Chabad Niggunim - Nigun of the Chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek - Niggun Chassidei Tzemach Tzedek

Tomorrow Thursday is the Rebbe Maharash, whose well known statement was "The world says that if you face a challenge, first try to go under it, and if you cannot go under, then try climbing over it. But I say, 'Lechatchila Ariber! in the first place, go over!" He was the son of the Tzemach Tzedak and was the 4th Lubavitcher Rebbe. In this clip you can hear also a commentary about him, and the Rebbe talking - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwR4Wm6ZEx0&list=PLkXcDdOrqRiooYFZ8T0wzLTS9ETbvRD-pD&index=2> Above and Beyond - 13 Tishrei 5741 Farbrengen Excerpt <https://youtu.be/qwR4Wm6ZEx0?list=PLkXcDdOrqRiooYFZ8T0wzLTS9ETbvRD-pD> hhtItps://www.youtube.com/

watcv=qwR4Wm6ZEx0&feature=youtu.be&list=PLkXcDdOrq RiooY-FZ8T0wzLTS9ETbvRDpDttps://youtu.be/qwR4Wm6ZEx0?st=PLkXcD-dOrqRiooYFZ8T0w zLTS9ETbvRDpD

The 5th Lubavich Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab, on Friday, Hoshanah Rabbah - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGYQthVTFiw> Nigun Hachono (Live)

The 6th Lubavitcher Rebbe the Frierdike Rebbe, on Shabbos, Shemini Atzeres - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7awxGW-mIV0&list=RDQ4Eg2MPr_xc&index=10> Seder Nigunim: "The Beinoni" ft. Eli Marcus סדר ניגונים: "הבינוני" עם אלי מרקוס

The 7th Lubavitcher Rebbe, The Rebbe, on Simchas Torah - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JWD7sBPUl8> Nigun "Ato Bechartanu" with the Rebbe

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

MOISHEH'S VISION

2021 / 5782

Gut Shabbos, Gut Moed and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 24 September 2021 · Shabbos 25 Sep 2021 · י"ט תשרי תשפ"ב

Shabbos 2021-09-25 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Sukkos!

It is so nice having part of the Family with us in London this year BH

Every day of Sukkos we have some special spiritual visitors to our Sukkah known as the Ushpizim. Today MOSHEH RABEINU is the visitor to all our sukkot.

There is also a Chassidishe ushpiz every day and today is The Mitteler Rebbe (the son of The Alte Rebbe)

And this week's Sedra is Zos Habrachah, and is about the brachos which MOSHEH RABEINU is giving to each tribe of Israel and to Bnei Yisrael in general, and his VISION OF THE FUTURE, just before his passing on Har Nebo.

I saw an interesting article about Moshe Rabeinu and his farewell address to the Jewish People this week and so I thought it would be appropriate to share this today, while he is with us in the sukkah!

This final blessing from Mosheh Rabbeinu is very powerful, especially in the light of the fact that we had already received the blessings of Yaakov in a similar manner at the end of Yaakov's life, at the end of the Book of Bereishis.

Now, in a kind of duplication, we are receiving Mosheh's blessings at the end of his life at the end of the Book of Devarim.

So what did Mosheh's blessings add onto those of Yaakov?

1. Yaakov was the Father of the Nation and Mosheh Rabeinu was its first leader. Therefore one is the blessing of a father to his Family, and one is the blessing of a leader to his Nation
2. A leader must make greater sacrifices to fulfil his role than a father. As can be seen, Moses had to contend with much more serious challenges than Yaakov, putting his life on the line. This being the case, it was only natural that this would elicit a greater response from Hashem
3. The superior efficacy of Mosheh's blessing is also alluded to in the opening verse of his brocha "Zos habrachah -THIS is the blessing" - Zos connotates pointing and specifying.
4. Mosheh is the representative and conduit of TORAH, and the Torah is the source of all blessing. Therefore despite Mosheh's relative aloofness from the affairs of life (as contrasted with Yaakov's greater involvement with family affairs), it was Mosheh who was to bestow G-d's ultimate blessing on the Nation
5. On the day of his death on Mount Nebo, Mosheh reached the 50th Gate of Understanding, a level which is mostly inaccessible to human beings
6. The vision of the Nation's future that Hashem granted to Mosheh, including the vision of the Messianic Redemption, is thus a fitting conclusion for the Torah.

And here is an example from the general blessing to the people and Mosheh's vision of the future (when we perform the Will of the Omnipresent):

"Ucheyamecha dovecha - And(even in the days of) your decline, (it will be) like the days of your (prime)" Ie Even in the days of our old age, it will still feel like the days of our youth. - Rashi

The word dovecha has the implication of flowing, and Rashi gives another meaning in that the whole world will make gold and silver flow into the Land of Israel, because it will be blessed with fruits...

Gut Shabbos, Gut Moed, and Gut Yom Tov to all

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

CREATING JOY

2022 / 5783

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 14 October 2022 · Shabbos 15 Oct 2022 · כ' תשרי תשפ"ג

Shabbos 2022-10-15 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

We have just returned from the amazing Barmitzvah trip of Mendel Levy in Eretz Yisrael. It was a beautiful trip and we are most proud of everything you did Mendel! Wishing you to grow from strength to strength in everything that you do in both gashmius and ruchnius. And a big thank you to Shmuel and Rivky for organising and implementing this amazing simchah! A huge amount of work and effort has gone into enabling this rich and memorable Sukkos / Barmitzvah experience. Wishing you much nachas from Mendel and all the children!

We are now well into the Festival of Sukkot, and I saw an interesting editorial to L'Chaim weekly publication, which I would like to share.

Whereas on Jewish holidays we have a special mitzvah to REJOICE AND BE HAPPY, with the Festival of Sukkos it is even more so.

With Sukkos, Torah mentions rejoicing 3 times, and 3 is a special number in Jewish mystical Teachings, connoting permanence and strength. Ie the simcha of Sukkos is greater than all the other Festivals.

But how is it possible to command someone to rejoice? What if one is not in the mood to rejoice?

A similar question is asked about the Mitzvah of 'Loving Hashem' - And you shall love the Lord your G-d.

How is it possible to command someone on an emotion?

The Rambam guides us on how build a love for Hashem, and that is by meditating on those points that evoke a love for Hashem.

And what evokes JOY?

Singing and dancing! (or other such acts)

And this is exactly what we do during Sukkos and especially on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

It is these ACTS OF JOY which evoke the JOY (This looks difficult to do, but is not. And it is within the reach of every Jew)

Also, this year is a year of Hakhel (once every 7 years after shmitah) where all jews came together at the Bet Hamikdash.

The Rebbe encouraged us to join in with other people throughout the year to help increase our JOY, love and fear of Hashem, and our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

JOY

2023 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 29 September 2023 · Shabbos 30 Sep 2023 · ט"ו תשרי תשפ"ד

Shabbos 2023-09-30 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and that Reuven and Sid are continuing to heal nicely.

I would like to apologize to anyone who has celebrations this week, as I am away from home and don't have access to my diary to help me with the details.

But we do wish a hearty Mazal Tov nevertheless.

We are now moving towards Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, which are referred to as the TIME OF OUR REJOICING.

So I would like to share a few points about JOY which I came across this week

It states in the Talmud that the power of joy is unlimited.

"Joy breaks through all boundaries"

How can one develop joy?

A Chassid once wrote to the third Chabad Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, and mentioned that he found it difficult to be happy.

The Tzemach Tzedek advised him "Thought, Speech and Action are within one's control

- A person must guard his thoughts and think only thoughts that bring joy.
- One should be cautious not to speak about sad or depressing matters.

- One should behave as if one were very joyous, even if one does not feel especially happy. In the end, one will ultimately be happy."

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov, and with much joy!

THE JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERES AND SIMCHAS TORAH

2023 / 5784

Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos, and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 6 October 2023 · Shabbos 7 Oct 2023 · כ"ב תשרי תשפ"ד

Shabbos 2023-10-07 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Sukkos!

Thank you to all the Family in California who are making us feel so welcome!

We are now moving towards the last days of Sukkos, which is Shemini Atzeret and Simchas Torah, when we REJOICE WITH THE SFREI TORAH, by dancing with them.

I saw a summary of a sichah of the Rebbe (Simchas Torah 1978) which gives us a deeper understanding of this rejoicing, which I wanted to share

The verse Ata horaysa.is the first verse that we recite of 17, in preparation for dancing and REJOICING with the SIFREI TORAH at Hakafos on Shemini Atzeret and Simchas Torah.

Its translation is "You have been shown to know, that Hashem is G-d, there is none else besides Him."

Rashi comments ".....and Hashem revealed that He is Yachid", ie the only true existent entity in creation.

This awareness will motivate us to carry out Hashem's will, regardless of our own desires (Since He is the only real entity in creation, and therefore it is impossible to transgress His Will).

Each of the above-mentioned 17 verses express reasons for the SIMCHAH on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

And in addition, the numerical value of 17 is equal to the word TOV (GOOD), and the Talmud explains that "There is no good other than Torah"

The Baal Shem Tov states "Everything that a Jew sees or hears, must serve as a lesson in the service of Hashem, which we can practically implement."

So how can we practically bring down the above-mentioned all-encompassing knowledge or emotion, that Hashem is the only true existence in Creation?

The answer lies in coupling this concept with TORAH, which serves as a guide to ALL ONE'S EXPERIENCES IN LIFE. Even the most physical of our activities can and should be guided by the directives of the Torah.

Therefore when reading or listening to the "Ata horaysa", we should be inspired to make a resolution to adhere to Torah in every aspect of our behaviour in the coming year.

Which will result in an experience of the UTMOST SIMCHAH, where our connection "In the Light of the Countenance of the King, one finds life", will be fulfilled.

And this connection will bring about blessings in every phase of our lives.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov with much joy!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

JOY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

2024 / 5785

Gut Yom Tov Gut Shabbos · sent Tuesday, 15 October 2024 · Shabbos 19 Oct 2024 · י"ז תשרי תשפ"ה

Shabbos 2024-10-19 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

We are now fast approaching Sukkos - the Festival of our REJOICING, and I came across a letter from the Rebbe this week, which explains a way on how to also be joyful every day of the year, which I would like to share:

(Igros Kodesh Vol. 16, p.347)

You write asking for a path of teshuvah;

Firstly, I must preface a point about teshuvah from Chassidus: that one of the foundations of teshuvah is joy and complete trust in the Creator and Leader of the world.

This is because teshuvah isn't necessarily done in response to a sin, but rather - and this is the central point of every type of teshuvah - to return to the source and beginning of it all: to Hashem, Who created us.

This is accomplished through living a lifestyle in accordance with the teachings of our Torah, the Torah of life, and this is the common denominator between all of the methods of teshuvah that different people do; from the very simplest individual up until the most righteous tzaddik, upon all of whom teshuvah is incumbent.

When you don't know what to do teshuvah for and which method of teshuvah to do, what I said above is the way that includes within it all of the methods.

It's certainly superfluous to explain at length that the Torah lifestyle isn't limited to Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Shabbos, Yom Tov, and so on, but rather it is a daily lifestyle; There are more weekdays than days of Shabbos and Yom Tov, and so the weekdays require extra scrupulosity.

I reiterate that all of this can - and must - be done with joy and trust in Hashem, and may I receive good news from your letters in the near future, about yourself, your household, and your entire family.

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos, with much Joy for all!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

HOLY FIRE - A STORY

2025 / 5786

Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 9 October 2025 · Shabbos 11 Oct 2025 · י"ט תשרי תשפ"ו

Shabbos 2025-10-11 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Sukkos.

A refuah shlemah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who had a baby girl on Yom Kippur! And whose name is Camille (Millie) Tova. Wishing parents and grandparents, Reuven and Chana Lieba (Ravin and Annette), many simchos and much continued nachas! So happy for all of you.

It is coming up Simchas Torah plus Shmini Atzeres next week, and in connection to this I saw an interesting point in this week's Sedra, Vezos Habrachah, and read an interesting story, which I would like to share

Sedra (33:4)

It says "Torah tziva lanu Mosheh MORASHAH kehilas Yaakov" - The Torah which Hashem commanded us is an INHERITANCE for the community of Yaakov"

Acquisitions belong to specific people who are deserving

But inhertance comes to one whether one deserves it or not.

Torah belongs to every single Jew, no matter what level of observance or knowledge we are up to. And as Rashi adds, "We will not abandon it."

And this is reflected in the fact, that on Simchat we can all dance with OUR SEFER TORAH. which is covered and closed, and with much joy!

Story (Rabbi Tilles)

One year on Simchat Torah, in Medzibuz, (round about 1734) the Baal Shem Tov and some of his advanced students were dancing together way into the night, with great joy, and consuming large quantities of wine.

The wife of the Baal Shem Tov, Leah Rochel was concerned that there would not be enough wine for the next day's kiddush and Havdalah and she asked her husband to ask his disciples to stop drinking.

The Baal Shem Tov's face lit up with a smile and he asked his wife to go and tell them, which she proceeded to do.

However, when she opened the door she was shocked by the scene - The Chassidim were dancing in a tight circle, and around them was a canopy of flames surrounding them, and hovering over them.

Without taking a further step, she turned around, went down to the basement cellar, gathering as much wine as she could, and placed it on the table of the enthusiastically dancing Chassidim!

Surely the Shechinah (Divine Presence) was dancing with them!

On a different year, the same scene repeated itself, but then at the height of the ecstasy, the shoelace of one of the disciples broke, and he could not continue dancing with his companions.

On this occasion, the only daughter of the Baal Shem Tov, Udel, was standing on the side enjoying the joyful spirit.

Udel was already married but did not yet have children, and she quietly approached the Chasid and said to him "If you promise that I will give birth to a son this year, I will provide you with a good pair of shoes to continue dancing."

The Chassid was in a quandary. How could he make such a promise? On the other hand, how could he give up being part of such an exalted celebration?

He quickly promised her for what she had asked.

That year she gave birth to the Holy Rebbe, Reb Baruch of Medzibuz, who grew up to be one of the most important Chassidic leaders in the third generation of Chassidim!

Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all, with much joy!

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

BEAUTY CONTINUED, WITH JOY

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 24 September 2026 · Shabbos 26 Sep 2026 · ט"ו תשרי תשפ"ז

Shabbos 2026-09-26 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and has had an inspiring Yom Kippur.

I saw a beautiful vort from Likutei Levi Yitzchak, linking Rosh Hashanah and Sukkos as follows

SHOFAR has a derivation from the Arameic word shufrei, meaning splendor or BEAUTY.

On Rosh Hashanah we ask Hashem to 'Reveal Yourself in the beauty (HADAR) of Your Exalted Might....'

And on Sukkos we take the ESROG (pri etz HADAR) where here it again means beautiful.

The Talmud in Sukkah mentions that hadar also means 'the one that dwells'. This is referring to the fact that, unlike other fruits, the esrog remains on its parent tree for the full 12 months of the year, thereby enabling it to develop fully and become beautiful.

And as a follow up of our email before Rosh Hashanah, just as Rivka Imeinu's mother and brother asked Eliezer to allow them 12 months for pre wedding preparations to yield the accessories and ornaments that bring out her inner beauty, so too, Rosh Hashanah, heralded by the shofar, leading to the hadar of the esrog, encapsulate and make possible a shining and beautiful year.

The words used by Rivka's mother and brother were.....achar telech (afterwards she can go), which has the numerical value of 659. This is exactly equal to the numerical value of Torah's name for the esrog of pri etz hadar!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a beautiful Sukkos, the Festival of JOY

Sukkos ↑ Sukkos · Contents · By date סוכות ושמיני עצרת

THE JOY OF SIMCHAS TORAH

2026 / 5787

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 1 October 2026 · Shabbos 3 Oct 2026 · כ"ב תשרי תשפ"ז

Shabbos 2026-10-03 is Sukkos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying Sukkos!

Mommy and I have just spent a wonderful time with the Family in Indio, for a combination get- together for Mommy's birthday, and Sukkos. This was mainly organised by Shmuel Levy and his Family, who have put in massive efforts, before during and after the event, organising, purchasing, transporting goods, equipment and sukkah etc, unpacking, cooking, arranging minyonim with 2 Sifrei Torah, arranging schedules and outings, and much more! Words cant thank you enough Shmuel, Rivky and Family!

And then huge shared efforts of contribution from each and every member of the Family, including their own Families, and including the members in London and Sydney who could not make it, and who also contributed greatly from afar, and whose hearts were with us.

Hashem should grant you all much blessing for this amazing Mitzvah of kibbud av vaem, and wishing the whole Family and extended Family to continue making many simchos BEH!!

I would like to welcome to our Family Group Justin and Micaela (Ne Raviv) Fasman, who have just recently got married. Mazal Tov!!

Micaela is a daughter of Laura (Fisher) Raviv, who is Naomi (Fisher) Davidoff's sister.

A big welcome Justin and Micaela. We are so happy to continue to link to Family and extended Family, and we wish you a very happy life together, building a *binyan adei ad *BEH!

To introduce you to everyone, I am attaching a Family Tree made by Kevin Marks, which focuses mainly on members of this Group (the ones marked in red), which I think will be easier to understand than another one we have from Kevin Ossey.

I think it would be nice at this stage to get a tab for the Fisher Family added to the Sheet. Could someone supply a basic Family Tree of the Fisher Family, which we can give to the two Kevins to add Justin and Micaela?

Please feel free to contribute and share comments and events etc to the Group.

We are now coming up to the climax of our Festival of Joy, Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, and I would like to share a short vort, and an extract from a story that I saw this week (I am attaching the rest of the story for those interested).

· Joy without calculation (Rabbi Avraham of Slonim)

Joy does not need to arrive from various considerations or calculations.

Rather, our rejoicing, because it is a Mitzvah "To rejoice before Hashem your G-d....", is simply because He is Hashem our G-d.

The very fact that Hashem wants us to be joyful should itself bring us to joy!

(Rambam mentions in the halachos of Sukkos, that even although it is a Mitvah to rejoice on all of the Yom Tovim, it is more so on Sukkos....And to do so is a great Service...)

· Extract from a Story (The complete Story of Tishrei)

The hakafot (circuits of dancing on Simchat Torah) were in full swing.

Round and round went the circle of dancing worshippers in the little shul.

I had come to watch, that's all.

Somebody from the circle pulled me in to the swirling mass of dancers.

I turned my head to glance at the man who had roped me in.

He seemed elderly, and I wondered where he got so much strength to dance and dance without end.

I was astonished to see that tears were streaming down his cheeks.

But an inner happiness and ecstasy were written over his noble face.....

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all, with much Joy

חנוכה

Chanukah

14 letters

2017 / 5778 — FACETS OF LIFE *(under Mikeitz)* 260
2018 / 5779 — THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY' *(under Mikeitz)* 262
2020 / 5781 — A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS *(under Vayeishev)* 241
2020 / 5781 — CHALLENGE *(under Mikeitz)* 264
2021 / 5782 — THE ORAL LAW *(under Vayeishev)* 244
2021 / 5782 — LIGHT *(under Mikeitz)* 266
2022 / 5783 — LISTENING TO THE FLAME *(under Vayeishev)* 246
2022 / 5783 — SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO *(under Mikeitz)* 268
2023 / 5784 — A PIT FULL OF WATER *(under Vayeishev)* 249
2023 / 5784 — OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE *(under Mikeitz)* 270
2024 / 5785 — GOOD ATTITUDE *(under Vayeishev)* 251
2024 / 5785 — FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES *(under Mikeitz)* 273
2025 / 5786 — WATER AND LIGHT *(under Vayeishev)* 254
2025 / 5786 — A RARE OPPORTUNITY *(under Mikeitz)* 276

ט״ו בשבט

Tu BiShvat

1 letters

2025 / 5785 — WHO NOURISHES ALL *(under Yisro)* 455

פורים

Purim

12 letters

2017 / 5777 — JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS' *(under Tetzaveh)* 518
2018 / 5778 — JOY *(under Tetzaveh)* 520
2018 / 5778 — COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE *(under Ki Sisa)* 542
2019 / 5779 — PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK? *(under Vayikra)* 615
2019 / 5779 — AND WHAT AFTER PURIM? *(under Tzav)* 644
2021 / 5781 — JOY *(under Terumah)* 501
2021 / 5781 — LECHAIM *(under Tetzaveh)* 527
2022 / 5782 — FUN WITH VOICES *(under Vayikra)* 622
2024 / 5784 — JOY OF PURIM *(under Vayikra)* 627
2025 / 5785 — LESSONS FROM PURIM *(under Tetzaveh)* 534
2025 / 5785 — PURIM *(under Ki Sisa)* 557
2026 / 5786 — DRESSING UP *(under Tetzaveh)* 536

פסח

Pesach

16 letters

2016 / 5776 — THE UNUSUAL NUTRITION OF MATZOS 1383
2016 / 5776 — IS EMUNAH THAT SIMPLE? 1385
2017 / 5777 — ONE LETTER CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE 1387
2018 / 5778 — FREEDOM 1388
2018 / 5778 — HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS 1391
2019 / 5779 — DAVID BEN GURION 1394
2019 / 5779 — SPLITTING THE SEA 1397
2021 / 5781 — LOVE 1399
2022 / 5782 — HUMILITY 1401
2022 / 5782 — CHANNAH CARE 1403
2024 / 5784 — SIGNIFICANCE OF MATZAH 1405
2025 / 5785 — DEVOTION AVAILABLE TO ALL 1407
2026 / 5786 — TIME USAGE, A STORY 1409
2020 / 5780 — OUR ARMY OF HASHEM *(under Shemini)* 669

2023 / 5783 — LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE *(under Shemini)* 679

2023 / 5783 — ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT *(under Shemini)* 682

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

THE UNUSUAL NUTRITION OF MATZOS

2016 / 5776

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 22 April 2016 · Shabbos 23 Apr 2016 · ט"ו ניסן תשע"ו

Shabbos 2016-04-23 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well.

A no. of birthdays this week:

Mazal Tov to Binyomin Mordechai on his Opsherin. We hardly recognise him now with his short hair, tzitzis and kappel!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo on the Second night of Pesach. We all remember so clearly, and with warmth, your birth here in London BH.

Mazal Tov to Ariel Pesach. Enjoy your birthday in Las Vegas this year!

And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Aaron on his birthday.

First night of Pesach this year is on Shabbos and second night is Motzei Shabbos

It is said that the Matza of the first night FEEDS US WITH EMUNAH.

Matza of the second night FEEDS US WITH HEALING.

Therefore when eating matza at the sedarim we can bear this in mind.

I saw 2 nice messages related to EMUNAH and HEALING

EMUNAH

Hayom Yom 16th Adar Sheini - 'Avodah for the businessman includes arousing within himself the EMUNAH (Faith) and perfect trust in the One who feeds and sustains all flesh, that He will provide him with an ample livelihood.

He (the businessman) must therefore be truly happy and cheerful NOW, as though all his livelihood were ALREADY in his hand.'

HEALING

I saw an interesting quote from the Shomer Emunim - ' I have a tradition from my mother, who received it from her ancestors, that if a person develops some new weakness, they should not reveal it to anyone for a while.

This is a tried and tested segulah for it to go away by itself.'

Wishing everyone a Gut and Happy Shabbos and Yom Tov, and to absorb the special Spiritual qualities of Matza.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

IS EMUNAH THAT SIMPLE?

2016 / 5776

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 27 April 2016 · Shabbos 30 Apr 2016 · כ"ב ניסן תשע"ו

Shabbos 2016-04-30 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family

Hope everyone is well and enjoying Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her upcoming birthday. Sorry it can't be in london with us Batsheva, but it was nice having you here for Pesach at least!

Last week we spoke about EMUNAH (FAITH), and as a continuation I heard an interesting talk from The Rebbe this week, on Living Torah, on this very subject, which is strongly linked to Pesach. (Matzos through their 'humility' represent Emunah)

And the theme was the paradox that on the one hand Emunah implies total reliance on Hashem, and on the other hand we are also instructed that 'Man is born to TOIL'

TOTAL RELIANCE

In the Hagadda we read that when we came out of Mitzraim, Hashem Himself took us out ie 'not through a Saraf (Angel) and not through any other Messenger'

So surely if Hashem himself, who represents the ultimate of Goodness, decided to come down himself and take our Nation out from within another Nation, and take us as His own, we could presume that all our needs would therefore be provided thereafter.

And any independent efforts by us would actually be regarded as a lack of Trust and Faith!

MAN IS BORN TO TOIL

So how can we now reconcile the fact that Hashem expects from us to toil? Ie not only to work, but to work hard, with toil to attain our needs!

And the Rebbe answers this as follows.

When we receive without working or deserving, it is called bread of shame.

And Hashem does not want us to feel shame.

And so the Truth remains that Hashem is really providing all our needs.

And in addition He is allowing us to not feel shame, by giving us the opportunity to Toil!

I find this such an intricate interesting balance, with which we can examine and balance our own personal lives.

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos to all.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

ONE LETTER CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

2017 / 5777

Gut Shabbos · sent Friday, 14 April 2017 · Shabbos 15 Apr 2017 · י״ט ניסן תשע״ז

Shabbos 2017-04-15 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

Hope everyone is well and having a wonderful Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Ariel whose birthday is tonight. Wishing you a happy year Ariel. Hope you and your Family are enjoying Pesach in Vegas.

Mazal Tov Shlomo for your birthday. We were remembering your birth here in London on second night seder. Hope you are also all enjoying Pesach in Vegas with your Family.

Wishing everyone safe travels after Pesach.

I feel sure that everyone must be tired from the *sedorim* and als very busy and so just a short Dvar Torah which I heard last Shabbos, connected to Pesach in that it describes Redemption.

The Hebrew word for exile is *golah**, *and for redemption it is *geulah*

The 2 words have the same letters except there is one extra letter in *geulah* ie an *alef**.*

Alef stands for *Alufo** Shel Olam *(Master of the World)

Ie when we incorporate the *Alufo** Shel Olam *into our lives we can find freedom.

Wishing all a Gut Moed, Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

FREEDOM

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 30 March 2018 · Shabbos 31 Mar 2018 · ט"ו ניסן תשע"ח

Shabbos 2018-03-31 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well, and that those who were travelling, have had comfortable flights.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy on his upcoming birthday on the second night of Pesach. I probably say this every year, but the memory is so vivid of your mother arriving from hospital the next day in a cab, and I was in the street at that time, and she was carrying you into our home on Pesach! You were so cute and we still love you Shlomo. Have a wonderful year.

Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday is 2 days later (and 2 years later). Have a wonderful year Ariel. We miss you and love you.

Mazal Tov to Gareth Sacks who got engaged. Wishing you both much happiness, and the wedding should be at a good time. Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Channah Davidoff who has found a beautiful flat for herself. Wishing you much success Channah!

I was recently in touch with Joy (ne Davidoff) and Claude Camaroff, and we welcome you both to our weekly Family email! Nice to be in touch again.

The email is delayed this week, because last night and this morning we, as with everyone, have been frantically putting away, hiding, selling and destroying all the chametz in the house, because ii is a strict mitzvah that no chametz should be found or seen over the 8 days of Pesach.

But I am now free to give over an interesting dvar Torah I saw in Hayom Yom this week (12th Nissan)

This speaks about the difference between a

1. Servant
2. Soldier

(in relation to FREEDOM)

From the time of the exodus from Egypt, the Jewish people have been called the 'army of Hashem' - tzivos Hashem' ie soldiers.

We are also called 'servants of Hashem'.

Servants.

A servant can serve his master on all different levels and with many varieties of work.

This service involves great toil and labour, but it has limitation ie the servant would not be prepared to give up his life for his master.

Soldiers.

Soldiers are servants who serve with great toil and labour, AND IN ADDITION, WITH SELF-SACRIFICE - in wars of defence or attack. They will stand at their posts with the highest degree of determination, un-detered by the opposing enemy, acting according to the orders of their commander.

The Jews in Egypt were utterly enslaved and afflicted by their enemy, yet despite this all, they determinedly held on to their 'Jewish names, Jewish language, and Jewish clothing.'

They 'stood at their posts' with absolute determination, because they knew that Hashem had promised to redeem them.

Whoever behaves as they did under such circumstances is a soldier in the army of Hashem, and Hashem will come to his assistance in a manner that

manifests itself in nature - and yet transcends nature. - The Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Pesach, with a sense of true Freedom.

HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS

2018 / 5778

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 5 April 2018 · Shabbos 7 Apr 2018 · כ"ב ניסן תשע"ח

Shabbos 2018-04-07 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope you are all well and enjoying Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Batsheva whose birthday is next week. Wishing you a great and interesting year Batsheva in both material and spiritual. It is nice that you are with us in London for the moment. BH

I cant let Pesach go past without mentioning our unsung hero, MOMMY!

In Lubavitch we are very strict on Pesach with the Laws of chametz. We don't buy any products and use only foods which can be peeled and home cooked, so that we are sure that not even a speck of chametz enters our home. We also don't allow the matzah to come into contact with any liquid for the same reason. This means tons of extra work to prepare the meals. And every year Mommy is there at her post, working extremely hard, and to all late hours, on guard, and preparing all different types of delicious meals. THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US.

We already learnt from the maamer of the Alte Rebbe (Sheshes yamim) how the humility in chochmah (represented by the matzah eaten on the first night of Pesach), has such a powerful effect over the next 6 days of Pesach in neutralising and refining the negative emotional qualities arising out of binah with its expansive nature.

This same refinement continues throughout the 49 days of Sefiras Haomer as follows:

There are 3 Intellectual faculties in Man (obviously including women)

1. Chochmah - the highly compacted point of say an initial idea
2. Binah - the vast expansion of details thereafter
3. Daas - the link of the details to action

And 7 emotional faculties (midot)

1. Chesed - LOVING-KINDNESS, benevolence
2. Gevurah -discipline, restraint, awe, justice
3. Tiferes - beauty, harmony compassion (it is often explained as a combination of chesed and gevurah)
4. Netzach - endurance, fortitude, victory, ambition
5. Hod - HUMILITY, splendour
6. Yesod - foundation, bonding (often explained as a combination of netzach and hod)
7. Malchut -nobility, sovereignty, leadership.

So, it is all very well saying that refinement of our negative midot takes place over the 49 days of sefira (including Pesach), but what does this mean practically?

First of all there are 49 combinations of midot (7x7) and each day of the omer addresses one of these combinations. (each midah contains itself, or it could be in combination with each of the other midot)

Todays combination for refining is HOD of CHESED - HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS. (the first week during Pesach is the refining of all the 7 aspects of chesed)

There is a very nice book by Rabbi Simon Jacobson called The Counting of the Omer, in which he explains each day.

And the explanation of todays refinement is as follows:

'One can often get imprisoned in love, being unable to forgive your loved one, or bend, or compromise your position.

Hod introduces the aspect of humility in love - the ability to rise above yourself and forgive, or give in to the one you love, just for the sake of love, even if you are convinced that you are right.

Arrogant love is not real love.'

And the exercise he gives for today is - Swallow your pride and reconcile with a loved one with whom you have quarrelled.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

DAVID BEN GURION

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 18 April 2019 · Shabbos 20 Apr 2019 · ט"ו ניסן תשע"ט

Shabbos 2019-04-20 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Shlomo Chaim Levy whose birthday is on the Second Seder night! I remember your Mommy bringing you back to our home on Second Day of Yom Tov. And now this is your barmitzvah year BH. Wishing you a wonderful year, and a year where you gear up and take up Torah and Mitzvos with a happy heart. Looking forward to be with you all soon at your celebration in Lag Baomer BEH.

Next birthday Mazal Tov is to Brian Davidoff. Wishing you a good year Brian in good health and happiness. Thank you for staying in touch with our Family in California. You are such a sport!

Mazel Tov to Ariel Pesach Bassin whose birthday follows next week. You should go from strength to strength using all the beautiful talents with which Hashem has given you. Enjoy Pesach in California with the rest of your Family.

Mazal Tov Aron Davidoff on your birthday next week. I hope all is going very well with you!

And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freidel on the purchase of your own flat in Longbeach. This is such great news, and it should be meshaneh makom meshaneh mazal letovah! We also wish Mendel Mazal Tov on the birth of a nephew to your brother Levi. Only sinchos!

Batsheva has almost reached her target to sponsor her hike for charity in the Grand Canyon. For those who would like to contribute, the link is: <https://www.teamfriendship.org/hikeextreme/Batshevadavidoff> https://www.teamfriendship.org/hikeextreme/Batshevadavidoff

David Ben Gurion was Israel's Prime Minister when it was a young fledging State, and I saw a cute, light story with significance, when he visited President Eisenhower to obtain support in those difficult times.

John Foster Dulles, who was then Secretary of State, challenged Ben Gurion as follows, 'Tell me Prime Minister, who is your new State to represent. Jews are living all over the world for the last 2000 years. Can you honestly talk about a single Nation with a unique culture?'

David Ben Gurion replied as follows: ' About 300 years ago the Mayflower left England with the first settlers who were going to create the greatest superpower in the world.

Can you do me a favour Mr Secretary - Go out on the streets and find 10 American children and ask them the following questions:

1. What was the name of the Captain of the Mayflower?
2. How long did the trip last?
3. What did the passengers eat on the way?
4. Describe the events which occurred on the journey

I am sure you will agree that there is a good chance that you will not get a satisfactory answer to these questions.

Now on the other hand, not 300 years ago, but more than 3200 years ago the Jews left the Country of Egypt.

I therefore pray that , on your vast travels around the world, that you ask 10 Jewish children in different countries, the following questions:

1. What was the name of the Leader who took the Jews out of Egypt?
2. How long was their journey?

3. What did they eat while crossing the desert?
4. What happened when they found themselves in front of the sea?

Once you get the answer to these questions, I invite you to carefully reconsider your question!!

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos and Pesach to our great Nation.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

SPLITTING THE SEA

2019 / 5779

Gut Shabbos, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 25 April 2019 · Shabbos 27 Apr 2019 · כ"ב ניסן תשע"ט

Shabbos 2019-04-27 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Pesach

Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week. Wishing you an amazing year, partly in California with the Family, Batsheva. Enjoy!

And just a short Dvar Torah to do with the 7th day of Pesach, when there was the miracle of the Splitting of the Sea

Thereafter Mosheh and Bnei Yisrael sang a song of Praise to Hashem

The Rebbe explained in a sicha:

The Sages note that Torah uses the future tense to describe this Song ie Az Yashir - Then Moses will sing.

Surely it should have said Az shar -Then Moses sang?!

Our Sages explained that at the time of the splitting of the sea we experienced a revelation from far beyond the realm of time.

Included in that experience was a revelation of the Future Era.

The future tense is a reference to techiyas hamesim - when the dead will come back to life.

Included in the Song of the Sea, was a preview of the future song of the Final Redemption.

May this be very soon, in our days.

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov to all!

LOVE

2021 / 5781

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yomtov · sent Thursday, 1 April 2021 · Shabbos 3 Apr 2021 · כ"א ניסן תשפ"א

Shabbos 2021-04-03 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Pesach.

Mazal Tov again to Ariel on his Barmitzvah. We all had the opportunity to zoom in to his event where he davened the whole of shacharis and Hallel and did all the layening so beautifully and with such ease. We are all so proud of you Ariel! Wishing you to go from strength to strength and with much happiness and success. And Mazal Tov Baty on bringing him up so beautifully and putting in so much effort into the upbringing of your children.

We have now moved into the 49 days between Pesach and the giving of Torah on Shavuos, called Sefira

Rabbi Moshe Kordevero, the famous Kabbalist, in his monumental work the Pardes, writes that sefira has 3 meanings:

- Number (mispar)
- Telling a story (sipur)
- Sapphire stone (sapir) - which is a transluscent crystal that shines brightly

Ie counting the sefira illuminates the different aspects of our emotional lives.

The days of sefirah tell us the story of our souls.

There are 7 emotional qualities, and each of these 7 subdivide further into 7, making a total of 49

So practically, the whole of this week will be the emotion of LOVING-KINDNESS (Chesed), and today specifically is the aspect of HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS (Hod shebechesed)

As explained by Rabbi Simon Jacobson in his book 'The Counting of the Omer':

LOVE is the single and most powerful and necessary component in life

It is the foundation of all human interactions.

It allows us to reach above and beyond ourselves, to experience another person, and to allow that person to experience us.

It is the tool by which we learn to experience the highest reality - G-d.

HUMILITY IN LOVE (today's sefirah)

This is the ability to rise above oneself and forgive, or give in to the one you love, just for the sake of love, even if you are convinced that you are right.

Each of the 49 days of Sefirah illuminates one of the 49 emotions and allows us to examine and refine these emotions.

After 49 days we should therefore be purified and ready, to Receive the Torah anew on Shavuos!

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yomtov to all

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

HUMILITY

2022 / 5782

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 15 April 2022 · Shabbos 16 Apr 2022 · ט"ו ניסן תשפ"ב

Shabbos 2022-04-16 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and getting ready for Pesach.

And wishing all those who are travelling, safe and happy journeys.

Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on the birth and naming of their new daughter Nechama Dina! Beautiful news BH! Wishing the whole Family continued growth and development in all areas, gashmius and ruchnius, and with much joy!

Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his upcoming birthday on the second Seder night. Wishing you a year of much growth Shlomo, and success in your studies, sport, and many other areas, with much joy!

Also on second nifght Seder is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie who we were all very fond of. Her neshamah should have an Aliyah, and wishing all of her Family only good. That reminds me of a beautiful picture I saw last week of Kerry Lee and her family! Wishing all much nachas!

Mazal Tov to Ariel, whose birthday is next week on chol hamoed Pesach, and we are so happy to have him here with us, together with Baty and Talya and Sarita, all the way from Australia BH! Have a wonderful year Ariel and keep growing nicely as you are now BH!

Mazal Tov to Brian, whose birthday is also upcoming next week. Wishing you a year of good health and wealth, and with much joy, Brian!

The MATZAH of Pesach represents, among other things, HUMILITY.

It is flat, small and simple, with no airs, as opposed to bread, which rises considerably.

In this context, I saw a beautiful short Dvar Torah on HUMILITY from the Baal Shem Tov (Keter Shem Tov paragraph 85) as follows:

"Your beginning shall be small, but your end shall increase exceedingly - Iyov 8:7

A Humble beginning is a catalyst, a solid foundation for great success in the end."

Wishing everyone a wonderful Shabbos, and a Kosher and Happy Pesach!

Love to all.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

CHANNAH CARE

2022 / 5782

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 20 April 2022 · Shabbos 23 Apr 2022 · כ"ב ניסן תשפ"ב

Shabbos 2022-04-23 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Pesach, and for those travelling, to have safe and enjoyable trips.

Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday this week. Wishing you a happy and healthy year Brian. I think I wished you a bit too early last week, but blessings are always useful BEH.

Mazal Tov to Aaron for his birthday next week. Wishing you a wonderful successful year Aaron. I hope all is going well.

There is an interesting Mitzva that we do at this time of year in spring time, in the month of Nissan, which is to make a once a year blessing on a blossoming fruit tree.

This year this Mitzva has had an added dimension for us for the following reason:

About 5 years ago Channah took the pip of an apple and planted it in a little flower pot.

Since then she has been CAREFULLY NURTURING the little plant which sprouted, making sure to give it the right amount of water and keeping it in the optimal place for sunlight and growth.

As the plant grew it was transferred into larger pots, and eventually was transferred into our garden.

It was carefully looked after with supports, watering, fertiliser, keeping away the foxes and insects. The foxes attempted to dig holes near the tree and we had to get wire mesh to protect it.

BH the tree is now a considerable size, looking very healthy and no longer needing any physical support.

And guess what we saw last week for the first time?

ONE SMALL BUNCH OF BLOSSOMS!!!

Which means that one or two apples are on their way BEH!

And so today I made the Nissan Blessing on Blossoming Fruit Trees in our own garden for the first time BH!

See photo attached, and thank you Channah for the special CARE that you have devoted to this tree (and more) for 5 years!

For those who would like to say this brochah, if you can find a fruit blossom tree, the text is as follows:

"Baruch Atah Ad. Elokeinu Melech haolam shelo chaser beolamo klum uvara vo brios tovos veilanos tovos lehanos bahem bnei adam."

"Blessed are you L-rd our G-d, King of the Univertse, Who has made nothing lacking in His world, and created in it goodly creatures and goodly trees, to give mankind pleasure."

Wishing everyone a Gut Yom Tov and a Gut Shabbos, taking much care!

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

SIGNIFICANCE OF MATZAH

2024 / 5784

Gut Shabbos, Gut Moed, Gut Yom Tov · sent Thursday, 25 April 2024 · Shabbos 27 Apr 2024 · י"ט ניסן תשפ"ד

Shabbos 2024-04-27 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying Pesach.

Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday is tonight. I hope that you are enjoying your trip to California Ariel and that you are having a nice Pesach. It was good to see you in California BH. Wishing you a year of continued happiness and success in both the material and spiritual.

Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff whose birthday is a day later. I hope all going well with you. Keep us in touch with your music when you can. Wishing you a year of much success and happiness Aaron.

I would like to welcome to our Family Group, Adrian Sacks, who is a first cousin from my mother's side. As mentioned last week, we had his daughter Bronwyn and her Family over for Shabbos, and as a result I made contact with Adrian again after many years (could even be decades). Adrian qualified as a dentist in SA and has been living in Melbourne for many years.

Welcome Ade. So nice to be in touch again! Whenever a new member joins I have this wish to have a Family tree so that we can introduce a new member to everyone. How about it Batsheva or Kevin, or any other volunteers!?

I saw an article on the SIGNIFICANCE OF MATZAH, from the Rebbe, and I would like to share some of the points (Likutei Sichos Vol 1 p129 and Vol 7 p276)

- Chametz (leavened bread) rises and becomes bloated, and this symbolizes self-inflated egotism and pride. Matzah, which remains flat and unpretentious, reflects selfless humility. This concept is also reflected in Torah's description of matzah as 'poor man's bread'. A poor man is humble and free of arrogance.
- The theme of Pesach is to undergo a personal exodus to freedom from Egypt by transcending our individual limits. The Zohar associates matzah with the quality of self-transcendence, calling it the 'bread of Faith'.
- Hashem gave us the Mitzvah to eat matzah on Pesach, to help us internalize the experience of the above 2 points, and this becomes part of our flesh and blood. Ie it becomes internalized.
- The Hebrew letters of chametz and matzah are almost identical. Each has 3 letters, 2 of which are the same. The third letters are slightly different (ie one has a chet - chametz, and matzah has a heh. Both these letters have the shape of 3 walls. In the case of the ches of chametz, the letter is enclosed on all 3 sides, signifying imprisonment. The heh of matzah however, has a little opening at the top of one of it's walls. This escape hatch refers to teshuvah, the ever- open opportunity to return to Hashem.

Practically this means that a chametz character will be opiniated and place his personal desires above everything. He will seek excuses to rationalize his behaviour because love, especially self love, covers all faults.

But the matzah character will be more willing to step beyond his personal desires, and fulfill Hashem's Will. When he makes mistakes, he will not try to justify his behaviour, but will seek to correct his faults through teshuvah.

Gut Shabbos to all and a continued inspirational Pesach.

Pesach ↑ Pesach · Contents · By date פסח

DEVOTION AVAILABLE TO ALL

2025 / 5785

Gut Shabbos and Gut Yom Tov · sent Friday, 18 April 2025 · Shabbos 19 Apr 2025 · כ״א ניסן תשפ״ה

Shabbos 2025-04-19 is Pesach (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well, and enjoying Pesach.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yecheskiel ben Esther.

Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week. Wishing you a year of much happiness and good health Brian, and continued success with everything that you do BEH. Thank you (and Sharon) for becoming so much part of the life of our children in California. Many of them speak so fondly of Uncle Brian!

This coming Shabbos and Sunday are the 7th and 8th days of Pesach.

The 7th day of Pesach is when the splitting of the sea took place upon leaving Mitzrayim.

The Rebbe Rayatz mentions, that although the splitting of the sea, and the Jewish People walking through the sea on dry land, involved great miracles and wonders, their initial entry into the waters was not miraculous - they entered the waters with SELF SACRIFICE.

It was in this merit that the sea split for them and became dry land afterwards, opening the way to receive the Torah at Har Sinai.

Self-sacrifice is not necessarily giving up one's life, but rather implies TOTAL DEVOTION and sacrifice for serving Hashem

- In the upcoming Hayom Yom of 26th of Nissan it speaks of the self-sacrifice during prayer, to be bound up with the Essence of the Infinite G-d.

- And then in the Hayom Yom of 15th Kislev, the Alte Rebbe tells his son the Mitteler Rebbe, that one must have total self-sacrifice and dedication (mesirat nefesh) for the love of one's fellow Jew, even towards a Jew whom one has never seen!
- And in the Hayom Yom of 3rd Adar Sheni, the Rebbe points out how the total devotion of a simple and sincere person, can reach higher levels than even brilliant scholars.

The 8th day of Pesach refers mainly to the Coming of Mashiach, may it be this year!

Wishing everyone a Gut Shabbos and a Gut Yom Tov!

Shemini ↑ Shemini · Contents · By date שמיני

TIME USAGE, A STORY

2026 / 5786

Gut Yom Tov Gut Shabbos · sent Sunday, 5 April 2026 · Shabbos 11 Apr 2026 · כ"ד ניסן תשפ"ו

Sent mid-Pesach; the following Shabbos (Shemini) has its own piece, so this is filed under Pesach only.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well and having a wonderful Pesach.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin on his birthday today. Wishing you a great year Ariel with much achievement in both the material and spiritual. And with much honour to you, we wish you a successful year with your IDF training this coming year BEH!

I also want to remember Aunty Girlie's yohrtzeit which was on the Second Day of Pesach. We wish long life to Adrian and all the connected Sacks Family. All who met Aunty Girlie can only have fond memories of her and her always happy disposition! Her neshamah should have an Aliyah.

I saw an interesting story in Slice of Life which I would like to share, about a man called Shmuel Menachem Spitz who is 105 years old and lives in Yerushalayim.

He was born in Hungary, he is a holocaust survivor, is a veteran of Israel's war of Independence, a former factory worker and the husband of an Auschwitz survivor.

Together they built a proud Jewish Family, and despite his remarkable age, he continues to study Torah every single day.

Both their life stories are described, and one of the points he mentioned was, "During my working years, I did not have much time to learn Torah. I feel that I was granted long life in order to complete the learning I once lacked."

When asked about the secret to his long life he replied with *3 simple principles*:

· Eat calmly. In the past people ate meals. Today it feels like people devour food. All our lives we ate 3 simple, orderly meals a day

· Second, keep the mind active. Sit and learn, read, and think. Do not waste your mind on nonsense

· Thirdly, always be joyful. One must remember that things could always be worse, G-d forbid. Rejoice in what you have.

From the second night of Pesach we begin Counting of the Omer - counting 49 days until Shavuot, the time when Hashem gave us His Torah.

In the meantime we still have to celebrate the rest of Pesach.

Gut Moed, Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos to all

ל״ג בעומר

Lag BaOmer

6 letters

2018 / 5778 — 7 = 5 + 2 *(under Emor)* 776
2021 / 5781 — RASHBI *(under Emor)* 783
2022 / 5782 — LAG BAOMER *(under Emor)* 786
2023 / 5783 — AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE *(under Emor)* 788
2025 / 5785 — GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT *(under Emor)* 793
2026 / 5786 — TIMES AND TIME *(under Emor)* 795

שבועות

Shavuos

4 letters

2020 / 5780 — HONEY AND MILK 1413
2023 / 5783 — TO DO FIRST, AND UNDERSTAND LATER? 1415
2026 / 5786 — TWO OATHS 1417
2024 / 5784 — PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS *(under Bamidbar)* 856

Shavuos ↑ Shavuos · Contents · By date שבועות

HONEY AND MILK

2020 / 5780

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 27 May 2020 · Shabbos 30 May 2020 · ז' סיון תש"פ

Shabbos 2020-05-30 is Shavuos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary next week. Wishing you much continued happiness and good health together.

Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday on the same day. Warm wishes from all of us.

Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the birth of a niece to Sheina. Wishing many simchos in the Family

In relation to Shavuos, the giving of Torah, Dovid Hamelech and the Baal Shem Tov:

Tehillim 19-11: 'Torah and Mitzvos are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.'

Torah is likened to nourishing milk (chalav)

The numerical value of chalav is 40, which is the number of days Mosheh spent on Har Sinai when receiving the Torah.

The Baal Shem Tov (1698- 1760) revealed the hidden levels of Torah, in preparation for the revelation of Mashiach ben David.

Ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu - How happy are we, and how good is our portion BH!

Wishing everyone a sweet and nutritious Yom Tov in both gashmius and ruchnius, and a Gut Shabbos!

Shavuos ↑ Shavuos · Contents · By date שבועות

TO DO FIRST, AND UNDERSTAND LATER?

2023 / 5783

Gut Yom Tov and Gut Shabbos · sent Wednesday, 24 May 2023 · Shabbos 27 May 2023 · ז' סיון תשפ"ג

Shabbos 2023-05-27 is Shavuos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his graduation this week, achieving Master in Law in LA Loyola. What an amazing achievement Zalmy! Well done for all the hard work. Wishing you to continue from strength to strength.

Mazal Tov to Adam on the bris of Shlomo Zalman yesterday. Wishing you much nachas from him and all your Family. Mazal Tov also to Jody, Roy, Gavin, Shelly, Sid and Brian!

Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick on his upcoming birthday. Aaron is the husband of Sara (ne Davidoff). Wishing you a great year Aaron!

Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming Batmitzvah next week. Looking forward to your big party Esther, and wishing you continued growth and happiness in both gashmius and ruchnius! And giving much nachas to your parents

Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Meme, also next week. Her neshama should have an aliya! We were all very fond of Meme.

I saw a nice article from the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, connected to Shavuot, which I would like to share.

A famous statement by the Jewish People at the Giving of Torah at Har Sinai was "NAASEH VENISHMA" - We will do and we will hear.

Ie they were saying with full enthusiasm and whole-heartedness, "Whatever Hashem asks of us we will do!" (even without understanding)

The Gemorra Shabbos understands that Am Yisrael said this even before hearing any of the Commandments.

Ibn Ezra, Rashbam and Ramban understand it as "We will do and understand" ie we can only understand Judaism by doing it.

But the conclusion is that the whole Jewish Nation agreed with one voice to the DOING of Judaism ie to follow the Code of Jewish Law.

The HEARING has many meanings - listening, understanding, absorbing, internalizing, responding, obeying etc, and refers to the more spiritual, inward dimension of Torah. And here one can also express one's own individuality in addition to the doing.

The modern Western mind tends to put things in the opposite order. We seek to understand what we are committing ourselves to before making the commitment.

This is fine if one is purchasing a mobile phone , or signing a contract, but not when making a deep existential commitment.

Other examples of existential commitment are, that one cannot understand marriage without getting married, and one cannot understand leadership without leading.

The only way to understand a way of life is to take the risk of living it.

Ie "Naaseh venishma" - " We will do, and eventually through extended practice and long exposure, we will understand. And each person in his or her, own special way."

Gut Yom tov and Shabbos to all with a reacceptance of Torah with joy and inwardness!

Shavuos ↑ Shavuos · Contents · By date שבועות

TWO OATHS

2026 / 5786

Gut Yom Tov Gut Shabbos · sent Tuesday, 19 May 2026 · Shabbos 23 May 2026 · ז׳ סיון תשפ״ו

Shabbos 2026-05-23 is Shavuos (no weekly parsha in the diaspora); filed under Yom Tov.

Dear Family,

I hope that everyone is well.

Wishing a refuah shleimah for Yechezkiel ben Ester.

MAZAL TOV TO PENINA AND AVI ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY LAST SHABBOS BH. The bris should be at a good and favourable time. Wishing you much nachas from him and all your children BEH. Mazal Tov also on your move to a new home – meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal letovah!

Mazal Tov to Nechamah Levy on her upcoming Bat mitzvah party next week. Wishing you a lovely party Nechamah and lots of success and happiness for your future with both the material and Spiritual. And wishing Mazal Tov to the whole Levy Family!

As this week is going to be very busy with travellings, Yom Tov, Shabbos, celebrations etc BH and BEH, I am doing the weekly email early, and will include just a short Dvar Torah which I saw.

The word Shavuot has multiple meanings:

· “Weeks” – Because it is the holiday that comes after Counting of the Omer for 7 weeks

· “Oaths” – On this Holiday 2 promises were made

Ø First, Hashem promised that He would not exchange the Jewish People for any other.

Ø Second, we promised that we would not exchange Hashem for another (Book of Our Heritage)

The celebration of Shavuot should inspire each individual to intensify his or her commitment to Torah study.

Each individual should also endeavour to share their Torah knowledge, by establishing a new Torah study session in which he/she will teach others.....
(The Rebbe Shavuot 5750 – 1990)

Wishing safe travels for all those travelling, a Gut Yom Tov, Gut Shabbos, and many continued celebrations for all BEH!

Letters per parsha

Bereishis			בראשית
Bereishis	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בראשית
Noach	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	נח
Lech Lecha	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	לך לך
Vayeira	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	וירא
Chayei Sarah	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	10	חיי שרה
Toldos	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	10	תולדות
Vayeitzei	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	10	ויצא
Vayishlach	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	10	וישלח
Vayeishev	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	10	וישב
Mikeitz	2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	9	מקץ
Vayigash	2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025	7	ויגש
Vayechi	2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023, 2025, 2026	7	ויחי

Shemos			שמות
Shemos	2017, 2018, 2021, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	7	שמות
Va'eira	2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	9	וארא
Bo	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בא
Beshalach	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בשלח
Yisro	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	יתרו
Mishpatim	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	משפטים

Terumah	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	תרומה
Tetzaveh	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025, 2026	10	תצוה
Ki Sisa	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	כי תשא
Vayakhel	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	ויקהל
Pekudei	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	פקודי

Vayikra ויקרא

Vayikra	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	ויקרא
Tzav	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	צו
Shemini	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	שמיני
Tazria	2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	10	תזריע
Metzora	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	מצורע
Acharei Mos	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	אחרי מות
Kedoshim	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	קדושים
Emor	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	אמור
Behar	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בהר
Bechukosai	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בחוקותי

Bamidbar במדבר

Bamidbar	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	במדבר
Nasso		11	נשא

	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026		
Beha'aloscha	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בהעלותך
Shelach	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	שלח
Korach	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	קרח
Chukas	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	חקת
Balak	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	בלק
Pinchas	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	פינחס
Mattos	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	מטות
Masei	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	מסעי

Devarim — דברים

Devarim	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	דברים
Va'eschanan	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	ואתחנן
Eikev	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	עקב
Re'eh	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	ראה
Shoftim	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	שופטים
Ki Seitzei	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	כי תצא
Ki Savo	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	כי תבא
Nitzavim	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	נצבים

Vayeilech	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	11	וילך
Haazinu	2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	10	האזינו
Vezos Haber-achah	—	0	וזאת הברכה

Family simchas

Every "Mazal Tov" in the letters (and in a few short family notes he sent separately), quoted as written, by date sent. Each line links to its letter.

2016

13 Jan 2016	*Engagement*	BIG MAZAL TOV ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF PENINA AND AVI!!!
13 Jan 2016	*Simcha*	And MAZAL Tov to you and Penina.
21 Jan 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty for her birthday tonight.
21 Jan 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi.
4 Feb 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Zalmy for getting good results for your Essays in your Business Studies.
18 Feb 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita on your birthday in far off Australia.
18 Feb 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy for completing the Marathon.
3 Mar 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday.
10 Mar 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chana Lieba on your birthday today.
10 Mar 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal tov to the Jacobs Family.
17 Mar 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Uncle Chanan on his birthday tomorrow.
17 Mar 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday this coming week.
17 Mar 2016	*Wedding*	I suspect also that Nechama's wedding is coming up next week or soon after, and so we wish you a big Mazal Tov for this, and to the rest of your Family.
25 Mar 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella on her upcoming birthday.
25 Mar 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their upcoming Anniversary.
31 Mar 2016	*Simcha*	MAZAL TOV FOR THE UPCOMING CHASSANA OF PENINA AND AVI.
31 Mar 2016	*Simcha*	Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov!
14 Apr 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai for his upcoming Third Birthday this coming Sunday IYrH, and therefore also his Opsheren (first time he is cutting his hair).
14 Apr 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again.
22 Apr 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Binyomin Mordechai on his Opsherin.
22 Apr 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo on the Second night of Pesach.

22 Apr 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Pesach.
22 Apr 2016	*Birthday*	And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Aaron on his birthday.
27 Apr 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her upcoming birthday.
5 May 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday today!
5 May 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha for her birthday next week.
5 May 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Nechama.
12 May 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on his upcoming birthday.
12 May 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovy who also has a birthday this coming week.
12 May 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Zalmy for getting excellent results at their colleges BH.
19 May 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday.
20 May 2016	*Simcha*	We all wish you a BIG MAZAL TOV!!! *(family note)*
27 May 2016	*Anniversary*	Also wishing Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba for their upcoming Anniversary.
27 May 2016	*New Home*	Also Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha for moving into their new and larger accommodation BH.
2 Jun 2016	*Simcha*	The Mazal Tovs this week are all in Sharon.
2 Jun 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary today!
9 Jun 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming birthday next week.
16 Jun 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday today.
16 Jun 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for their upcoming Anniversary of their engagement at the Ohel
16 Jun 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos.
16 Jun 2016	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Chava on graduating from her first year in Seminary.
23 Jun 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary tomorrow.
23 Jun 2016	*Anniversary*	And another Anniversary, their first, Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida.
23 Jun 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming Birthday next week.
1 Jul 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
1 Jul 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Mendel, and Shmuly and Devorah Leah!
14 Jul 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli on their Anniversary.

14 Jul 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her upcoming birthday.
14 Jul 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy for getting excellent results for his end of year .
14 Jul 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Channah for getting her Hygiene Certificate for her Cooking business.
28 Jul 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday.
4 Aug 2016	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Chanie and the Dahan Family on the engagement of Shlomo!
4 Aug 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week.
11 Aug 2016	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Shmuly on passing a big exam.
11 Aug 2016	*Semicha / Studies*	Similarly, Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing his difficult exam.
18 Aug 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy for having been offered a place in Law School.
25 Aug 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin on his upcoming birthday next week.
25 Aug 2016	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah and Family on their move to a new Home!
2 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin on his birthday which I think is today.
2 Sep 2016	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on your upcoming Anniversary.
8 Sep 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dovi who won the Best Camper award at overnight Camp in Canada!
15 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya on her upcoming birthday next week.
15 Sep 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly, having been selected for the Shul Committee here.
15 Sep 2016	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy with his new fancy car and his good Grades from exams
22 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Freida on your upcoming birthday.
22 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov also to Chava on your birthday thereafter.
29 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava on her birthday today.
29 Sep 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchok on his birthday WHICH IS ON ROSH HASHANA!, and which is also the birthday of the whole of mankind.
21 Oct 2016	*Birthday*	Similarly we also wish Avi Mazal Tov on his English Birthday a few days before this, which we also celebrated here in London.

27 Oct 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Avi on your real birthday this coming week.
3 Nov 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his first birthday!
10 Nov 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week.
17 Nov 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mommy on your Hebrew birthday which has already been thoroughly celebrated.
17 Nov 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Penina on your upcoming birthday next week.
17 Nov 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shlomo Dahan on his Chassana this week, and all the Family who are there celebrating.
8 Dec 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya on her birthday next week.
8 Dec 2016	*Simcha*	We want to wish Shmuel and Rivky Mazal Tov on their move to LA.
8 Dec 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov and all good for you and your Family *(family note)*
8 Dec 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel! *(family note)*
15 Dec 2016	*Birthday*	So first Mazal Tov Channa on your upcoming birthday.
15 Dec 2016	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Rivky on your upcoming birthday. iYrh you are facing a year with lots of change and new possibility.
29 Dec 2016	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on continually getting good grades in his courses BH.

2017

5 Jan 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on your upcoming birthday.
5 Jan 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie who also has her birthday next week.
12 Jan 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Chanie Dahan whose birthday is today and Shmuel Levy whose birthday is tomorrow.
2 Feb 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Baty on your upcoming birthday!
2 Feb 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Baty and Shmueli on your engagement anniversary which was Yud Shvat
9 Feb 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa for her upcoming birthday I think on Shabbos.
16 Feb 2017	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Rivky, Shmuel and Family with their new home in LA.
16 Feb 2017	*Bar Mitzvah*	And Mazal Tov for Dovi putting on Tefillin at the end of this month in preparation for his Barmitzvah BEH.
2 Mar 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday.
2 Mar 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Sarita in Australia far away.

2 Mar 2017	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah and Family on the wedding of her brother Mendel, taking place tonight.
9 Mar 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba on her upcoming birthday.
9 Mar 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha who has a birthday coming up tonight.
16 Mar 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanan on your upcoming birthday.
16 Mar 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on your Anniversary next week.
16 Mar 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on your First Anniversary!
30 Mar 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his upcoming birthday.
6 Apr 2017	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Sarah on her engagement.
6 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his upcoming birthday on second night Seder.
14 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel whose birthday is tonight.
14 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Shlomo for your birthday.
20 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week.
20 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian who has a birthday on Shabbos.
20 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron who also has a birthday next week.
20 Apr 2017	*Simcha*	Wishing you much success Aaron Mazal Tov to Chava who passed her driving test today BH.
27 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her upcoming birthday on Shabbos.
27 Apr 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama on her birthday also on Shabbos.
5 May 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach whose birthday is tomorrow.
5 May 2017	*Birthday*	MAZAL TOV TO DOVI WHOSE 13TH BIRTHDAY IS TODAY!
5 May 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty whose birthday is next week.
5 May 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman whose first birthday is also this coming week!
12 May 2017	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on the birth of a beautiful baby boy!
12 May 2017	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on the upcoming Bar-mitzvah of Dovi on Sunday and the Family Shabbos this week, which they have arranged together with the Shalom zachar for Avi and Penina's baby, with the coming together of many Families BH!
12 May 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel for his birthday today.
12 May 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov again to Mendel for passing his exam for Interior Decorating.

12 May 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha for becoming certified in Estate Agency.
12 May 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Devorah Leah Good luck for all those currently studying and writing exams.
18 May 2017	*Bar Mitzvah*	So first of all a big Mazal Tov to Dovi on his Barmitzvah, and to Shmuel and Rivky for being such amazing hosts, for the accommodation, and for all the many months of hard work and preparations which went into this event, mostly with their own 2 hands!
18 May 2017	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina for their new beautiful boy which was named Pesach Yishaya also on Sunday, at the same venue of the Barmitzvah, just before sunset, both events having taken place on Lag Baomer!
25 May 2017	*Simcha*	2 Mazal Tovs in Sharon next week.
25 May 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary.
25 May 2017	*Birthday*	And on the same day, Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday.
25 May 2017	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli in Sydney on moving into your own new home.
2 Jun 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming birthday next week.
2 Jun 2017	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina for the upcoming pidyan haben for Pesach Yeshayeh.
2 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov for Yeshayeh
8 Jun 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
8 Jun 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on your birthday next week.
8 Jun 2017	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov again to Avi and Penina for the pidyan haben this week which I heard was beautiful BH.
15 Jun 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary tonight.
15 Jun 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi who also have an Anniversary in this coming week.
15 Jun 2017	*Anniversary*	And another Anniversary - Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on your Anniversary next week.
15 Jun 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel on his third birthday next week and upcoming opsher.
22 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	So Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie.
22 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel.
22 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on getting excellent results for his 'prerequisites' to do Nursing.

22 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Chava who has just finished her Seminary year in New York, and is now travelling to SA to be a Leader at their Winter Camps, and preparing to do Mathematics next year BEH.
29 Jun 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly for qualifying as a Dental Therapist.
29 Jun 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli for your upcoming Anniversary.
29 Jun 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for the main Opsher event for Mendel this Sunday.
6 Jul 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his first year of Law with very good results BH!
6 Jul 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday tonight!
13 Jul 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday next week.
20 Jul 2017	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO HIRSHY AND MARIASHA ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR NEW BABY SOPHIA ESTHER BH.
20 Jul 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week.
27 Jul 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Devorah Leah whose birthday was today.
3 Aug 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Rivky on qualifying in her Accounting course after spending many years studying part-time and juggling this with raising her Family together with Shmuel etc.
3 Aug 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy for more excellent scores coming in, this time in Philosophy.
17 Aug 2017	*Simcha*	We are still in the French Alps, and as such I do not have access to all Mazal Tovs, so please forgive if I have left anyone out.
17 Aug 2017	*Simcha*	So Mazal Tov Shmueli.
24 Aug 2017	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary which was on Rosh Chodesh.
24 Aug 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Avi and it should be another 10 years of success, and more.
31 Aug 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his upcoming birthday next week.
14 Sep 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is tonight!
14 Sep 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is also this coming week.
14 Sep 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Daniel.
14 Sep 2017	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on the engagement of her sister.
19 Oct 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his upcoming second birthday.

19 Oct 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing his Nursing School entrance exams.
19 Oct 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Chanan, for his 25th year of service to Radiology.
2 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy on her upcoming birthday.
2 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday this Shabbos.
2 Nov 2017	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on your acceptance into Nursing School.
9 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Penina on your upcoming birthday on Shabbos!
9 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Reuven whose birthday is thereafter.
9 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov Perry on your birthday one day apart from your father.
16 Nov 2017	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on having moved to their new home.
16 Nov 2017	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on moving to their new home this coming week.
23 Nov 2017	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Talya on her Basmitzva on Sunday.
23 Nov 2017	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov also to Baty and Shmueli, and wishing you lots of nachas from Talya and all your children.
23 Nov 2017	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah, who is also travelling to the wedding of her sister next week.
23 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Renee on your upcoming birthday, on Shabbos I believe.
30 Nov 2017	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again Talya and the whole Family.
30 Nov 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel for your birthday on Shabbos.
7 Dec 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday tonight.
7 Dec 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday tomorrow.
7 Dec 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi for your birthday next week.
21 Dec 2017	*Birth*	Big Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on the birth of Liora!
28 Dec 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on your upcoming birthday.
28 Dec 2017	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff who also has a birthday this coming week.

2018

11 Jan 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again, and wishing you many simchos.
11 Jan 2018	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the Barmitzvah of his nephew in Miama.

26 Jan 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday next week.
26 Jan 2018	*Simcha*	So triple mazal tov!
26 Jan 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to all, and it should be that each simcha will open the gates for more such simchos for all of us.
1 Feb 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov for Hirshy's acceptance into Nursing School where there was much competition.
8 Feb 2018	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on the engagement of his brother Levi.
8 Feb 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week.
8 Feb 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on finding a new flat (and also literally new!) right in the middle of Stamford Hill almost next door to the surgery BH!
8 Feb 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Pesach who has found a new office, also near to Stamford Hill.
22 Feb 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mariasha on your upcoming birthday.
22 Feb 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Sarita on your upcoming birthday.
22 Feb 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Roy on your upcoming birthday.
1 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday.
8 Mar 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Shmuel and Rivky on your wedding anniversary tonight.
8 Mar 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	And while we are with the Levys, another Mazal Tov to Rivky for qualifying in her accounting!
8 Mar 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov also to Avi and Penina on their upcoming anniversary next week.
8 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Chana Lieba on your upcoming birthday next week.
8 Mar 2018	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the wedding on Sunday of your sister Rivka to our nephew Mendel Sarfati in NY.
8 Mar 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again to Pesach, who moved his business to a new site right near Stamford Hill.
15 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chanan on your upcoming birthday next week.
22 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella on her upcoming birthday next week.
22 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai who also has a birthday next week.
30 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy on his upcoming birthday on the second night of Pesach.

30 Mar 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday is 2 days later (and 2 years later).
30 Mar 2018	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Gareth Sacks who got engaged.
30 Mar 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Channah Davidoff who has found a beautiful flat for herself.
5 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva whose birthday is next week.
12 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on your upcoming birthday next week.
12 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy whose birthday is on the same day.
19 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on your upcoming birthday.
19 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach Dovid Levy (Dovi) on your upcoming birthday this week.
19 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to our latest sweet 'Pesach', Pesach Yeshayeh Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week.
19 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian Davidoff who also has a birthday this week.
19 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aron Davidoff who also has a birthday next week.
26 Apr 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again!
26 Apr 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov and a big kiss Shneur Zalman!
26 Apr 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mendel (Kehaty) on your birthday next week.
10 May 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his birthday this Shabbos.
24 May 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her 7th birthday, also today!
24 May 2018	*Anniversary*	And another Mazal Tov to the Stamford Hill Davidoffs Shmuly and Devorah Leah, on the anniversary of their engagement this coming week.
24 May 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Rivky on her Valedictorian graduation ie with distinction!
24 May 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Dovi on his graduation from School this coming week, and heading for Yeshiva next year.
24 May 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Levys!
31 May 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary tomorrow.
31 May 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba for their Anniversary on Shabbos
31 May 2018	*Wedding*	And also Mazal Tov to Mendel on the marriage of his brother Laivi this week.
31 May 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming birthday next week.

31 May 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	So Mazal Tov to the Cobbs and everyone else who has graduated this year!
7 Jun 2018	*Wedding*	MAZAL TOV FOR THE UPCOMING WEDDING OF SARA TO AARON GLICK NEXT WEEK!
7 Jun 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary this week.
7 Jun 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week.
14 Jun 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again!
14 Jun 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
14 Jun 2018	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on your graduation!
21 Jun 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli for their Anniversary on Shabbos.
21 Jun 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana whose birthday is next week.
5 Jul 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday this Shabbos.
5 Jul 2018	*Simcha*	And another Mazal Tov in LA!
5 Jul 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Sophia on your first birthday next week.
12 Jul 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on your birthday next week.
26 Jul 2018	*New Home*	MAZAL TOV to Avi and Penina on the purchase of their new home in Tarzana!
2 Aug 2018	*Simcha*	We wish Pesach and Chanie and Family Mazal Tov for their move to California next week.
2 Aug 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmueli Bassin in Australia for your upcoming birthday next week.
9 Aug 2018	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos.
23 Aug 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Levy on his birthday next week.
30 Aug 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida on her birthday next week.
30 Aug 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is also next week.
6 Sep 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel who has the most amazing birthday, on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, which is also the birthday of mankind ie Adam Harishon.
13 Sep 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Joy Comaroff (ne Davidoff).
13 Sep 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya on her birthday which is also next week.

20 Sep 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah whose sister Esther had a daughter last week.
20 Sep 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Janine and Michal Milner who became grandparents BH.
20 Sep 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Gavin!
4 Oct 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Mendel and thanks for reminding us of the importance of this daily learning, and motivating us to make new resolutions for this year!
11 Oct 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi on his birthday this week.
11 Oct 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week.
11 Oct 2018	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Goodman, Devorah Leah's brother, who had a baby girl.
18 Oct 2018	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO SHMULY AND DEVORAH LEAH ON THE BIRTH OF A SON BH!!
18 Oct 2018	*Simcha*	So double Mazal Tov.
25 Oct 2018	*Birth*	Double Mazal Tov to Shmuly for his birthday, and the bris of their new baby on Wednesday.
25 Oct 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is this Shabbos.
25 Oct 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week, a few days later.
8 Nov 2018	*New Home*	There are no personal Mazal Tovs this week that I know about, but BEH we are now moving into the month of Kislev which contains Chanukah and so many important and happy Chassidic events.
15 Nov 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Perry on his birthday today!
15 Nov 2018	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Reuven!
22 Nov 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel whose birthday is today!
22 Nov 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya in Sydney Australia on your birthday tomorrow.
22 Nov 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Renee on your birthday next week.
22 Nov 2018	*Birth*	Mazal Tov Channah, our first born, on your birthday next week.
22 Nov 2018	*Birthday*	And last but not least, Mazal Tov Rivky on your birthday one day after Channah.
6 Dec 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leora Davidoff on her first birthday BH on Rosh Chodesh.
6 Dec 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Naomi on your birthday next week.
20 Dec 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos.

20 Dec 2018	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel (Levy) on your birthday next week.

2019

3 Jan 2019	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on moving in to your new home in Tarzana BH.
17 Jan 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Baty on your birthday tomorrow.
7 Feb 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on your birthday next week.
14 Feb 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita on her birthday tomorrow.
14 Feb 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy (Cobb) who also has a birthday next week.
28 Feb 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella Davidoff on her birthday this coming week.
28 Feb 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to David and Mel Gickman (ne Milner) - Janine's (ne Stein) daughter, on the birth of a boy in London.
7 Mar 2019	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his SECOND BARMITZVAH this Shabbos!
7 Mar 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on your birthday tomorrow.
7 Mar 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Chana Lieba!
7 Mar 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the baby born to your sister Rivka!
14 Mar 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chanan on your birthday this coming week.
14 Mar 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday also next week.
21 Mar 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff for your birthday next week.
28 Mar 2019	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Alisa Davidoff on her engagement.
28 Mar 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on your Anniversary Today!
28 Mar 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Penina and Avi on your upcoming Anniversary next week.
11 Apr 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week.
18 Apr 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Chaim Levy whose birthday is on the Second Seder night!
18 Apr 2019	*Birthday*	Next birthday Mazal Tov is to Brian Davidoff.
18 Apr 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Aron Davidoff on your birthday next week.
18 Apr 2019	*Simcha*	And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freidel on the purchase of your own flat in Longbeach.
18 Apr 2019	*Birth*	We also wish Mendel Mazal Tov on the birth of a nephew to your brother Levi.
25 Apr 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week.

2 May 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Batsheva whose birthday is today.
2 May 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha whose birthday is next week.
10 May 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on the birth of a girl, who has already been named Tiferes Chava BH.
10 May 2019	*Birthday*	And then Mazal Tov again for the birthday of Yeshayah next week!
10 May 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on the birth of a boy!
10 May 2019	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov again for Dovi's birthday next week!
10 May 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Claude and Joy who had a grandson in SA.
10 May 2019	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov Claude for your birthday next week!
10 May 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach for your birthday next week.
10 May 2019	*Simcha*	Wishing to hear of continued simchos and Mazal Tovs for all the Family!
16 May 2019	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Rivky and Shmuel for the bris of Yehudah Zeev Levy yesterday.
16 May 2019	*Bar Mitzvah*	It is Shlomo Levy barmitzvah coming up next week on Lag-Baomer, but I would like to reserve this Mazal Tov for next week BEH.
16 May 2019	*Simcha*	Anyway no harm for an extra Mazal Tov now Shlomo!
16 May 2019	*Birthday*	And again an extra Mazal Tov to Yeshayah whose birthday is today.
16 May 2019	*Simcha*	And then Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff (Shmuly and Devorah Leah's).
16 May 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov, and especially for your opsheren on LagBaomer Shneur Zalman.
16 May 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mendel Kehaty on your birthday next week.
16 May 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel who also has a birthday next week.
16 May 2019	*Simcha*	BH, so many Mazal Tov's.
22 May 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov and wishing everyone an inspiring Lag Baomer and Shabbos
31 May 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov Freida and Mendel on the birth of a beautiful boy.
31 May 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on your anniversary next week.
31 May 2019	*Birthday*	And another Mazal Tov from the Family in Sharon - Happy birthday Sarah for your birthday on the same day as your parents anniversary.

31 May 2019	*Semicha / Studies*	I know that it was mentioned last week about Dani's graduation, for which we extend a big Mazal Tov, but I also heard that she won an award for creating on campus environmental control (she obtained an Environment Science major) Mazal Tov Dani, and also for all your efforts in Judaism!
6 Jun 2019	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Bris and naming of their son Dovber.
13 Jun 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary next week.
13 Jun 2019	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing an important exam in his Nursing course.
20 Jun 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha and Hirshy on their Anniversary tomorrow.
20 Jun 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida who also have their Anniversary next week.
20 Jun 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy for your birthday this coming week, and for completing your year and exams at University.
27 Jun 2019	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Pidyan Haben which took place today.
27 Jun 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
27 Jun 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week.
11 Jul 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Baty and Shmueli on your upcoming Anniversary.
11 Jul 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week.
11 Jul 2019	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his Law exams for this year with such good results.
18 Jul 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov Devorah Leah, whose sister Chana had a baby girl in Virginia.
18 Jul 2019	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina who are making a kiddush this Shabbos for the birth of Tiferet.
25 Jul 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday on Shabbos.
25 Jul 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sophia Esther for her birthday 2 days after her Daddy.
25 Jul 2019	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Brian and Sharon, who I believe are travelling to EY next week for the Bar or Batmitzva of grandchildren.
25 Jul 2019	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov also to Renee and Roy and Family who will be joining Brian and Sharon for the simcha.

1 Aug 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her birthday next week.
29 Aug 2019	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary, which is on Shabbos, and Rosh Chodesh Elul.
29 Aug 2019	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to Avi's brother Chezzi who had twins! (a boy and a girl BH).- wishing many simchos for the Family and extended Families.
12 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy on her upcoming birthday next week.
12 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff who also has a birthday next week.
12 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy who also has a birthday next week.
19 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is next week.
19 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chava whose birthday is also next week, a few days later.
26 Sep 2019	*Birthday*	And of course we wish Daniel Mazal Tov on having a birthday at such an amazing and auspicious time.
10 Oct 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to those who got through the 'marathon' davening successfully.
24 Oct 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi on his upcoming birthday this week.
24 Oct 2019	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on passing the next stage of his Nursing Course.
31 Oct 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel Davidoff on his upcoming birthday next week.
31 Oct 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his first birthday, also next week.
7 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mommy for her upcoming birthday.
7 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Shmuly on your upcoming birthday next week.
14 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy again, whose English and Hebrew birthdays covered 2 weeks, and the real Hebrew one is this Shabbos!
14 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina whose birthday is next week.
14 Nov 2019	*Simcha*	And then there are 2 Mazal Tovs for the Davidoffs in Sharon:
14 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Reuven on your birthday.
14 Nov 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Perry whose birthday is 1 day earlier.
28 Nov 2019	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to the Bongarts on the engagement of their daughter to Moishe Golomb from London.
5 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Renee on your birthday from last week.
5 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday at the end of next week.
5 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Gavriel on your upcoming birthday.

12 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Channah on your upcoming birthday next week.
12 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Rivky on your birthday next week, one day later.
12 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Talya (Bassin) on your birthday tomorrow.
12 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	I have already wished Gavriel Mazal Tov for his birthday, but because it is today, I would like to wish him again, to have an amazing year!
19 Dec 2019	*Birthday*	I already wished Channah and Rivky Mazal Tov for their birthdays, but today is Rivky's actual birthday.

2020

9 Jan 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chanie Davidoff on your birthday on Shabbos.
9 Jan 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Shmuel Levy on your upcoming 40th birthday next week - to be continued below!
9 Jan 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Nechama, Mariasha's sister, who had a baby girl.
9 Jan 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Finkel and Shlomie Tunk on the birth of a baby boy.
9 Jan 2020	*Simcha*	And mazal Tov to grandparents Yidel and Dina.
6 Feb 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Sarah (ne Davidoff) Glick and Aron, on the birth of a boy!
6 Feb 2020	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to our new Bobba and Zeidy, Chana Lieba (Annette) and Reuven!
6 Feb 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Alisa.
6 Feb 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on your birthday tonight ie Friday.
27 Feb 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella on her upcoming birthday next week.
5 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on your birthday next week.
5 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Wishing you a successful year with much joy Mazal Tov Roy on your upcoming birthday.
5 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Kerry Lee on your birthday next week.
5 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Wishing you a great year with much joy Mazal Tov Chana Lieba in Sharon, on your birthday.
5 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	And last but not least, Mazal Tov to our sweet Sarita in Sydney on your birthday tomorrow.
12 Mar 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Rivky and Shmuel on your upcoming Anniversary.
12 Mar 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina who also have an Anniversary next week.
12 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to my brother Chanan on his birthday next week.

19 Mar 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov Avi and Penina on your upcoming Anniversary next week! (I got in too early last week) Good wishes never get lost, and so we wish you again, a wonderful year together with much joy, nachas and achievement in both gashmius and ruchnius.
26 Mar 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella whose birthday is tomorrow.
2 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai whose birthday is tonight.
2 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on the second night of Pesach next week.
2 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov also to Ariel Pesach in Australia, for your birthday next week.
13 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week.
13 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aron who also has a birthday next week.
13 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	And last but not least Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week.
23 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov on your birthday Miriam.
23 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Tiferet on your first birthday!
23 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Nechama I think on your 6th birthday.
23 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zeev also on his first birthday.
30 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Pesach on your birthday next week.
30 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Dovi (Pesach Dovid) on your birthday on Shabbos.
30 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yeshayah (Pesach Yeshayah) on his birthday next week.
30 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman on his second birthday next week.
30 Apr 2020	*Birthday*	And last but not least Mazal Tov to Adam on you birthday at the end of next week.
7 May 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Medel (Kehaty) on your birthday this coming week.
14 May 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his opsheren which took place on Lag Baomer.
14 May 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber on his first birthday next week!
21 May 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Chanie for the birth of a nephew in Eretz Yisrael.
27 May 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary next week.
27 May 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday on the same day.
27 May 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the birth of a niece to Sheina.
4 Jun 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her 9th birthday this week.

4 Jun 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary next week.
4 Jun 2020	*Engagement*	Mazal tov to Avi on the engagement of his brother Eli.
11 Jun 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy whose birthday is tonight!
11 Jun 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary this coming week.
11 Jun 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary also next week.
11 Jun 2020	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his graduation.
11 Jun 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy, Hirshy and Batsheva for their half marathon and full marathon cycling to raise funds for Friendship Circle.
18 Jun 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary on Shabbos.
18 Jun 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday, also this Shabbos.
2 Jul 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Adam on the birth of a son named Eliezer Amram.
2 Jul 2020	*Simcha*	And of course we wish the same Mazal Tov to great-grandparents, Renee and Roy, great-uncle, Brian.
2 Jul 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week.
2 Jul 2020	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov again to Shlomo, who now had his official Graduation Ceremony.
2 Jul 2020	*Simcha*	And of course wishing Mazal Tov to the deserving parents Shmuel and Rivky.
10 Jul 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday next week.
10 Jul 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his second year of Law with a first class pass.
16 Jul 2020	*Simcha*	This week all the Mazal Tovs go to the Davidoffs in LA:
16 Jul 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday today!
16 Jul 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is on Shabbos.
23 Jul 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah for her birthday on Shabbos.
31 Jul 2020	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on graduating as a nurse!!
31 Jul 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Chava who also passed the modules that she has been studying with flying colours!
6 Aug 2020	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Rivky for having attained full American Citizenship.

13 Aug 2020	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Avi on the wedding of his brother Eli BH.
14 Aug 2020	*Wedding*	To announce a big Mazal Tov for the chassanah on Sunday of Alisa and Yochanan Maimon! *(family note)*
14 Aug 2020	*Simcha*	And a big Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba and the whole Family for this wonderful simchah. *(family note)*
20 Aug 2020	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their 10th Anniversary today!
3 Sep 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on the birth of a beautiful girl, named Chaya Mussiah (not sure of spelling).
3 Sep 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy for his birthday tomorrow.
10 Sep 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida on her birthday next week.
10 Sep 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava who also has a birthday next week.
10 Sep 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy on your birthday next week.
17 Sep 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchak for his birthday on Rosh Hashanah, the same day as the birth of Adam HaRishon!
17 Sep 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff who has a birthday tomorrow.
1 Oct 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Mel (Geniene Stein's daughter) and David Glickman on the birth of a girl.
15 Oct 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Avi on your birthday this Shabbos.
22 Oct 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel whose birthday is tomorrow.
22 Oct 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef whose birthday is next week.
29 Oct 2020	*Simcha*	Wishing Mommy Mazal Tov for a beautiful year, with much nachas from all of our children, and in good health!
29 Oct 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday which is also next week.
5 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina for your birthday next week.
12 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Reuven for your birthday next week.
12 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Perry on your birthday next week.
12 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adrian Sacks in Melbourne who also has a birthday next week.
26 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Renée on her birthday this week.
26 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya in Sydney on her birthday next week.
26 Nov 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday next week.
3 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channa on her birthday on Sunday.
3 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday one day later.

10 Dec 2020	*Simcha*	A BIG MAZAL TOV TO HIRSHEY FOR PASSING HIS FINAL NURSING HURDLE AND IS NOW A REGISTERED NURSE BH!
10 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday next week on Rosh Chodesh.
10 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi on your upcoming birthday.
10 Dec 2020	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Avi on the birth of a nephew from his brother Aron.
25 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday next week.
25 Dec 2020	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff in Long Beach on your birthday next week.

2021

21 Jan 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday next week.
28 Jan 2021	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah for the engagement of her brother Sruli.
28 Jan 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his success in finding his first hospital position.
4 Feb 2021	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Perry (Pesach Shlomo) on his engagement to Mikayla Koval.
4 Feb 2021	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Freida who passed her exams to be a new US citizen.
11 Feb 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday today.
18 Feb 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha who has a birthday next week.
18 Feb 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb who has a birthday on Taanis Esther next week.
18 Feb 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita in Sydney for your birthday next week.
18 Feb 2021	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Simi Sarfati on her engagement this past week.
19 Feb 2021	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on the birth of a beautiful baby boy! *(family note)*
26 Feb 2021	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on the upcoming bris on Purim!
4 Mar 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their wedding Anniversary tonight.
4 Mar 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their wedding Anniversary next week.
4 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday next week.
11 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Annette (Chana Lieba) on your birthday for yesterday!

11 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chanan for your upcoming birthday next week.
18 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his birthday next week.
18 Mar 2021	*Wedding*	And in the same Family, Mazal Tov Devorah Leah for the wedding of your brother on Sunday.
18 Mar 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Aaron on going official with his music on Spotify under the name of Aaron Percy.
24 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos.
24 Mar 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Slomo Levy whose birthday is on the second night of Pesach.
1 Apr 2021	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov again to Ariel on his Barmitzvah.
1 Apr 2021	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov Baty on bringing him up so beautifully and putting in so much effort into the upbringing of your children.
8 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Batsheva on your birthday tonight.
8 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Miriam Brocha whose birthday is next week.
8 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Tiferet on your birthday next week.
8 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Nechama on your birthday next week.
8 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zeevi whose birthday is on the same day.
16 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian, whose birthday is next week.
16 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach for his birthday next week.
16 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovi for your birthday next week.
16 Apr 2021	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov for achieving your driving licence!
22 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday next week.
22 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron on his birthday next week.
22 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday next week.
22 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach Yeshayah on your birthday tomorrow.
22 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman (Junior) on your birthday on Shabbos.
22 Apr 2021	*Bar Mitzvah*	Batsheva is making a video for Ariel's Barmitzvah, and it would be nice if everyone could make a small recording, wishing him Mazal Tov, and send it to Batsheva to put together *(family note)*
29 Apr 2021	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Ariel who is celebrating his Barmitzvah today on Lag Baomer!
29 Apr 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber on his birthday next week.

6 May 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude whose birthday is next week.
20 May 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday this Shabbos.
20 May 2021	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi for the move to their new home.
27 May 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his birthday next week.
27 May 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday next week.
27 May 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba on their Anniversary on the same day as Sara's birthday.
27 May 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary.
27 May 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida who also have an Anniversary next week!
3 Jun 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
3 Jun 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week.
17 Jun 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their wedding Anniversary tomorrow.
17 Jun 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana who has a birthday next week.
1 Jul 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Hirshy on your birthday next week.
1 Jul 2021	*Birthday*	And in the same home, Mazal Tov also to Sophia on her birthday next week.
8 Jul 2021	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his amazing achievement of qualifying as a lawyer after 5 hard years of studying BH!!
8 Jul 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov on your upcoming birthday Devorah Leah.
15 Jul 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy for receiving his Certificate of Bachelor of Science in Nursing!
22 Jul 2021	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Chava on passing your exams in your ongoing studies.
29 Jul 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on the purchase of his new accounting business in America.
5 Aug 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary next week.
12 Aug 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary this week.
19 Aug 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday next week.
19 Aug 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia Davidoff on her first birthday tonight.
26 Aug 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Freida for your birthday next week.

26 Aug 2021	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Pesach for passing your exams, which now allow him to do tax returns in the US (in case anyone is looking for a good Accountant!)
2 Sep 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chava whose birthday is tonight.
2 Sep 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah! (Also the birthday of Adam Harishon).
9 Sep 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy on your birthday this coming week.
16 Sep 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya who has a birthday on Shabbos.
30 Sep 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi for his birthday next week.
7 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week.
7 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef whose birthday and opsheren is this coming week.
14 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Yosef on your opsherenish this evening, on your third birthday.
14 Oct 2021	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to Shmuly, exactly 1 week later, next Thursday.
21 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is next week.
21 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Penina for your birthday next week.
21 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Shmuly who is farbrenging tonight with all his friends in celebration of his birthday which was today.
28 Oct 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Penina on her birthday today.
28 Oct 2021	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the purchase and renovation of their new home in North Hollywood.
4 Nov 2021	*Simcha*	MAZAL TOV TO TWO SINCERE JEWS STARTING OUT THEIR LIFE WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION OF TORAH VALUES, HANDED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. - see photos attached.
4 Nov 2021	*Simcha*	MAZAL TOV AGAIN!
5 Nov 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Channa on her new business - "Chanies Kitchen" *(family note)*
11 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov To Reuven on his upcoming birthday.
11 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov To Perry whose birthday is one day difference from his father.
11 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel, whose birthday just squeezes in at the end of the week.
18 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday next week.
18 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Rivky, whose birthday is one day later.

18 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Talya on your birthday next week.
25 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Renee on your 80th birthday today.
25 Nov 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivky on your 40th birthday today.
2 Dec 2021	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on the birth of their first child Emma Joyce.
2 Dec 2021	*Simcha*	And of course Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba the grandparents!
2 Dec 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh.
9 Dec 2021	*Engagement*	A big Mazal Tov for Dani and her Choson on their engagement!
9 Dec 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Chanan and Naomi.
9 Dec 2021	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday next week.
9 Dec 2021	*New Home*	Mazal Tov to Pesach Chanie and Family on the closing of purchase of their new home in LA. *(family note)*
16 Dec 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Shmuel (Levy) on your birthday next week.
16 Dec 2021	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Chanie on your birthday this Shabbos.
16 Dec 2021	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov for this also!
16 Dec 2021	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Renee and Roy on their 60th Anniversary!
24 Dec 2021	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Freida and Mendel on the birth of a baby boy BH!
24 Dec 2021	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Sara and Aaron Glick on the birth of a baby girl BH - Gila Lieba.
24 Dec 2021	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba.
30 Dec 2021	*Birth*	A big Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the bris today of their new baby boy, who is now named Shlomo BH!

2022

13 Jan 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on your birthday now tonight.
3 Feb 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Moshe Vogel on his first birthday next week.
10 Feb 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday next week.
10 Feb 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday this coming week.
10 Feb 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita whose birthday is tonight.
18 Feb 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the birth of a baby boy BH!
24 Feb 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on the bris of their new baby, Shlomo Tuvia.
3 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella on her birthday this coming Shabbos.
3 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba on your upcoming birthday.

3 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee who also has a birthday this week.
3 Mar 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Sarfati and Rivky (Ne Goodman) on the birth of a boy in Pennsylvania.
3 Mar 2022	*Simcha*	Also wishing the connected Families, Devorah Leah and Shmuly, and Meyer and Malky Mazal Tov and much nachas!
10 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday this coming week.
10 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday the day after.
10 Mar 2022	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Rivky Sarfati and associated Families on the bris of Shlomo Yitzchak BH
18 Mar 2022	*Simcha*	A big Mazal Tov to Uncle Chanan whose 70th is today.
18 Mar 2022	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their upcoming Anniversary.
24 Mar 2022	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary this coming week.
24 Mar 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella for her birthday this coming week.
7 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai on his upcoming birthday.
15 Apr 2022	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on the birth and naming of their new daughter Nechama Dina!
15 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo on his upcoming birthday on the second Seder night.
15 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel, whose birthday is next week on chol hamoed Pesach, and we are so happy to have him here with us, together with Baty and Talya and Sarita, all the way from Australia BH!
15 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian, whose birthday is also upcoming next week.
20 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday this week.
20 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron for his birthday next week.
28 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva whose birthday is today.
28 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week.
28 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy on her birthday next week.
28 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Tiferet on her birthday next week.
28 Apr 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Zeevi on his birthday next week.
5 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Pesach!
5 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Claude!
5 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dovi!
5 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Yeshayah last but not least.

12 May 2022	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Dani and Ariel for their upcoming wedding on LAG BAOMER next week -continued in Dvar Torah below.
12 May 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty who has a decade birthday coming up next week BH.
12 May 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday this Shabbos.
12 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman (junior).
12 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zeevi who is having his opsheren on Lag Baomer next week.
12 May 2022	*Simcha*	And wishing Mazal Tov also to Chanan and Naomi.
19 May 2022	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov again for todays simchos on Lag Baomer ie the wedding of Dani And Ariel in Boston, and the opsheren of Zeevi in LA - beautiful simchos on a beautiful day BH.
19 May 2022	*Simcha*	We wish you a Big MAZAL TOV.
19 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov also to Reuven and Chana Lieba.
19 May 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber on his third birthday next week.
26 May 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Reuven for such a huge achievement which has come about from HARD WORK AND DEDICATION!
2 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again, and so happy to have you both join with us!
2 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dov Ber who is having his opsherin next week after Shavuos.
2 Jun 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam whose birthday is at the end of next week.
9 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dovber on his opsherin.
9 Jun 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Claude and joy on the birth of a grand- daughter.
16 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi.
16 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha.
16 Jun 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida.
16 Jun 2022	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his upcoming birthday.
23 Jun 2022	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their upcoming Anniversary.
23 Jun 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff whose birthday is on the same day.
30 Jun 2022	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on having started putting on Tefillin 2 months before his Barmitzvah.
7 Jul 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana whose birthday is next week.
21 Jul 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his upcoming birthday.
21 Jul 2022	*Simcha*	And in the same Family, Mazal Tov to Sophia 2 days later.

21 Jul 2022	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Chava who passed her exams towards a BSc, did well in Sem, and also ran the administration of our office from NY!
21 Jul 2022	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov Esther Miriam on graduating to Senior School.
21 Jul 2022	*Semicha / Studies*	I am sure many others in the Family have also passed exams and courses etc, and we wish all Mazal Tov!
28 Jul 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday next week.
28 Jul 2022	*Simcha*	And so we wish you Mazal Tov again.
11 Aug 2022	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
25 Aug 2022	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah for their Anniversary on Shabbos.
8 Sep 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia whose birthday is today.
8 Sep 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy, whose birthday is at the end of next week.
8 Sep 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Mendel!
15 Sep 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff for her upcoming birthday on Sunday.
15 Sep 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Freida.
15 Sep 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Chava.
22 Sep 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel Yitzchok whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah itself!
22 Sep 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal tov for the wonderful successes we have had at our local Girls School and our Dental Office this week, where the government conducted rigorous inspections.
6 Oct 2022	*Simcha*	As I am now travelling, I apologise if I am omitting any Mazal Tovs this week.
6 Oct 2022	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy who is celebrating his Barmitzvah in Yerushalayim.
6 Oct 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel who started putting on tefillin last week.
20 Oct 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi whose birthday is next week.
27 Oct 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week.
27 Oct 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef who also has a birthday next week.
3 Nov 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday next week.
10 Nov 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy whose birthday is on Shabbos.
10 Nov 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week.

17 Nov 2022	*Birthday*	But as nothing happens by accident, this gives me a good opportunity to reintroduce the Kovals and to wish the members of the Davidoff /Koval Families ie Mark, Reuven and Perry a big UNITED MAZAL TOV on your birthdays.
17 Nov 2022	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to the following grandchildren who have excelled in their Rambam exams (Chidon) - Esther and Binyamin Davidoff in London and Gavriel Davidoff in LA.
1 Dec 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Penina and Avi on the birth of Shira Nechama!
1 Dec 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Avi's brother Eli on the birth of a son named after his father ah Yisrael Meir.
1 Dec 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Mazal Tov!
1 Dec 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Avi on an amazing week BH!
8 Dec 2022	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shmuel and Rivky for the birth last Shabbos.
8 Dec 2022	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov Pesach and Chanie on the Barmitzvah of Gavriel today.
8 Dec 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi on your birthday next week.
8 Dec 2022	*Simcha*	Gut Shabbos to all and Mazal Tov!
15 Dec 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channah whose birthday was this week.
15 Dec 2022	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Rivky who was born a day later (plus 1 year!) for your birthday and Mazal Tov again on the birth of Dovber.
15 Dec 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin whose birthday was this week.
15 Dec 2022	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on passing her Broker exam!
22 Dec 2022	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Liora whose birthday is on Rosh Chodesh.

2023

5 Jan 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday this coming week.
5 Jan 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (LA) on her birthday on Shabbos.
5 Jan 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty on his upcoming first birthday next week BH.
19 Jan 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff (Brian's wife) who has an upcoming birthday next week.
26 Jan 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday which is today.
2 Feb 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Baty on her birthday which is now the Hebrew date!
9 Feb 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday on Shabbos.

23 Feb 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week.
9 Mar 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on achieving US citizenship!
9 Mar 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Penina on receiving US citizenship!
9 Mar 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba whose birthday bordered 2 weeks.
16 Mar 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on your 20th Anniversary.
16 Mar 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary this coming week.
16 Mar 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella and Ariel Jacobs, who both have their Hebrew birthdays this week.
16 Mar 2023	*Engagement*	Hot news, just announced, that Esther Sarfati just got engaged in NY - Mazal Tov Esther, Meir and Malky!
23 Mar 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanan on his birthday this week.
23 Mar 2023	*Birthday*	And also from Newton, Mazal Tov to Ariella on her birthday next week.
23 Mar 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to another new American citizen.
30 Mar 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyomin whose birthday is tonight.
30 Mar 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shlomo!
5 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again for Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on second night of Pesach!
5 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday follows on Chol Hamoed.
5 Apr 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Penina on graduating to be a Personal Trainer!
11 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her upcoming birthday next week.
20 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Brian Davidoff.
20 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff.
20 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Miriam Brocha Davidoff.
20 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy.
20 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal tov to all those who completed a cycle, and hatzlachah to those who are starting again anew!
27 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on his birthday next week.
27 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovi on his birthday on Shabbos.
27 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his birthday next week.
27 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday.

27 Apr 2023	*Birthday*	And last but not least, Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday right at the end of next week.
27 Apr 2023	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin for passing her driving licence in Au!
4 May 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday next week.
11 May 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude on his birthday tomorrow.
11 May 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dov Ber Kehaty on his birthday this coming week.
19 May 2023	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Adam on the birth of a baby boy! *(family note)*
19 May 2023	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to great grandfather Roy Cobb, grandparents Jody Frankel, and Uncles and Aunts - Gavin and Shelley and Sid and Brian! *(family note)*
24 May 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on his graduation this week, achieving Master in Law in LA Loyola.
24 May 2023	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Adam on the bris of Shlomo Zalman yesterday.
24 May 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov also to Jody, Roy, Gavin, Shelly, Sid and Brian!
24 May 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick on his upcoming birthday.
24 May 2023	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her upcoming Batmitzvah next week.
1 Jun 2023	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov again to Esther Miriam on the beautiful Basmitzvah celebration she had this week.
1 Jun 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov for the Anniversary of Reuven and Chana Lieba.
1 Jun 2023	*Anniversary*	And another Anniversary - Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha later in the week.
1 Jun 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sara on her birthday tomorrow.
1 Jun 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	And Mazal Tov for all those who have Graduation parties!
8 Jun 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff Senior (but still young in years!) on his birthday tonight.
8 Jun 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary next week.
15 Jun 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov on your birthday next week in Australia Sid.
15 Jun 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pam Koval on your birthday next week.
15 Jun 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week.
15 Jun 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on your upcoming Anniversary.
15 Jun 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chani on your upcoming Anniversary.

22 Jun 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy who was chosen to be the valedictorian of his graduating class at Yeshivah.
29 Jun 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Eliana.
6 Jul 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday, and wishing him well to have a wonderful year!
13 Jul 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy whose birthday is today.
13 Jul 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Sophia.
20 Jul 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday.
20 Jul 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Chava on qualifying in her BSc Honours for Maths and Science!
10 Aug 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their upcoming Anniversary.
17 Aug 2023	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Wedding Anniversary today.
17 Aug 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on landing his first Law job in the USA.
24 Aug 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Zelda on your birthday tomorrow.
24 Aug 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia whose birthday is this week.
31 Aug 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday tonight.
7 Sep 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday this week.
7 Sep 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava whose birthday is 2 days later.
7 Sep 2023	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva for receiving her Israeli Citizenship.
14 Sep 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy Comarof, my cousin in SA whose birthday is tomorrow.
14 Sep 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff whose birthday is this coming week.
29 Sep 2023	*Simcha*	But we do wish a hearty Mazal Tov nevertheless.
12 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi for his birthday on Shabbos.
19 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday tonight.
19 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef who has a birthday this coming week.
26 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to my dear wife on her upcoming birthday.
26 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his upcoming birthday next week.
26 Oct 2023	*Birthday*	So it is with much gratitude that I thank you my dear wife, Rahel, and wish you Mazal Tov on your birthday, and much happiness and success, which extends also to the whole Family and extended Family.
2 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday this coming week.
2 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his upcoming birthday.

2 Nov 2023	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff on the birth of a nephew, to her sister Mariasha.
9 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Reuven (Ravin) on his upcoming birthday next week.
9 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Perry whose birthday is right next to his father.
9 Nov 2023	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Naomi for all the celebrations in the Fisher Family - Becca's wedding and Evelyn's batmitzvah.
16 Nov 2023	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy on passing his Bar exam in LA, and who is therefore now a qualified lawyer.
16 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday tonight.
23 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin on her upcoming birthday.
23 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday next week.
30 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channah on her birthday next week.
30 Nov 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday one day later (plus 1 year!) Wishing you continued success in all areas Rivky with much nachas from your whole Family.
7 Dec 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi on her upcoming birthday.
7 Dec 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Liora on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh.
21 Dec 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday next week.
21 Dec 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Chanie Davidoff on her birthday next week.
29 Dec 2023	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty on his birthday this Shabbos.
29 Dec 2023	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Dovber Rosenfeld on his Barmitzvah in EY.

2024

11 Jan 2024	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who had a baby girl this week BH.
11 Jan 2024	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba!
19 Jan 2024	*Engagement*	MAZAL TOV TO ZALMY ON HIS ENGAGEMENT TO NECHAMA DINA PIPERNO.
19 Jan 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff (Brian's wife) on her upcoming birthday next week.
25 Jan 2024	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov again to Zalmy and Nechama on their engagement in NY this past Sunday.
26 Jan 2024	*Birthday*	I wanted to wish Baty Mazal Tov on her birthday today! *(family note)*
1 Feb 2024	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Gollub and the Levy Family, on his wedding this week.

8 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week.
15 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his third birthday tonight (or is it Adar Sheini?).
15 Feb 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Davidoff who turns two this coming week.
15 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita who has a birthday next week (again not sure if this is Adar Sheini?) Wishing you a year of much growth and achievement Sarita, and with happiness!
15 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his birthday at the end of the week (again not sure if this is Adar Sheini).
29 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella whose Hebrew birthday is this week.
29 Feb 2024	*Birthday*	So Mazal Tov also, Ariel on your birthday.
7 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba (Annette) on her upcoming birthday next week.
7 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday tomorrow.
7 Mar 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Mikayla Davidoff.
14 Mar 2024	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV ON THE BIRTH OF RIVKA EMUNAH TO SHMULY AND DEVORAH LEAH ON ROSH CHODESH ADAR 2!
14 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov for the special Opsher birthday of Shlomo Moshe Vogel on 7 Adar , which is also the birthday and yohrtzeit of Mosheh Rabeinu!
14 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) on his upcoming birthday next week.
14 Mar 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva for completing the 10 km Jerusalem marathon in under 1 hour!
21 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday tonight.
21 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday the next day.
21 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kevin Marks on his birthday this week.
21 Mar 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella whose birthday is next week.
21 Mar 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again for the beautiful Opsheren celebration of Shlomo Moshe Vogel!
28 Mar 2024	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama on their upcoming Chassanah next week BEH.
28 Mar 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky (Levy) on their wedding Anniversary next week.
11 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin Mordechai on his birthday next week.

18 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week.
18 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy whose birthday is on the Second Seder night.
18 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff whose birthday is tonight, on the very special day of Yud Aleph Nissan, which is also the Rebbe's birthday.
25 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin whose birthday is tonight.
25 Apr 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff whose birthday is a day later.
2 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday next week.
9 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her upcoming birthday.
9 May 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Tiferes whose sefira characteristic is TIFERES in TIFERES.
9 May 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dovi whose sefira characteristic is Gevurah in NETZACH.
9 May 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Nechama whose sefira character is NETZACH in TIFERES.
9 May 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zeev whose sefira character is NETZACH in TIFERES.
9 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his birthday next week.
17 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Pesach whose birthday is tonight.
17 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday on next day following.
23 May 2024	*Bar Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Alon Topol, who had his Barmitzvah this week.
23 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday tonight.
23 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick whose birthday is next week.
30 May 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his birthday tonight.
30 May 2024	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on the wedding of his sister Sima this week.
30 May 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba whose Anniversary is on Sunday.
30 May 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Sara, and wishing you, Aaron and Family a wonderful year together.
7 Jun 2024	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Meyer and Malky on the engagement of Esther.
14 Jun 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their Anniversary next week.
14 Jun 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday next week.

20 Jun 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their Anniversary next week.
20 Jun 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff senior on his birthday next week.
27 Jun 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary tonight.
4 Jul 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary today.
4 Jul 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff in Australia on his birthday tomorrow.
4 Jul 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff whose birthday is today.
18 Jul 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday tonight, on same day as the release of the Frierdike Rebbe from imprisonment (Yud Bes and Yud Gimmel Tammuz).
25 Jul 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to the Davidoff Family in North Hollywood who have 2 upcoming birthdays this week.
25 Jul 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Hirshy.
25 Jul 2024	*Birthday*	And Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is 2 days later.
1 Aug 2024	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO MENDEL AND FREIDA ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY BH!
1 Aug 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff (Nini) whose birthday is tonight.
1 Aug 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah whose birthday follows at the end of the week.
1 Aug 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Dovi Levy on attaining Smicha in Rabbinical Studies!
8 Aug 2024	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on the Bris of their new son, Moishe, who is named after Mendel's grandfather ah, who was famous for containing both kindness, and a fighting spirit BH!
8 Aug 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Devorah Leah whose birthday was today!
15 Aug 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their Anniversary tomorrow.
15 Aug 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zelda Marks, whose birthday is next week.
22 Aug 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Dovi! *(family note)*
22 Aug 2024	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky for all your efforts that you have put in to the childrens education BH! *(family note)*
22 Aug 2024	*Simcha*	This is such an appropriate Mazal Tov for this week's theme of TORAH LEARNING BH! *(family note)*
29 Aug 2024	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary next week on Rosh Chodesh Elul.

12 Sep 2024	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Meyer and Malky Sarfati, for the wedding of Esther, which is today!
12 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy Camaroff on her birthday next week.
12 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff on her birthday next week.
12 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy on his birthday next week.
12 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mussia on her birthday next week.
13 Sep 2024	*Birth*	A huge Mazal Tov to Dani and Ariel Jacobs on the birth of a son!! *(family note)*
13 Sep 2024	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to the new Grand-parents Chanan (Ashley) and Naomi. *(family note)*
26 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida whose birthday is tonight.
26 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava on her birthday next week.
26 Sep 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel for his birthday on the first night of Rosh Hashanah.
1 Oct 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again for Daniel Davidoff whose birthday is on the first day of Rosh Hashanah.
1 Oct 2024	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to the naming of Daniella and Ariel's son - Yona.
22 Oct 2024	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO SARA AND ARON GLICK, AND GRANDPARENTS REUVEN AND CHANA LIEBA, ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY GIRL YESTERDAY - Chava (Eve) Nava!
22 Oct 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi Vogel whose birthday is next week.
31 Oct 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Avi for his birthday today.
31 Oct 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel whose birthday is next week.
31 Oct 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again!
7 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his birthday yesterday.
7 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos.
14 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy on her Hebrew birthday next week.
14 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his birthday this Shabbos.
14 Nov 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Perry.
21 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday this Shabbos.
28 Nov 2024	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO PESACH AND CHANIE ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY BH!
28 Nov 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday next week.

5 Dec 2024	*Wedding*	And at the same time we wish you a huge MAZAL TOV Dov, on the marriage of your son Josh.
5 Dec 2024	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on the bris of their new baby boy who has now been named Elisha.
5 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov again to Avi and Penina on the birthday of Shira which was today.
5 Dec 2024	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shira!
5 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on the birthday of Dovber which is next week BEH.
6 Dec 2024	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO MARIASHA AND HIRSHY ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY!! *(family note)*
12 Dec 2024	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha, who are today celebrating the bris of their new baby boy, who has been named Matan Asher.
12 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi, whose birthday is also today.
12 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin whose birthday is next week.
19 Dec 2024	*Bas Mitzvah*	MAZAL TOV TO SARITA WHO IS CELEBRATING HER BATMITZVAH IN LA THIS SUNDAY.
19 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channah for her birthday on Shabbos.
19 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	And one day later (plus a year!) Mazal Tov to Rivky on her birthday.
26 Dec 2024	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday next week on Rosh Chodesh.

2025

2 Jan 2025	*Engagement*	MAZAL TOV TO TALYA DAVIDOFF ON HER ENGAGEMENT TO MICHAEL, THIS WEEK!
9 Jan 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shmuel.
9 Jan 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (LA) on her birthday next week.
16 Jan 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff on her birthday next week.
16 Jan 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty whose very significant birthday is coming up on Shabbos.
16 Jan 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida, and wishing you all a wonderful celebration, with much nachas from Shlomo and all your children BEH!
23 Jan 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again to Shlomo Kehaty on his beautiful opsherin this week.
6 Feb 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty for her birthday next week.

6 Feb 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Alisa on her birthday next week.
27 Feb 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella Jacobs (nee Davidoff) on her English birthday next week.
6 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba for her birthday next week.
6 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Mariasha on your birthday next week.
6 Mar 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov again!
6 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee on her birthday next week.
6 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mikayla on her birthday, same day as Kerry Lee.
6 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita for her birthday next week.
6 Mar 2025	*Birth*	And last but far from least, Mazal Tov to Shlomo Moshe Vogel on his birthday tomorrow, on the same day that Moshe Rabeinu was born BH.
13 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy Cobb on his birthday tomorrow.
13 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) whose birthday is next week.
13 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kevin (Marks) who also has a birthday tomorrow.
20 Mar 2025	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO PERRY AND MIKAYLA ON THE BIRTH OF A BABY GIRL, SASHA LIV.
20 Mar 2025	*Simcha*	And of course, Mazal Tov to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba (Ravin and Annette)!
20 Mar 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their Anniversary tonight.
20 Mar 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their Anniversary next week.
20 Mar 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Esther!
21 Mar 2025	*Birth*	Mark got on famously with all the Davidoff Family and WE ALL WISH YOU BOTH A HEARTY MAZAL TOV ON THE BIRTH OF SASHA LIV! *(family note)*
27 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Selma (Penn) for her birthday on Shabbos!
27 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella (Davidoff) whose birthday is today.
27 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Jacobs whose birthday is tonight, and also Mazal Tov to Daniella (Jacobs) whose Hebrew birthday was yesterday.
27 Mar 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivka Emuna Davidoff whose birthday is on Shabbos.
3 Apr 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on their Wedding Anniversary last week.
3 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Binyamin on his birthday next week.

3 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff Jnr on her birthday next week.
10 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy for his birthday on 2nd night of Pesach.
18 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva on her birthday tonight!
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy for her birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Tiferet for her birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shirley Isaacson on her birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff on his birthday next week.
25 Apr 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zeevi Yehuda Levy for his birthday on the same day as Nechama next week. *(family note)*
1 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach for his birthday next week.
1 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovi Levy for his birthday which is also next week.
8 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his birthday next week.
8 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude on his upcoming Birthday.
8 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel on his birthday next week.
8 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yeshayah on his birthday tonight!
8 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr for his birthday on Shabbos.
15 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his birthday.
22 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick whose birthday is this coming week.
29 May 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Reuven and Chana Lieba (Ravin and Annette) on their upcoming Anniversary.
29 May 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sara Glick on her birthday on the same day.
5 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Tracy Pollock on her upcoming birthday.
5 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam on her birthday tonight.
12 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	A big Mazal Tov to Hy Fisher, Naomi's father, who has just celebrated his 99th birthday BH!
12 Jun 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov on your Anniversary!
12 Jun 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha on their upcoming Anniversary on Shabbos.
12 Jun 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida on their Anniversary next week.
12 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff senior on his birthday next week.

12 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pam Koval on her birthday this week!
19 Jun 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary next week.
19 Jun 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Davidoff on his birthday next week.
3 Jul 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos.
3 Jul 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana Davidoff on her Batmitzvah Birthday next week.
10 Jul 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Penina on receiving her Certification as a Personal Trainer!
17 Jul 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal tov to Nechama Dina (Nini) Davidoff on her birthday today.
17 Jul 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday next week.
17 Jul 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Sophia, and wishing you a very happy year with much success at school, and giving your parents much nachas BEH.
17 Jul 2025	*Simcha*	And last but not least is Mazal Tov to Moishe Kehaty on turning 1 on Shabbos.
24 Jul 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday.
1 Aug 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Janine Milner on her upcoming birthday.
8 Aug 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan on their Anniversary.
14 Aug 2025	*Birthday*	'Coincidentally' I also noticed that Zelda's birthday is upcoming on the 25th of August, and so I would like to wish her a big Mazal Tov.
22 Aug 2025	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their upcoming Anniversary.
29 Aug 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman on her upcoming birthday next week.
4 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chaya Mussia Davidoff whose birthday is tonight.
4 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Levy whose birthday is next week. *(family note)*
12 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday next week.
12 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Davidoff on her birthday next week.
18 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava, whose birthday is tonight, and we just celebrated with her this evening BH.
18 Sep 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel whose birthday is on Rosh Hashanah itself (on the first night).

25 Sep 2025	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin on his graduation from High School.
9 Oct 2025	*Birth*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who had a baby girl on Yom Kippur!
16 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi on his birthday next week.
16 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sara and Aron Glick on the birthday of their daughter Chava Nava.
16 Oct 2025	*Simcha*	And of course Mazal Tov also to grandparents Reuven and Chana Lieba!
23 Oct 2025	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her Batmitzvah.
23 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel on his birthday next week.
30 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly on his upcoming birthday at the end of next week.
30 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef on his birthday today.
30 Oct 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mark Koval on his birthday next week.
6 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mommy/Rahel whose birthday is on Shabbos.
6 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday at the end of next week.
6 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Elisha on his birthday next week.
13 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday today!
13 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Reuven whose birthday is on Shabbos.
13 Nov 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Ade, and wishing you a good, happy and healthy year!
20 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shira Nechama on her birthday next week.
20 Nov 2025	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Freida on the growth of her 'Mommy and Me' Group in Longbeach.
27 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber Levy on his birthday this Shabbos and his upcoming opsher celebration next week BEH.
27 Nov 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Gavriel on his birthday at the end of next week.
4 Dec 2025	*Engagement*	MAZAL TOV TO DOVI LEVY ON HIS ENGAGEMENT TO RIKKI MAGALNIK TODAY.
4 Dec 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Channa on her birthday next week.
4 Dec 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov Rivky on her birthday next week.
4 Dec 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya Bassin on her birthday tonight.
11 Dec 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Naomi whose birthday is tomorrow.
19 Dec 2025	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO ZALMY AND NECJHAMA DINA ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BOY TODAY!
19 Dec 2025	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leora on her birthday this Shabbos.

2026

2 Jan 2026	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on the bris and naming of their new son - Ariel Rachamim Alexander.
2 Jan 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel Levy on his birthday this coming week.
2 Jan 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanie Davidoff (California) on her birthday this coming week.
2 Jan 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Kehaty whose birthday is at the end of next week.
15 Jan 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sharon Davidoff for her birthday at the end of the week.
22 Jan 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Brian and Sharon on their 50th Wedding Anniversary!
22 Jan 2026	*Bris / Naming*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy and Nechama Dina on the Pidyan Haben of Ariel Rachamim Alexander BH!
29 Jan 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Baty on her birthday which is tonight.
12 Feb 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rivka Emunah on her birthday on Rosh Chodesh.
19 Feb 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Vogel on his upcoming birthday next week.
26 Feb 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Roy on his birthday next week.
26 Feb 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on her birthday next week.
26 Feb 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Shlomo!
26 Feb 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sarita on her birthday tonight (morning in Australia).
5 Mar 2026	*Wedding*	MAZAL TOV TO DOVI AND RIKKI ON THEIR UPCOMING CHASSANAH NEXT WEEK BEH!
5 Mar 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuel and Rivky on their Anniversary.
5 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chana Lieba (Annette Davidoff) on her birthday next week.
5 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kevin Marks whose birthday was on Taanis Esther.
5 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kerry Lee whose birthday is on Shabbos.
5 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mikayla Davidoff whose birthday is also on Shabbos.
13 Mar 2026	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Dovi and Rikki Levy on their beautiful wedding this week.
13 Mar 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Avi and Penina on their wedding anniversary next week.
13 Mar 2026	*Engagement*	Mazal Tov to Mariasha on the engagement of her brother BH

13 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) for his birthday next week.
13 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Jacobs on his birthday next week.
13 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniella Jacobs on her birthday this coming week.
13 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sasha Davidoff on her birthday on Shabbos.
26 Mar 2026	*Simcha*	MAZAL TOV TO BINYAMIN ON HIS BARMITVAH TONIGHT!
26 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Selma Penn on her birthday next week.
26 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariella Davidoff on her birthday tomorrow.
26 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shlomo Levy for his birthday on Second Day of Yom Tov.
26 Mar 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina on her birthday next week.
5 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Ariel Bassin on his birthday today.
10 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva, whose birthday is coming up next week.
16 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Brian on his birthday next week.
16 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Miriam Brocha on her birthday next week.
16 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Tiferet on her birthday next week.
16 Apr 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Zeevi.
16 Apr 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal tov to Nechama.
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Levy for her Batmitzvah birthday this week!
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach on his birthday next week.
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach Dovid Levy on his birthday next week.
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Pesach Yeshaya Vogel on his birthday next week.
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shneur Zalman Davidoff Jnr on his birthday next week.
23 Apr 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Davidoff on his birthday next week.
3 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Kehaty on his upcoming birthday next week.
3 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shirley Isaacson on her birthday tomorrow.
3 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel whose birthday is today.
7 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Claude Comaroff on his upcoming birthday next week.
7 May 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Adam Frankel and Family on the opsherin of their son Shlomo Zalman on Lag Baomer.

7 May 2026	*Simcha*	Kol hakavod Adam, and mazal tov to Jody and Roy, and all the connected Family!
7 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his upcoming birthday.
19 May 2026	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO PENINA AND AVI ON THE BIRTH OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY LAST SHABBOS BH.
19 May 2026	*New Home*	Mazal Tov also on your move to a new home – meshaneh makom, meshaneh mazal letovah!
19 May 2026	*Bas Mitzvah*	Mazal Tov to Nechamah Levy on her upcoming Bat mitzvah party next week.
19 May 2026	*Simcha*	And wishing Mazal Tov to the whole Levy Family!
28 May 2026	*Simcha*	A big thank you to our hosts and all the family in California – Mazal Tov!
28 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Aaron Glick on his birthday yesterday.
28 May 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Esther Miriam who also had a birthday this week.
28 May 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy and Mariasha for their Anniversary at the end of next week.
4 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	MAZAL TOV TO DR HY FISHER WHO IS CELEBRATING HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY NEXT WEEK!!
4 Jun 2026	*Simcha*	Also wishing Mazal Tov to Naomi (Davidoff) and the whole Fisher Family!
4 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Tracy Pollock for her upcoming birthday next week.
4 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Zalmy Davidoff (Snr) on his birthday tonight!
4 Jun 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Mendel and Freida (Kehaty) on their upcoming Anniversary next week!
4 Jun 2026	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to Dovber Kehaty on his beautiful Siddur Party this week!
11 Jun 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan and Naomi on their upcoming Anniversary next week.
11 Jun 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Pesach and Chanie on their Anniversary this Shabbos.
11 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Mendel Davidoff on his birthday this Shabbos.
11 Jun 2026	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov on the Graduation of Shlomo Levy.
11 Jun 2026	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov on the Graduation of Mendel Levy.
18 Jun 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Chanan (Ashley) and Naomi on their Anniversary today.

18 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Kevin Ossey on his birthday next week.
25 Jun 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Eliana on her birthday next week.
3 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sid Davidoff on his birthday next week.
3 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Nechama Dina Davidoff (Nini) on her birthday next week.
3 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Moshe Kehaty on his birthday at the end of next week.
9 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Hirshy on his birthday today.
9 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Sophia whose birthday is 2 days later – so you and your Daddy can celebrate together Sophia.
16 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Devorah Leah on her upcoming birthday on Shabbos.
30 Jul 2026	*Birth*	MAZAL TOV TO FREIDA AND MENDEL ON THE BIRTH OF A BABY GIRL NAMED NECHAMA!
30 Jul 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Janine Milner on her birthday next week.
13 Aug 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly and Devorah Leah on their Anniversary which is today.
13 Aug 2026	*Anniversary*	Mazal Tov to Alisa and Juan who also have an Anniversary next week.
13 Aug 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Isanne Ossey on her birthday tomorrow.
13 Aug 2026	*Birth*	Mazal Tov again to Mendel and Freida on the birth of Nechama.
20 Aug 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov Zelda.
20 Aug 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Chaya Musia Davidoff.
27 Aug 2026	*Wedding*	Mazal Tov to Gareth Sacks on his marriage to Liraz Elbaz in Eretz Yisrael last week!
27 Aug 2026	*Simcha*	And Mazal Tov to mother Froma and sister Kerry Lee and Families!
27 Aug 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to both and wishing you a year of much success and happiness with many new good developments BEH.
27 Aug 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman on her upcoming birthday next week.
27 Aug 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Menachem Mendel Levy for his birthday tonight.
3 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Freida on her upcoming birthday next week.
3 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Chava on her upcoming birthday a few days later.
3 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Leslie Hyman who has a birthday tomorrow.
3 Sep 2026	*Simcha*	Mazal Tov to Ariel who received his IDF uniform this week.

10 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Joy Camaroff on her upcoming birthday next week.
10 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Daniel who has the special birthday on the First day of Rosh Hashanah!
17 Sep 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Talya (Ne Davidoff) on her upcoming birthday tomorrow.
8 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Avi on his upcoming birthday this Shabbos.
15 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Micaela Fasman on her birthday next week.
15 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Netanel Davidoff on his birthday tonight.
15 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Yosef Davidoff on his birthday next week.
22 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Rahel (Mommy) whose Hebrew birthday is next week.
22 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Shmuly whose birthday is next week.
22 Oct 2026	*Semicha / Studies*	Mazal Tov to Batsheva for passing her exams with excellent scores to gain access to University in EY to study midwifery, starting next month BEH.
29 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Penina on her birthday next week.
29 Oct 2026	*Birthday*	Mazal Tov to Elisha on his birthday next week.

Yahrzeits

Every mention of a yahrzeit, quoted as written, by date sent.

2016

11 Feb 2016 And we wish Renee long life for the Yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie AH.

10 Mar 2016 And last but not least we wish Mommy long life for the Yohrtzeit of Pepe AH.

25 Mar 2016 Wishing Mommy arichus yomim on the upcoming Yohrtzeit of Simcha.

9 Jun 2016 And on the same day is the Yohrtzeit of Meme.

16 Jun 2016 We wish Mommy long life for Meme's Yohrtzeit today.

7 Jul 2016 This coming Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of my father A'H, who is also the father of Chanan and Reuven.

7 Jul 2016 Gimmel Tammuz on Shabbos is also the Yohrtzeit of the Rebbe.

29 Sep 2016 Today is now the Yohrtzeit of my mother, and I wish Chanan and Reuven long life.

2017

19 Jan 2017 This coming Motzei Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of The Alte Rebbe, one of the giants of our People.

2 Feb 2017 This coming week is also the Yohrtzeit of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson ZLB.

23 Feb 2017 We wish long life to Mommy for the upcoming Yohrtzeit of Pepe next week.

23 Feb 2017 Similarly to Renee, we wish you long life for Aunty Lottie's Yohrtzeit.

16 Mar 2017 Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Simcha AH next week.

2 Jun 2017 We wish Mommy long life for the Yohrtzeit of Meme next week, and a safe trip to Tunisia.

22 Jun 2017 The 1st of Tammuz is Mommy and I Anniversary, and then the 3rd of Tammuz is Daddy's Yohrtzeit (Pesach ben Breina AH)

22 Jun 2017 The 3rd of Tammuz is also the Rebbe's Yohrtzeit.

22 Jun 2017 And the Yohrtzeit of Shmueli Bassin's grandfather AH.

14 Sep 2017 And last but not least is the Yohrtzeit of our mother Nechama bas Chasha.

14 Sep 2017 It is interesting that her Yohrtzeit is chof zain Elul (27th Elul).

16 Nov 2017 We wish long life to Kerry Lee for the Yohrtzeit of her father Alden, which is this Shabbos.

2018

11 Jan 2018 Today (chof dalet Teves) is the yohrtzeit of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of the Chabad Chassidic movement.

18 Jan 2018 We have now entered the month of Shvat and the 10th of Shvat is the Yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson.

16 Feb 2018 Wishing long life to Mommy for the yohrtzeit of Pepe a'h

16 Feb 2018 Wishing long life to Renee for the yohrtzeit of Auntie Lottie a'h.

1 Mar 2018 Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Simcha ah this coming week.

24 May 2018 Wishing Mommy long life for her mother, Meme, whose yohrtzeit is today.

7 Jun 2018 And we wish long life to all the Fisher Family on the Yohrtzeit of Naomi's mother Rosalie, in the coming week.

14 Jun 2018 This Shabbos we have 3 yohrtzeits.

14 Jun 2018 Ie the yohrtzeit of our Rebbe - The Lubavitcher Rebbe, our (Chanan, Reuven and my) father, and the grand-father of Shmueli Bassin in Australia. - Gimmel Tammuz.

14 Jun 2018 The CLINICAL theme of this week very much reflected off the wedding of Sara and Aaron this week, and relates to the above yohrtzeits.

2 Aug 2018 Yesterday was the yohrtzeit of The Rebbe's father Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson (1878-1944).

6 Sep 2018 Tonight is the yohrtzeit of our dear Mother AH.

6 Sep 2018 It is customary to visit the beis olam before Rosh Hashana anyway if one can, and this of course fits in very well with her yohrtzeit.

13 Sep 2018 Also to mention that Joys husband Claude also had a yortzeit last week for his mother on the same day as Mommy's Yohrtzeit.

25 Oct 2018 It is interesting that it was also the yohrtzeit of Rachel imeinu last week on 11th of Cheshvan, and we see her tremendous devotion to her children.

1 Nov 2018 This coming week is the yohrtzeit of my first cousin, Alden ah'.

2019

1 Feb 2019 We wish Renee long life for the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week.

1 Feb 2019 This week has also been the yohrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the wife of the Rebbe, and daughter of the Previous Rebbe.

1 Feb 2019 I must have been tired when I did the email last night, but I omitted you regarding the yohrtzeit of your mother AH. *(family note)*

1 Feb 2019 Brian, wishing you long life on the yohrtzeit next week. *(family note)*

21 Feb 2019 We wish Mendel Kehaty long life on the yohrtzeit of Nadiv.

14 Mar 2019 We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of Pepe which was this week.

21 Mar 2019 Also to wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister Simcha, this coming week.

22 May 2019 This is how great is the flow of light and energy coming down on this day, and this is the day that Rashbi passed on, and this is why he wanted his yohrtzeit to be celebrated with such great joy!

6 Jun 2019 Shavuos is the time when we received the TORAH from Hashem, and it is also the time of the yohrtzeit of Dovid Hamelech, who wrote the Book of Psalms (TEHILLIM)

13 Jun 2019 We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of Meme.

27 Jun 2019 And we cant forget that this coming week is also the Yohrtzeit of Rosalie Fisher AH, Naomi's mother.

4 Jul 2019 This Shabbos is Gimel Tamuz, which is the Yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and also our father Pesach ben Zalman

19 Sep 2019 1 year later during Shavuos meal on the first yohrtzeit of the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Tzvi announced that his father had appeared to him and instructed him to transfer the leadership to the greatest disciple of the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch, also known as the Maggid of Mezeritch.

26 Sep 2019 At this time of the year, there are 2 events which stand out prominent, and that is the Yohrtzeit of my (and Chanan and Reuven's) mother which is tonight, and the birth of Daniel Yitzchok on the first night of ROSH HASHANAH.

26 Sep 2019 I believe that it is also Claude's mother's Yohrtzeit at the same time tonight, and we all wish you long life, and that both neshama's should have an aliyah!

20 Nov 2019 This coming week is the Yohrtzeit of my cousin Alden, and I wish Froma and Kerry Lee and Adrian long life.

2020

20 Feb 2020 It is also the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week, and we wish Renee, Brian and Sidney long life.

27 Feb 2020 Tonight is Pepe's Yohrtzeit, and we wish Mommy long life.

12 Mar 2020 We wish long life to Mendel and the Kehaty Family on the Yohrtzeit of Nadiv.

12 Mar 2020 And we wish Mommy long life on the Yohrtzeit of Simcha.

4 Jun 2020 We wish Mommy long life for Meme whose Yohrtzeit was this week.

18 Jun 2020 Then there are some Yohrtzeits:

25 Jun 2020 Today is the auspicious day of Gimmel Tammuz (3rd of Tammuz) which is the Yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and it is also the Yohrtzeit of our dear father.

25 Jun 2020 It is so touching for me to see these 2 yohrtzeit candles standing next to each other on the mantle-piece in our home BH!

25 Jun 2020 I would like to link these 2 yohrtzeits, with the Studying of Rambam, from an interesting Dvar Torah I heard this week.

25 Jun 2020 The first cycle ended on the Rebbe's birthday, and the upcoming 40th cycle, with all the significance of the no. 40, ends on Gimmel Tammuz next year, the Rebbe's yohrtzeit!

16 Jul 2020 I believe that this is the only time in Torah that an explicit date is given for a Yohrtzeit!

10 Sep 2020 It is her Yohrtzeit next week, and we all remember her with fond memories.

29 Oct 2020 • Today is the Yohrtzeit of Rachel Imeinu, and traditionally 1000's of people go to pray at Kever Rachel, in Israel, that Hashem should have mercy on us in her merit. • And next week is the birthday of Rahel our personal imeinu.

12 Nov 2020 And next week is also the yohrtzeit of Alden AH, who is Kerry Lee's father and the past husband of Froma (and Adrian's brother).

19 Nov 2020 I want to wish Renee, Sid and Brian long life for the Yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave which was last week.

10 Dec 2020 We wish Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Greg.

2021

7 Jan 2021 Tonight is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, Reb Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

21 Jan 2021 Yud Shvat (the 10th of Shvat) which we mark on Shabbos, is the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe in 1950, and it is the day when the Lubavitcher Rebbe took over the leadership one year later.

11 Feb 2021 We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of Pepe next week.

11 Feb 2021 We wish Renée, Sid and Brian long life on the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week.

11 Feb 2021 It is also the yohrtzeit of a good friend of our family Reb Shimon Pilsner.

26 Feb 2021 Wishing long life to Mendel and the Kehaty Family on the yohrtzeit of Nadav ah next week.

26 Feb 2021 Wishing long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit also of Simchah next week.

24 Mar 2021 We also remember Aunty Girlie Sacks with fondness, whose yohrtzeit is also on the second day of Pesach.

29 Apr 2021 It is always with much excitement that we await Lag Baomer, the Yohrtzeit of Rashbi (Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai).

29 Apr 2021 He also instructed that the day of his yohrtzeit (Lag Baomer) should be one of JOYOUS CELEBRATION!

13 May 2021 And this can be further understood from David HaMelech, whose birth and yohrtzeit are both on Shavuot, in Psalm 8 which I noticed this week.

13 May 2021 The Baal Shem Tov's yohrtzeit is also on Shavuot and his Teachings and those of the Alte Rebbe, (author of Tanya above) are integrally related.

20 May 2021 We wish Mommy long life on the Yohrtzeit of Meme, also on Shabbos.

3 Jun 2021 We wish long life to Naomi on the Yohrtzeit of her mother next week.

10 Jun 2021 This time of year always has a bitter sweet taste in that it is our Anniversary (tonight - 2nd Tammuz) and the Yohrtzeit of our dear father ah and dear Rebbe is on 3rd Tammuz.

2 Sep 2021 On Shabbos is the Yohrtzeit of mine, and Chanan and Reuven's mother AH.

28 Oct 2021 We wish long life to Renee, Sid and Brian for the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave this coming week.

28 Oct 2021 We also wish long life to Froma, Kerry-Lee and Gareth for the yohrtzeit of Alden, also next week.

30 Dec 2021 This week was also the Yohrtzeit of the ALTE REBBE (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi), which followed soon after the Yohrtzeit of the RAMBAM (Maimonides), 2 giants of Klal Yisrael.

30 Dec 2021 "The Yohrtzeits of these 2 teachers should inspire us to establish fixed programs of study that focus on their works.

2022

6 Jan 2022 • always follows soon after the Rambam's yohrtzeit, • the above verse refers to Egypt where Rambam lived, • and the verse is placed right before the first 2 Mitzvos of Torah, the area where Rambam has been the chief codifier throughout our history, to list out the full 613 Mitzvos that Torah comes to teach us.

13 Jan 2022 Yud Shvat is the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe who passed on in 1950, and exactly one year letter, also on Yud Shvat, the Rebbe (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson) took over the leadership of the Lubavitch movement.

3 Feb 2022 We wish long life to Renee, Sid and Brian on the Yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie today (I believe that it is Adar Aleph).

10 Feb 2022 This week on the 7th of Adar, is both Mosheh's yohrtzeit and birthday on the same day!

18 Feb 2022 Wishing long life to Mendel on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv, who we were fortunate to meet.

3 Mar 2022 We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of her father, Pepe, this coming week.

3 Mar 2022 On the same day as Pepe, it is also the yohrtzeit of a friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner.

18 Mar 2022 Wishing Mommy long life for Dani (Simcha), whose yohrtzeit is this coming week.

15 Apr 2022 Also on second nifght Seder is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie who we were all very fond of.

12 May 2022 Lag Baomer is the yohrtzeit and yom hilula of the revered, second century Sage, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who is buried in the mountains of Meron, and which takes place next Wednesday night and Thursday.

2 Jun 2022 And on the same day is the yohrtzeit of Meme, who Esher is named after.

2 Jun 2022 Mosheh Rabeinu received the Torah on Shavuot, and Shavuos is also the yohrtzeits of both Dovid HaMelech and the Baal Shem Tov (the founder of the Chassidic Movement)

23 Jun 2022 We wish long life to Naomi and the Fisher Family on the yohrtzeit of their mother this coming week.

30 Jun 2022 This Shabbos is Gimmel Tammuz, which is the yohrtzeit of The Rebbe and my father AH. (I believe that one has to put one's spiritual teacher first) - see below for their mention.

22 Sep 2022 In relation to Rosh Hashanah and the Yohrtzeit tonight of our mother (Chanan, Reuven and I), I heard a powerful story which I would like to share.

22 Sep 2022 It is also the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother, and we wish him and his Family long life.

22 Sep 2022 And our dear mother Nechama bas Yisroel Tzvi Hirsh ah, whose yohrtzeit is tonight, wanted her boys to be MENTCHEN.

17 Nov 2022 We wish long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah, for whom I have many fond memories.

17 Nov 2022 It is also the yohrtzeit of Alden ah, my cousin.

22 Dec 2022 Wishing Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Gregg.

29 Dec 2022 Also, coming up on Chof (20th) Teves is the Rambam's yohrtzeit, and so I decided to contribute to these 2 events by offering for free all the PDF files of my Studying Rambam Series. (See Offer attached)

2023

12 Jan 2023 Tonight is the yohrtzeit of the Rambam (Maimonides), and next week is the yohrtzeit of The Alte Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

2 Feb 2023 We wish Avi and Family long life, on the first yohrtzeit of his father.

2 Feb 2023 But 2 other events that occurred, ie the yohrtzeit of Avi's father, Reb Yisrael Meir Vogel ah, and the anniversary of Uncle Morris Davidoff's Barmitzvah, were very much connected.

23 Feb 2023 We have 3 yohrtzeits this week:

23 Feb 2023 Today is Aunty Lottie's ah yohrtzeit, and we wish Sid and Brian and their Families, long life.

23 Feb 2023	Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Pepe ah, Mommy's father.
23 Feb 2023	Also tonight is the yohrtzeit of Shimon Pilsner ah, a friend of ours for many years.
9 Mar 2023	There are 2 yohrtzeits this week:
9 Mar 2023	We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister Simcha ah.
9 Mar 2023	We wish Mendel Kehaty long life on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadav ah.
30 Mar 2023	Also on the second day of Pesach is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie.
24 May 2023	Wishing Mommy long life for the yohrtzeit of Meme, also next week.
15 Jun 2023	Wishing Naomi and her Family long life for the yohrtzeit of her mother Rosalie.
22 Jun 2023	This week, and actually, today, Gimmel Tammuz, we have 2 yohrtzeits.
22 Jun 2023	I would therefore like to share some thoughts linking these 2 yohrtzeits, and also to connect this to an article I saw from this coming week's Pirkei Avot.
10 Aug 2023	In Letter no. 3 he discusses Tzedakah as an 'armoured coat of mail (scales)', and this very much links up with the scales and fins of the kosher fish in this week's Sedra Reeh, and the yohrtzeit of the Rebbe's father Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson which was this week.
7 Sep 2023	It is the Yohrtzeit of Mommy towards the end of the week.
7 Sep 2023	Wishing long life also to Claude on the yohrtzeit of his mother.
14 Sep 2023	Then we have 2 yohrtzeits:
9 Nov 2023	This week is also the yohrtzeit of my cousin Alden ah.
9 Nov 2023	Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah, and this week was the unveiling of the tombstone of Renee ah.
16 Nov 2023	The 9th of Kislev marks his birth and his Yohrtzeit.
7 Dec 2023	Wishing Claude and Joy long life on the yohrtzeit of Gregg ah, on the second day of Chanukah.

2024

4 Jan 2024	Tonight is the Yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidus, and so I thought to summarize what we have been learning from his famous book, Tanya (also known as Sefer Ha Beinunim - Book of the Intermediates) this week, in the section Likutei Amarim Chaps 12 and 13
11 Jan 2024	We want to wish Avi long life for the upcoming Yohrtzeit of his dear father Reb Yisroel Meir ah on Thursday next week.
19 Jan 2024	Wishing long life to Avi and his Family on the yohrtzeit of his father today.
8 Feb 2024	It is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next week.
7 Mar 2024	We wish long life to Mommy for the yohrtzeit of Pepe next week.

7 Mar 2024	It is also the yohrtzeit of a friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner, who spent many Shabbosim and Yom Tvim in our home.
14 Mar 2024	Mazal Tov for the special Opsher birthday of Shlomo Moshe Vogel on 7 Adar , which is also the birthday and yohrtzeit of Mosheh Rabeinu!
28 Mar 2024	Today is the yohrtzeit of Nadiv Dovber Kehaty ah, the brother of Mendel.
28 Mar 2024	Tonight is also the Yohrtzeit of Dani ah, Mommy's (Rahel) sister.
18 Apr 2024	Next week is the yohrtzeit of Aunty Girlie Sacks.
14 Jun 2024	We wish Mommy long life for Meme's Yohrtzeit next week.
4 Jul 2024	Our father's Yohrtzeit is on the same day as The Rebbe's, on Gimmel Tammuz.
4 Jul 2024	We also wish long life to Naomi and all the Fisher Family on the Yohrtzeit of her mother tomorrow.
26 Sep 2024	We have the Yohrtzeit of my mother on Monday, and I will be going to visit her at the Beis Olam on Sunday.
26 Sep 2024	It is also the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother.
1 Oct 2024	And on Vav Tishrei we remember fondly, Renee on her Yohrtzeit.
21 Nov 2024	It is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah this coming week and we wish long life to Sid and Brian.
28 Nov 2024	It is my cousin Alden's yohrtzeit on Shabbos, and we wish long life to Kerry Lee, Gareth, and Froma and their Families.
26 Dec 2024	We wish long life to Claude and Joy on the yohrtzeit of Gregg.

2025

9 Jan 2025	We wish Shmuel Levy long life with the upcoming yohrtzeit of his father Reb Ephraim ah.
16 Jan 2025	I saw an interesting article by Rabbi YY Jacobson, combining these themes, and it is also relevant now, because the upcoming 24th of Tevet is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe, author of Tanya.
30 Jan 2025	I want to wish Avi long life on the upcoming yohrtzeit of his father next week.
30 Jan 2025	• Sedra Bo always falls in close proximity to the yohrtzeit of Rambam • Rambam lived a large part of his life in Egypt • Isn't it also interesting, that straight after the above verse , comes the first Law in Torah about calculating the New Moon.
6 Feb 2025	The 10th of Shvat is this Shabbos, and it marks the yohrtzeit of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson in 1950
27 Feb 2025	Wishing Rahel long life for her father, whose yohrtzeit is next week, and who was fondly known as Pepe ah by all.
27 Feb 2025	Wishing long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Auntie Lottie ah, next week.

27 Feb 2025	I would also like to remember a friend of our Family, Shimon Pilsner ah, whose yohrtzeit is on the same day as Pepe.
13 Mar 2025	We wish long life to Mommy on the yohrtzeit of Dani her sister next week.
13 Mar 2025	We wish long life to Mendel Kehaty and all his Family on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv Dovber which is next week.
10 Apr 2025	It is Aunty Girlie's yohrtzeit next week and we wish Adrian and all her side of the Family including Froma and Kerry Lee, long life, and many simchos in the future.
5 Jun 2025	And also tomorrow is the Yohrtzeit of Meme, Rahel's mother ah.
26 Jun 2025	The 3rd of Tammuz is the yohrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and on the same day many years previously, it was the day when his father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe, was released from imprisonment in Russia.
26 Jun 2025	The yohrtzeit of my father is also on the 3rd of Tammuz, and the Anniversary of Rahel and I is on the 1st of Tammuz.
1 Aug 2025	This week has also been the Yohrtzeit of the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi, also know as the ARI HAKADOSH - THE HOLY LION, who passed away in 1572.
8 Aug 2025	I also noticed that it is the yohrtzeit of Basha Stein this Shabbos (not sure of her first name) who passed away on the 15th of Av 1949.
29 Aug 2025	Also coming up next week is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Morris.
18 Sep 2025	Last but not least is the upcoming yohrtzeit of our dear mother on Shabbos.
25 Sep 2025	We have 2 important Yohrtzeits coming up this week.
25 Sep 2025	This is also the Yohrtzeit of the Rebbes mother and is a well known date in the Chassidic calendar.
25 Sep 2025	I always feel so impressed that Renes yohrtzeit is on the same day.
25 Sep 2025	One day later, on Monday, is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Maika, which I only found out about recently through Selma.
13 Nov 2025	We wish long life to Sid and Brian for the yohrtzeit of Uncle Dave ah which is next week.
13 Nov 2025	And another yohrtzeit at the end of next week is that of my cousin Alden ah.
11 Dec 2025	Wishing long life for Claude and Joy on the yohrtzeit of Gregg coming up this week.
26 Dec 2025	We wish long life to Shmuel Levy on the upcoming yohrtzeit of his dear father, Reb Ephraim ah, next week.

2026

8 Jan 2026	This coming week is the yohrtzeit of the Alte Rebbe (24 Tevet), and I saw an interesting vort connected to him, and the incident of the 'Burning Bush' in this week's Sedra, Shmos.
22 Jan 2026	We wish Avi long life for the Yohrtzeit of his dear father Reb Yisrael Meir ah, coming up next week.
29 Jan 2026	This week on the 10th of Shvat, was the yohrtzeit of the Frierdike Rebbe, and we have been learning the last Maamar that he composed called Basi Legani.
12 Feb 2026	Wishing long life to Sid and Brian on the yohrtzeit of Aunty Lottie next Thursday.
19 Feb 2026	There are a number of yohrtzeits this week:
19 Feb 2026	We wish Mommy long life on the yohrtzeit of her father, Pepe.
19 Feb 2026	Towards the end of the week is the yohrtzeit of Dov Hyman.
19 Feb 2026	Tonight is also the yohrtzeit of a dear friend of ours, Shimon Pilsner, who spent many Shabbosim with us.
5 Mar 2026	And Yohrtzeits:
5 Mar 2026	We wish long life to Mendel Kehaty on the yohrtzeit of his brother Nadiv Dovber ah on Shabbos.
5 Mar 2026	Wishing Mommy (Rahel) long life on the yohrtzeit of her sister, Simcha ah on Sunday.
5 Apr 2026	I also want to remember Aunty Girlie's yohrtzeit which was on the Second Day of Pesach.
28 May 2026	We wish long life to Mommy (Rahel) for the yohrtzeit of Meme which was this week.
11 Jun 2026	We wish long life to Naomi and all the Fisher Family for the yohrtzeit of her mother Rosalie, which is next week.
18 Jun 2026	In addition, today is Daddy's Yahrzeit -Percy Pesach ben Zalman ah.
18 Jun 2026	Today, Gimmel Tammuz, is also the Yohrtzeit of our dear Rebbe, the Lubavitcher Rebbe.
23 Jul 2026	There is a yohrtzeit coming up at the end of next week, on the special day of 15th of Av (Tu BeAv) of my mother's mother, Basha Stein ah.
30 Jul 2026	Wishing long life to Isanne Ossey on the 10th Yohrtzeit of her mother Mary Heiman ah, which was on Tisha BeAv.
30 Jul 2026	· The yohrtzeit of Isanne's mother on Tisha BeAv, Mary
30 Jul 2026	· The yohrtzeit of my mother's mother Chasha ah (Annie) on TU BEAV (15th of Av), yesterday.

6 Aug 2026	Connected to the above is a short Dvar Torah from Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, the Rebbe's father, whose yohrtzeit was this week, which I saw, as follows:
20 Aug 2026	Today is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Morris ah, and we wish long life to all the members of his Family in this group – Shirley, Zelda, Greta and all their Families.
27 Aug 2026	We also wish the Stein Family from Uncle Henry ah side, long life for Aunty Maisy ah, whose yohrtzeit is tonight.
3 Sep 2026	At the end of next week is my mother ah yohrtzeit.
3 Sep 2026	On the same day is the yohrtzeit of Claude's mother ah, and we wish her neshamah to have an aliyah.
17 Sep 2026	This Shabbos is the yohrtzeit of Uncle Maika ah.
17 Sep 2026	Tonight is the yohrtzeit of Renee ah, and we wish long life to all her Family – Jody, Shelley, Gavin, Roy, Sid, Brian and Adam and Families.
17 Sep 2026	Renee has such a special yohrtzeit being the day on which the Rebbe's mother also passed away.
17 Sep 2026	A few days later at the yohrtzeit of my mother on the 27th of Elul, Rabbi Citron had a lechaim with me, and there was a conversation about the passing of his grandmother Mrs Carlbach a few days earlier.
17 Sep 2026	As mentioned, Rebetzen Chana's yohrtzeit is tonight.
15 Oct 2026	Wishing long life to Janine Milner, Anthony and Gillian on the upcoming yohrtzeit of Uncle Henry ah next week.

Every letter by date sent

All 556 letters in the order they were sent (UK date), with the parsha or Yom Tov they are filed under and the page they start on. Each title links to its letter.

2016

13 Jan 2016	*Bo*	ROOTS	372
21 Jan 2016	*Beshalach*	SPLITTING WATER	404
28 Jan 2016	*Yisro*	5 MINUTES PER WEEK.	433
4 Feb 2016	*Mishpatim*	AN ESSAY RECEIVED FROM CHAVA	463
11 Feb 2016	*Terumah*	DONKEY	491
18 Feb 2016	*Tetzaveh*	THE JOY OF HOLY MUSIC	515
25 Feb 2016	*Ki Sisa*	JOY CONTINUED	539
3 Mar 2016	*Vayakhel*	JOY CONTINUED - CHASSANAH AND TRUE LOVE	562
10 Mar 2016	*Pekudei*	JOY CONTINUED - THE JOY OF STRENGTH	590
17 Mar 2016	*Vayikra*	JOY CONTINUED - THE RIDICULOUS AND THE SUBLIME	604
25 Mar 2016	*Tzav*	JOY CONTINUED - A REFLECTION ON AN OBSTACLE	634
31 Mar 2016	*Shemini*	SIMPLE JOY AND MAZAL TOV	662
8 Apr 2016	*Tazria*	MAZAL TOV MAZAL TOV	692
14 Apr 2016	*Metzora*	THE POWER OF A WOMAN	717
22 Apr 2016	*Pesach*	THE UNUSUAL NUTRITION OF MATZOS	1383
27 Apr 2016	*Pesach*	IS EMUNAH THAT SIMPLE?	1385
5 May 2016	*Acharei Mos*	THE WORLD IS ONE DAY OLD	726
12 May 2016	*Kedoshim*	HEALTH	760
19 May 2016	*Emor*	SOME HISTORY AND BIOLOGY	771
27 May 2016	*Behar*	A WATCHING EYE	800
2 Jun 2016	*Bechukosai*	UNDERSTANDING THAT WHICH CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD	825
9 Jun 2016	*Bamidbar*	STRENGTHENING INTELLECT	836

16 Jun 2016	*Nasso*	THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS	865
23 Jun 2016	*Beha'aloscha*	SUMMER	892
1 Jul 2016	*Shelach*	EYE SPY.....?	918
7 Jul 2016	*Korach*	SOULS ON FIRE	947
14 Jul 2016	*Chukas*	HAPPINESS	979
21 Jul 2016	*Balak*	IMPRISONMENT ?	1007
28 Jul 2016	*Pinchas*	LONLINESS?	1029
4 Aug 2016	*Mattos, Masei*	A PARADOX	1056
11 Aug 2016	*Devarim*	VISION	1086
18 Aug 2016	*Va'eschanan*	GROWING YOUNGER	1114
25 Aug 2016	*Eikev*	LONG LIFE CONTINUED	1138
2 Sep 2016	*Re'eh*	TZEDAKA	1166
8 Sep 2016	*Shoftim*	DYNAMICS OF TZEDAKA	1192
15 Sep 2016	*Ki Seitzei*	THIRTEEN	1215
22 Sep 2016	*Ki Savo*	A RADICAL PATH	1241
29 Sep 2016	*Nitzavim*	A LOVING JUDGE	1267
6 Oct 2016	*Vayeilech*	NEVER TOO LATE - DROP BY DROP - A REFLECTION	1297
13 Oct 2016	*Haazinu*	A ONE WORD INSTRUCTION BOOK	1311
21 Oct 2016	*Sukkos*	SAMECH	1350
27 Oct 2016	*Bereishis*	JACOB GOES ON HIS WAY	25
3 Nov 2016	*Noach*	1,064,340,000,000,000,000	51
10 Nov 2016	*Lech Lecha*	FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH CONFUSION	77
17 Nov 2016	*Vayeira*	ANGELS, PLANETS AND MOONS	102
24 Nov 2016	*Chayei Sarah*	A DUAL MANOEUVRE	132
1 Dec 2016	*Toldos*	HIDDEN MESSAGES	156
8 Dec 2016	*Vayeitzei*	THE LAME BRIDE	180
15 Dec 2016	*Vayishlach*	CONNECTING	205
22 Dec 2016	*Vayeishev*	RELEASE	231
29 Dec 2016	*Mikeitz*	OLIVE OIL	257

2017

5 Jan 2017	*Vayigash*	LONG - SIGHTED	279

12 Jan 2017	*Vayechi*	BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS	303
19 Jan 2017	*Shemos*	NEVER GIVE UP	330
26 Jan 2017	*Va'eira*	HOW MUCH POWER DOES MAN (OR WOMAN) HAVE?	353
2 Feb 2017	*Bo*	A STORY OF HOPE, FROM AUSTRALIA	375
9 Feb 2017	*Beshalach*	SINGING AND DANCING BIRDS	407
16 Feb 2017	*Yisro*	A BEAUTIFUL HOME	437
23 Feb 2017	*Mishpatim*	JOY IN DARKNESS	468
2 Mar 2017	*Terumah*	JOY OF THE PRESENT	493
9 Mar 2017	*Tetzaveh*	JOY OF THE SUBLIME AND 'RIDICULOUS'	518
16 Mar 2017	*Ki Sisa*	JOY OF APPRECIATION	540
23 Mar 2017	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	EMUNAH INTRODUCTION	565
30 Mar 2017	*Vayikra*	EMUNAH - MIND VS HEART	606
6 Apr 2017	*Tzav*	3 + 4 = FREEDOM	637
14 Apr 2017	*Pesach*	ONE LETTER CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE	1387
20 Apr 2017	*Shemini*	THE PATH OF THE KING	664
27 Apr 2017	*Tazria, Metzora*	HEALTH - GENERAL	693
5 May 2017	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	HEALTH CONTINUED	729
12 May 2017	*Emor*	HUMILITY IN ENDURANCE	774
18 May 2017	*Behar, Bechukosai*	PROMISING	802
25 May 2017	*Bamidbar*	THE EARTH TREMBLED	838
2 Jun 2017	*Nasso*	ETERNAL BOND - YESHAYEH	867
8 Jun 2017	*Beha'aloscha*	DEDICATION	894
15 Jun 2017	*Shelach*	IMPOSSIBLE?	920
22 Jun 2017	*Korach*	BITTER - SWEET	950
29 Jun 2017	*Chukas*	DIVINE PROVIDENCE	981
6 Jul 2017	*Balak*	OUR ENEMIES AND A SOLUTION	1010
13 Jul 2017	*Pinchas*	A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE	1031
20 Jul 2017	*Mattos, Masei*	SILK WORMS	1058
27 Jul 2017	*Devarim*	YERUSHALAYIM	1088
3 Aug 2017	*Va'eschanan*	HONOUR	1117

10 Aug 2017	*Eikev*	DOWNFALL AND CONQUEST	1141
17 Aug 2017	*Re'eh*	The Marathon	1168
24 Aug 2017	*Shoftim*	CELESTIAL BODIES	1195
31 Aug 2017	*Ki Seitzei*	KOL YISRAEL	1218
7 Sep 2017	*Ki Savo*	FIXED TIMES	1244
14 Sep 2017	*Nitzavim, Vayeilech*	PURITY	1269
28 Sep 2017	*Yom Kippur*	SCALES OF LOVE	1341
11 Oct 2017	*Bereishis*	THE HUG	27
19 Oct 2017	*Noach*	BEGINNINGS	54
26 Oct 2017	*Lech Lecha*	THE PATH	79
2 Nov 2017	*Vayeira*	AGONISING	106
9 Nov 2017	*Chayei Sarah*	AGONISING ???	134
16 Nov 2017	*Toldos*	BIRTH	159
23 Nov 2017	*Vayeitzei*	BELOVED	184
30 Nov 2017	*Vayishlach*	KABBALAH, GEMATRIAS, AND BROTHERS	207
7 Dec 2017	*Vayeishev*	YERUSHALAYIM	233
14 Dec 2017	*Mikeitz*	FACETS OF LIFE	260
21 Dec 2017	*Vayigash*	PERSISTENT PRAYER	282
28 Dec 2017	*Vayechi*	SUBLIME GREATNESS	305

2018

4 Jan 2018	*Shemos*	NAMES, LETTERS, HUGS, AND KISSES	333
11 Jan 2018	*Va'eira*	CHASSIDIC MELODY	355
18 Jan 2018	*Bo*	FOLLY AND MARRIAGE JOY	378
26 Jan 2018	*Beshalach*	LETTERS WITH A STORY - APPROPRIATE ACTION	409
1 Feb 2018	*Yisro*	GRATITUDE	439
8 Feb 2018	*Mishpatim*	THE WAY OUT	470
16 Feb 2018	*Terumah*	BEARDS	496
22 Feb 2018	*Tetzaveh*	JOY	520
1 Mar 2018	*Ki Sisa*	COMEDY ENGLISH STYLE	542
8 Mar 2018	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	JOY CONTINUED	569
15 Mar 2018	*Vayikra*	DOES EATING MATZAH HELP?	612

22 Mar 2018	*Tzav*	MATZAH CONTINUED	641
30 Mar 2018	*Pesach*	FREEDOM	1388
5 Apr 2018	*Pesach*	HUMILITY IN LOVING-KINDNESS	1391
12 Apr 2018	*Shemini*	WEALTH	666
19 Apr 2018	*Tazria, Metzora*	ASHAMED OF OUR BAD CHARACTER TRAITS?	696
26 Apr 2018	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	HOLY SHABBOS	734
2 May 2018	*Emor*	7 = 5 + 2	776
10 May 2018	*Behar, Bechukosai*	CHAYENU	804
17 May 2018	*Bamidbar*	TRIPLE PREPARATION	840
24 May 2018	*Nasso*	EDUCATION, GRADUATION, ETHICS OF THE FATHERS	869
31 May 2018	*Beha'alosch a*	EDUCATION CONTINUED - PREVENTION	897
7 Jun 2018	*Shelach*	ANOTHER FACET OF EDUCATION	923
14 Jun 2018	*Korach*	CLINICAL	952
21 Jun 2018	*Chukas*	CORRECTION	984
28 Jun 2018	*Balak*	FINE BALANCE	1013
5 Jul 2018	*Pinchas*	THE POWER OF DIFFICULTY	1034
12 Jul 2018	*Mattos, Masei*	HOPE, AND THE LOVE OF HASHEM FOR HIS PEOPLE.	1062
19 Jul 2018	*Devarim*	GREAT OPPORTUNITIES	1092
26 Jul 2018	*Va'eschanan*	NATURAL TALENT	1119
2 Aug 2018	*Eikev*	THE SOURCE, THE RIVER AND THE GARDEN	1143
9 Aug 2018	*Re'eh*	THE ZODIAC OF ELUL	1170
16 Aug 2018	*Shoftim*	BROCHAS	1197
23 Aug 2018	*Ki Seitzei*	PRECIOUS DAYS	1220
30 Aug 2018	*Ki Savo*	JOYOUS ACTION	1246
6 Sep 2018	*Nitzavim*	EDUCATION	1272
13 Sep 2018	*Vayeilech*	TO HIM WHO HAS COMPASSION ON HIS PEOPLE	1300
20 Sep 2018	*Haazinu*	JOY	1313
27 Sep 2018	*Sukkos*	SUCCESS POTENTIAL	1352

4 Oct 2018	*Bereishis*	THE FOOLISH KING	30
11 Oct 2018	*Noach*	TRUST (BITACHON)	57
18 Oct 2018	*Lech Lecha*	TRANQUILITY	81
25 Oct 2018	*Vayeira*	BITACHON, YOSEF AND RAHEL	110
1 Nov 2018	*Chayei Sarah*	PEOPLE	137
8 Nov 2018	*Toldos*	LAUGHTER AND LIGHT	161
15 Nov 2018	*Vayeitzei*	THE SOURCE OF CONFIDENCE AND JOY	187
22 Nov 2018	*Vayishlach*	CONVERTING CHAOS TO SERENITY	209
29 Nov 2018	*Vayeishev*	LIVING IN THE MOMENT	236
6 Dec 2018	*Mikeitz*	THE BATTLE FOR THE 'LITTLE CITY'	262
13 Dec 2018	*Vayigash*	INSULAR V WORLDLY JUDAISM	285
20 Dec 2018	*Vayechi*	REAL LIVING	309
27 Dec 2018	*Shemos*	A FREUDIAN SLIP	336

2019

3 Jan 2019	*Va'eira*	SONG AND JOY	357
10 Jan 2019	*Bo*	HOLY LETTERS	381
17 Jan 2019	*Beshalach*	FLOWERS WITH EARS	412
24 Jan 2019	*Yisro*	THE CURE FOR ENVY	441
1 Feb 2019	*Mishpatim*	THE GREATNESS OF WOMEN	472
7 Feb 2019	*Terumah*	PROACTIVE HAPPINESS	497
14 Feb 2019	*Tetzaveh*	JOY - MUSIC OF THE TEMPLE - THE HARP OF DAVID HAMELECH	522
21 Feb 2019	*Ki Sisa*	HIDDENESS	543
28 Feb 2019	*Vayakhel*	THE ZODIAC OF ADAR	571
7 Mar 2019	*Pekudei*	AND SHE LAUGHS AT THE FINAL DAY	593
14 Mar 2019	*Vayikra*	PURIM?, YOM KIPPUR?, DRUNK?	615
21 Mar 2019	*Tzav*	AND WHAT AFTER PURIM?	644
28 Mar 2019	*Shemini*	HALFWAY MARK	668
11 Apr 2019	*Metzora*	LIGHT INSIDE THE DARKNESS	719
18 Apr 2019	*Pesach*	DAVID BEN GURION	1394
25 Apr 2019	*Pesach*	SPLITTING THE SEA	1397
2 May 2019	*Acharei Mos*	LOVE OF A FELLOW JEW	737

10 May 2019	*Kedoshim*	REFINING PROCESS	763
16 May 2019	*Emor*	SOFT SPEECH	779
22 May 2019	*Behar*	HOD	807
31 May 2019	*Bechukosai*	LEARNING FROM CHILDREN	828
6 Jun 2019	*Bamidbar*	AMAZING TORAH AND TEHILLIM	842
13 Jun 2019	*Nasso*	RAMBAM	872
20 Jun 2019	*Beha'aloscha*	FATHERS	899
27 Jun 2019	*Shelach*	40 YEARS	925
4 Jul 2019	*Korach*	INNER JOY	955
11 Jul 2019	*Chukas*	HISTORY AND EGO	986
18 Jul 2019	*Balak*	KING	1016
25 Jul 2019	*Pinchas*	STONES AND BRICKS	1037
1 Aug 2019	*Mattos, Masei*	RAMBAM	1064
8 Aug 2019	*Devarim*	OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL	1095
15 Aug 2019	*Va'eschanan*	FORCED LOVE?	1121
22 Aug 2019	*Eikev*	HIDDEN DEEP LOVE	1148
29 Aug 2019	*Re'eh*	GROWTH	1173
5 Sep 2019	*Shoftim*	REALISATION	1199
12 Sep 2019	*Ki Seitzei*	ELLUL	1222
19 Sep 2019	*Ki Savo*	HUMILITY AND CHAI ELLUL	1248
26 Sep 2019	*Nitzavim*	ROSH HASHANAH	1274
3 Oct 2019	*Vayeilech*	THE JOY OF MOVEMENT	1302
10 Oct 2019	*Haazinu*	JOY OF SUKKOS	1315
17 Oct 2019	*Sukkos*	DANCING	1354
24 Oct 2019	*Bereishis*	JOY CONTINUED	32
31 Oct 2019	*Noach*	KNOWLEDGE ROM THE HEIGHTS AND THE DEPTHS	59
7 Nov 2019	*Lech Lecha*	POWERUL SIMPLICITY	83
14 Nov 2019	*Vayeira*	CONGRUITY BETWEEN OUR INNER AND OUTER SELVES	113
20 Nov 2019	*Chayei Sarah*	SONS (AND DAUGHTERS)	139
28 Nov 2019	*Toldos*	HOLINESS AND LAUGHTER	163
5 Dec 2019	*Vayeitzei*	LADDER	189

12 Dec 2019	*Vayishlach*	THOUGHTFUL PONDERING	212
19 Dec 2019	*Vayeishev*	LIGHT AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT	238
2020			
2 Jan 2020	*Vayigash*	EFFORT AND SWEET FRUIT	287
9 Jan 2020	*Vayechi*	TORAH STUDY	311
30 Jan 2020	*Bo*	AN AMAZING STORY	385
6 Feb 2020	*Beshalach*	TRANSFORMING BITTERNESS TO SWEET	414
13 Feb 2020	*Yisro*	HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS HASHEM	442
20 Feb 2020	*Mishpatim*	WORK SLAVERY AND FREEDOM	475
27 Feb 2020	*Terumah*	JOY OF ADAR	499
5 Mar 2020	*Tetzaveh*	THE MONKEY	525
12 Mar 2020	*Ki Sisa*	JOY CONTINUED	548
19 Mar 2020	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	ADAR IS NOT YET OVER	574
26 Mar 2020	*Vayikra*	REDEMPTION	619
2 Apr 2020	*Tzav*	MATZOS - BREAD OF EMUNAH AND HEALTH	646
13 Apr 2020	*Shemini*	OUR ARMY OF HASHEM	669
23 Apr 2020	*Tazria, Metzora*	LOVE WORK	698
30 Apr 2020	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	BREINA	739
7 May 2020	*Emor*	ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATION	781
14 May 2020	*Behar, Bechukosai*	STRENGTH OF HUMILITY	811
21 May 2020	*Bamidbar*	EXCUSES?	845
27 May 2020	*Shavuos*	HONEY AND MILK	1413
4 Jun 2020	*Nasso*	TIMES OF TURMOIL?	876
11 Jun 2020	*Beha'aloscha*	SOULS ON FIRE	901
18 Jun 2020	*Shelach*	WORK ON FAITH	929
25 Jun 2020	*Korach*	GIMMEL (THIRD) of TAMMUZ AND RAMBAM	958
2 Jul 2020	*Chukas, Balak*	MYSTERY	990
10 Jul 2020	*Pinchas*	'FROM MOSHE TO MOSHE THERE NEVER AROSE ONE AS MOSHE'	1040

16 Jul 2020	*Mattos, Masei*	LOVING PEACE, PURSUING PEACE, AND LOVING OUR FELLOW JEWS	1067
23 Jul 2020	*Devarim*	FOLLOWING THE CLUES	1097
31 Jul 2020	*Va'eschanan*	OUR PRECIOUS BODIES	1123
6 Aug 2020	*Eikev*	A STORY OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION	1150
13 Aug 2020	*Re'eh*	THE WISDOM OF TOLERANCE	1175
20 Aug 2020	*Shoftim*	THE HIGH-LEVEL RETURN OF TZEDAKAH (CHARITY)	1201
27 Aug 2020	*Ki Seitzei*	COMFORT ZONE VERSUS THE YOKE OF TOIL	1224
3 Sep 2020	*Ki Savo*	FREE CHOICE	1251
10 Sep 2020	*Nitzavim, Vayeilech*	JOYOUS SERVICE	1276
17 Sep 2020	*Haazinu*	LOVE OF AWE	1318
24 Sep 2020	*Haazinu*	TEHILLIM	1320
1 Oct 2020	*Sukkos*	MUSIC	1356
7 Oct 2020	*Sukkos*	MUSIC CONTINUED	1358
15 Oct 2020	*Bereishis*	THE LAND OF ISRAEL	34
22 Oct 2020	*Noach*	THE VALUE OF EARNING A LIVING	61
29 Oct 2020	*Lech Lecha*	SEPARATION	86
5 Nov 2020	*Vayeira*	MARRIAGE FORMULA	115
12 Nov 2020	*Chayei Sarah*	MARRIAGE AND LOVE	141
19 Nov 2020	*Toldos*	FROM MUNDANE TO INSPIRATION	165
26 Nov 2020	*Vayeitzei*	HE WHO IS SMALL IS GREAT, AND HE WHO IS GREAT IS SMALL	191
3 Dec 2020	*Vayishlach*	FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT	214
10 Dec 2020	*Vayeishev*	A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS	241
17 Dec 2020	*Mikeitz*	CHALLENGE	264
25 Dec 2020	*Vayigash*	TWO KINGS, TWO GIANTS	290
31 Dec 2020	*Vayechi*	OUR DEEP TORAH	314
2021			
7 Jan 2021	*Shemos*	CONTROLLING UNWANTED URGES	339
14 Jan 2021	*Va'eira*	ASTOUNDING!	359
21 Jan 2021	*Bo*	DIVINE PROVIDENCE	389

28 Jan 2021	*Beshalach*	OUR ENEMY AMALEK	416
4 Feb 2021	*Yisro*	PEACE	445
11 Feb 2021	*Mishpatim*	A STORY	477
18 Feb 2021	*Terumah*	JOY	501
26 Feb 2021	*Tetzaveh*	LECHAIM	527
4 Mar 2021	*Ki Sisa*	CONSTRUCTIVE FIRE	550
11 Mar 2021	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	THE FENCE	576
18 Mar 2021	*Vayikra*	THE LITTLE ALEPH	620
24 Mar 2021	*Tzav*	FAITH AND HEALING	649
1 Apr 2021	*Pesach*	LOVE	1399
8 Apr 2021	*Shemini*	LASER BEAM	675
16 Apr 2021	*Tazria, Metzora*	THE DIRECT APPROACH	700
22 Apr 2021	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	THE ENLIGHTENED HEEL	745
29 Apr 2021	*Emor*	RASHBI	783
6 May 2021	*Behar, Bechukosai*	PLEADING	813
13 May 2021	*Bamidbar*	HIDDEN POWER	847
20 May 2021	*Nasso*	HANDS AND BLESSING	878
27 May 2021	*Beha'aloscha*	A LITTLE BEND	904
3 Jun 2021	*Shelach*	WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT	932
10 Jun 2021	*Korach*	CONQUEST	961
17 Jun 2021	*Chukas*	ONE G-D AND TWO WORLDS	993
24 Jun 2021	*Balak*	INTRIGUE	1018
1 Jul 2021	*Pinchas*	REPAIRING BREACHES	1042
8 Jul 2021	*Mattos, Masei*	AHARON	1069
15 Jul 2021	*Devarim*	A STORY	1099
22 Jul 2021	*Va'eschanan*	POWERFUL WORDS	1125
29 Jul 2021	*Eikev*	MATCH-MAKING	1152
5 Aug 2021	*Re'eh*	A GENTLE INNER VOICE	1177
12 Aug 2021	*Shoftim*	ACCOUNTING	1203
19 Aug 2021	*Ki Seitzei*	PURE AND CLEAR WINE	1226
26 Aug 2021	*Ki Savo*	THE LAND OF ISRAEL	1253
2 Sep 2021	*Nitzavim*	STANDING UPRIGHT	1279

9 Sep 2021	*Vayeilech*	SEEING VIRTUE	1304
16 Sep 2021	*Haazinu*	NEW RESOLUTIONS	1322
24 Sep 2021	*Sukkos*	MOISHEH'S VISION	1360
30 Sep 2021	*Bereishis*	RESOLUTIONS AND RESOLVE	37
7 Oct 2021	*Noach*	THE RAINBOW	63
14 Oct 2021	*Lech Lecha*	HAIR CUTTING	89
21 Oct 2021	*Vayeira*	SWEET DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINED LOVE	117
28 Oct 2021	*Chayei Sarah*	ETERNAL GENERATIONS	143
4 Nov 2021	*Toldos*	MARRIAGE - A STORY	168
11 Nov 2021	*Vayeitzei*	THE BLESSING OF CHILDREN	193
18 Nov 2021	*Vayishlach*	HISTORY	217
25 Nov 2021	*Vayeishev*	THE ORAL LAW	244
2 Dec 2021	*Mikeitz*	LIGHT	266
9 Dec 2021	*Vayigash*	MIRACLES CONTINUED	293
16 Dec 2021	*Vayechi*	FISH	316
24 Dec 2021	*Shemos*	SECRET OF SURVIVAL	342
30 Dec 2021	*Va'eira*	GIANTS	361

2022

6 Jan 2022	*Bo*	REDEMPTION	391
13 Jan 2022	*Beshalach*	SONG	419
20 Jan 2022	*Yisro*	BURIED TREASURE	448
27 Jan 2022	*Mishpatim*	ASPECTS OF JOY	480
3 Feb 2022	*Terumah*	FURTHER ASPECTS OF JOY	502
10 Feb 2022	*Tetzaveh*	A JOYOUS FAST DAY	528
18 Feb 2022	*Ki Sisa*	COUNTERING NEGATIVE FORCES	552
24 Feb 2022	*Vayakhel*	HUMOUR	578
3 Mar 2022	*Pekudei*	LESSONS FROM FISH	595
10 Mar 2022	*Vayikra*	FUN WITH VOICES	622
18 Mar 2022	*Tzav*	ANTITHESIS TO AMALEK	651
24 Mar 2022	*Shemini*	CONQUERING WITH JOY	677
31 Mar 2022	*Tazria*	CLEAN SPEECH	702

7 Apr 2022	*Metzora*	MARITAL AND GENERAL HARMONY	721
15 Apr 2022	*Pesach*	HUMILITY	1401
20 Apr 2022	*Pesach*	CHANNAH CARE	1403
28 Apr 2022	*Acharei Mos*	EMUNAH	747
5 May 2022	*Kedoshim*	GOOD HEALTH	765
12 May 2022	*Emor*	LAG BAOMER	786
19 May 2022	*Behar*	MODESTY	814
26 May 2022	*Bechukosai*	HARD WORK	830
2 Jun 2022	*Bamidbar*	RENEWED COMMITTMENT	850
9 Jun 2022	*Nasso*	CONNECTIONS	880
16 Jun 2022	*Beha'aloscha*	OUR PRIVILEGED GENERATION	906
23 Jun 2022	*Shelach*	EFFORT AND OPTIMISM	934
30 Jun 2022	*Korach*	CLIMBING MOUNTAINS	964
7 Jul 2022	*Chukas*	PURIFYING WATERS OF KNOWLEDGE	995
14 Jul 2022	*Balak*	NOT TO BE FOOLED	1020
21 Jul 2022	*Pinchas*	LASTING CHANGE	1044
28 Jul 2022	*Mattos, Masei*	THE HINTING OF TORAH	1071
4 Aug 2022	*Devarim*	THE POWER OF A PHYSICAL ACT	1101
11 Aug 2022	*Va'eschanan*	'SIMPLE' JEWS	1127
18 Aug 2022	*Eikev*	A SWEET AND HAPPY LIFE	1154
25 Aug 2022	*Re'eh*	THINKING OF OTHERS	1179
1 Sep 2022	*Shoftim*	KINGS	1204
8 Sep 2022	*Ki Seitzei*	GOOD INFLUENCE	1228
15 Sep 2022	*Ki Savo*	DEEP REFLECTION	1255
22 Sep 2022	*Nitzavim*	BE A MENTCH - A STORY	1281
29 Sep 2022	*Vayeilech*	PATHS OF TESHUVAH	1306
6 Oct 2022	*Haazinu*	BEARING OPPOSITES	1323
14 Oct 2022	*Sukkos*	CREATING JOY	1362
20 Oct 2022	*Bereishis*	THOUGHTFUL ACTION	39
27 Oct 2022	*Noach*	BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY	65
3 Nov 2022	*Lech Lecha*	ANALYSING WORK	91
10 Nov 2022	*Vayeira*	ESHES CHAYIL (WOMAN OF VALOUR)	120
17 Nov 2022	*Chayei Sarah*	WEALTH	145

24 Nov 2022	*Toldos*	UNDERSTANDING PRAYER	170
1 Dec 2022	*Vayeitzei*	BIRTHS AND EDUCATION	195
8 Dec 2022	*Vayishlach*	HOW TO BE A MAN	220
15 Dec 2022	*Vayeishev*	LISTENING TO THE FLAME	246
22 Dec 2022	*Mikeitz*	SURRENDERING ONE'S EGO	268
29 Dec 2022	*Vayigash*	WEEPING?	295

2023

5 Jan 2023	*Vayechi*	LEFT AND RIGHT HEART	318
12 Jan 2023	*Shemos*	OUR GIANTS	344
19 Jan 2023	*Va'eira*	GRATITUDE	363
26 Jan 2023	*Bo*	DYNAMICS OF FREEDOM	393
2 Feb 2023	*Beshalach*	UNCLE MORRIS AND REB YISROEL MEIR LINKED TO YUD SHVAT	422
9 Feb 2023	*Yisro*	PRACTICAL FREEDOM	450
16 Feb 2023	*Mishpatim*	LAWS	482
23 Feb 2023	*Terumah*	STRIVING FOR TRUTH	504
9 Mar 2023	*Ki Sisa*	A STORY "IT TOOK YEARS, AND I AM FINALLY PROUD TO BE JEWISH"	554
16 Mar 2023	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	JOYFUL APPROACH	580
23 Mar 2023	*Vayikra*	PRECIOUS MATZAH	624
30 Mar 2023	*Tzav*	SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION	653
5 Apr 2023	*Shemini*	LIONS AND BEYOND NATURE	679
11 Apr 2023	*Shemini*	ADVICE FOR AN INTROVERT	682
20 Apr 2023	*Tazria, Metzora*	CANDLES FOR A BROKEN WORLD	704
27 Apr 2023	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	OUR HOLY NATION	749
4 May 2023	*Emor*	AS WATER MIRRORS THE FACE TO THE FACE	788
11 May 2023	*Behar, Bechukosai*	COURAGE AND PRIDE - A BEAUTIFUL STORY	816
18 May 2023	*Bamidbar*	REDEEMING OURSELVES	853
24 May 2023	*Shavuos*	TO DO FIRST, AND UNDERSTAND LATER?	1415
1 Jun 2023	*Nasso*	DEVELOPING OUR INTELLECT	882

8 Jun 2023	*Beha'aloscha*	HEALING	908
15 Jun 2023	*Shelach*	TESHUVAH	936
22 Jun 2023	*Korach*	A COMMON PREDICAMENT	967
29 Jun 2023	*Chukas, Balak*	TAKING CHARGE OF OURSELVES	998
6 Jul 2023	*Pinchas*	HISTORY OF PRAYER	1047
13 Jul 2023	*Mattos, Masei*	HIDDEN KINDNESSES IN OUR JOURNEY	1073
20 Jul 2023	*Devarim*	REFLECTION	1103
26 Jul 2023	*Va'eschanan*	BEARING SIMULTANEOUS WEEPING AND LAUGHTER	1129
3 Aug 2023	*Eikev*	THANK YOU HASHEM!	1156
10 Aug 2023	*Re'eh*	FISH	1181
17 Aug 2023	*Shoftim*	SIMPLE SINCERITY	1206
24 Aug 2023	*Ki Seitzei*	LEARNING FROM CHILDREN	1231
31 Aug 2023	*Ki Savo*	SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	1257
7 Sep 2023	*Nitzavim, Vayeilech*	THE BIRTH OF CHASSIDISM	1285
14 Sep 2023	*Rosh Hashanah*	TESTS AND CHALLENGES	1335
21 Sep 2023	*Haazinu*	RETURN	1325
29 Sep 2023	*Sukkos*	JOY	1364
6 Oct 2023	*Sukkos*	THE JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERES AND SIMCHAS TORAH	1366
12 Oct 2023	*Bereishis*	OUR BEAUTIFUL ERETZ YISRAEL	41
19 Oct 2023	*Noach*	THE POWER OF ACTION AND FAITH	67
26 Oct 2023	*Lech Lecha*	HUSBANDS AND WIVES	94
2 Nov 2023	*Vayeira*	ADDRESSING DIFFICULTY WITH JOY	122
9 Nov 2023	*Chayei Sarah*	AM YISRAEL CHAI	147
16 Nov 2023	*Toldos*	STRETCHING TIME	172
23 Nov 2023	*Vayeitzei*	SINGING AS WE GO INTO BATTLE	197
30 Nov 2023	*Vayishlach*	THE BATTLE OF EDUCATION	222
7 Dec 2023	*Vayeishev*	A PIT FULL OF WATER	249
14 Dec 2023	*Mikeitz*	OUR ESSENTIAL NATURE	270
21 Dec 2023	*Vayigash*	ART OF ELEVATION	297
29 Dec 2023	*Vayechi*	LIFE	321

2024

4 Jan 2024	*Shemos*	GENTLE MIGHT	346
11 Jan 2024	*Va'eira*	ACTIONS and FEELINGS	365
19 Jan 2024	*Bo*	VICTORY	395
25 Jan 2024	*Beshalach*	HIDDEN TREASURES	424
1 Feb 2024	*Yisro*	POWER OF SPEECH	453
8 Feb 2024	*Mishpatim*	VICTORY OF JOY	484
15 Feb 2024	*Terumah*	60 DAYS OF JOY	507
22 Feb 2024	*Tetzaveh*	EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE	532
29 Feb 2024	*Ki Sisa*	JOY IN BATTLE	556
7 Mar 2024	*Vayakhel*	JOY OF SHABBOS	582
14 Mar 2024	*Pekudei*	THE JOY OF OUR HERITAGE	597
21 Mar 2024	*Vayikra*	JOY OF PURIM	627
28 Mar 2024	*Tzav*	THE JOY OF CHASSANAH	655
5 Apr 2024	*Shemini*	CHASSANAH JOY OF DANCING, JUGGLING AND SINGINGING	684
11 Apr 2024	*Tazria*	THE POWER OF FAMILY	707
18 Apr 2024	*Metzora*	THE CURE FOR SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION	723
25 Apr 2024	*Pesach*	SIGNIFICANCE OF MATZAH	1405
2 May 2024	*Acharei Mos*	TZEDAKAH AND KINDNESS	751
9 May 2024	*Kedoshim*	TIFERES AND NETZACH EMOTIONAL ATTRIBUTES	767
17 May 2024	*Emor*	SERVANT WITH STATUS	790
23 May 2024	*Behar*	WAR OF GOG AND MAGOG	818
30 May 2024	*Bechukosai*	THE LEVIATHAN	832
7 Jun 2024	*Bamidbar*	PREPARING FOR SHAVUOS	856
14 Jun 2024	*Nasso*	WHAT WE GIVE BELONGS TO US	884
20 Jun 2024	*Beha'aloscha*	RESUME OF A PROPHET	910
27 Jun 2024	*Shelach*	NEVER TOO LATE FOR TESHUVAH	939
4 Jul 2024	*Korach*	JOY AND TRAGEDY, WEALTH AND POVERTY	970
11 Jul 2024	*Chukas*	PEACE IN THE HOME	1000
18 Jul 2024	*Balak*	ALONE BUT NOT LONELY	1023

25 Jul 2024	*Pinchas*	LUNAR LESSON	1049
1 Aug 2024	*Mattos, Masei*	THE FINAL STRETCH AND A STORY	1075
8 Aug 2024	*Devarim*	OIL, WINE and HONEY	1106
15 Aug 2024	*Va'eschanan*	TU BEAV, TESHUVAH, FORGIVENESS	1131
22 Aug 2024	*Eikev*	REWARDS OF LISTENING	1158
29 Aug 2024	*Re'eh*	SOME LESSONS FROM ANIMALS	1184
5 Sep 2024	*Shoftim*	WILL POWER	1208
12 Sep 2024	*Ki Seitzei*	FAMILY AND LIGHT	1233
19 Sep 2024	*Ki Savo*	COMPLETE SETTLING WITH JOY	1259
26 Sep 2024	*Nitzavim, Vayeilech*	SHANAH TOVAH	1288
1 Oct 2024	*Haazinu*	OUR FAMILY TREE!	1326
10 Oct 2024	*Yom Kippur*	A YEAR OF ABUNDANT GOODNESS	1346
15 Oct 2024	*Sukkos*	JOY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	1368
22 Oct 2024	*Bereishis*	SPECIAL JOY OF SHEMINI ATZERET AND SIMCHAT TORAH	44
31 Oct 2024	*Noach*	TO WORK OR NOT TO WORK?	69
7 Nov 2024	*Lech Lecha*	THE STARS	96
14 Nov 2024	*Vayeira*	DEVELOPING ENTHUSIASM	124
21 Nov 2024	*Chayei Sarah*	DEVOTION	150
28 Nov 2024	*Toldos*	EDUCATION - A STORY	174
5 Dec 2024	*Vayeitzei*	THE WELLSPRING OF MARRIAGE	199
12 Dec 2024	*Vayishlach*	SMALLNESS	225
19 Dec 2024	*Vayeishev*	GOOD ATTITUDE	251
26 Dec 2024	*Mikeitz*	FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AND 2 STORIES	273

2025

2 Jan 2025	*Vayigash*	OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST MIRACLES	299
9 Jan 2025	*Vayechi*	THE BRIDGE	323
16 Jan 2025	*Shemos*	THE SWEET WAR	348
23 Jan 2025	*Va'eira*	HUMAN CAPACITY FOR RENEWAL AND GROWTH	367

30 Jan 2025	*Bo*	A TOUCHING STORY ABOUT RAM-BAM	398
6 Feb 2025	*Beshalach*	SELFLESSNESS	426
12 Feb 2025	*Yisro*	WHO NOURISHES ALL	455
20 Feb 2025	*Mishpatim*	GUARDIANS OF OUR SOULS	486
27 Feb 2025	*Terumah*	AMAZING STORY FROM THE WAR	509
6 Mar 2025	*Tetzaveh*	LESSONS FROM PURIM	534
13 Mar 2025	*Ki Sisa*	PURIM	557
20 Mar 2025	*Vayakhel*	DAVIDOFF ROOTS?	584
27 Mar 2025	*Pekudei*	FRENCH ROOTS	600
3 Apr 2025	*Vayikra*	THE SMALL ALEPH	629
10 Apr 2025	*Tzav*	FAITH AND HEALING	657
18 Apr 2025	*Pesach*	DEVOTION AVAILABLE TO ALL	1407
25 Apr 2025	*Shemini*	THE LABOUR OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE	687
1 May 2025	*Tazria, Metzora*	LEARNING HOW TO JUDGE OUR FELLOWS	709
8 May 2025	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	GOOD HEALTH	754
15 May 2025	*Emor*	GENTLE SPEECH - A PATH OF LIGHT	793
22 May 2025	*Behar, Bechukosai*	THE INVISIBLE WALLS OF YERUSHALAYIM	820
29 May 2025	*Bamidbar*	THE BURNING CANDLE	859
5 Jun 2025	*Nasso*	CHOICE	886
12 Jun 2025	*Beha'aloscha*	BITTERNESS TO SWEET, DARKNESS TO LIGHT	912
19 Jun 2025	*Shelach*	AN OPPORTUNE TIME	941
26 Jun 2025	*Korach*	LOVE AND LIGHT	973
3 Jul 2025	*Chukas*	SWEET WELL WATER	1002
10 Jul 2025	*Balak*	DYNAMICS OF OUR JOURNEYS	1025
17 Jul 2025	*Pinchas*	LOVE AND HARMONY	1051
24 Jul 2025	*Mattos, Masei*	LOVING FELLOW JEWS	1078
1 Aug 2025	*Devarim*	THE LION	1109
8 Aug 2025	*Va'eschanan*	THE YARDSTICK OF TORAH	1133

14 Aug 2025	*Eikev*	FINDING LIGHT AND JOY IN THE BROKEN PIECES	1160
22 Aug 2025	*Re'eh*	TESHUVAH - A STORY	1186
29 Aug 2025	*Shoftim*	WHY WORRY	1210
4 Sep 2025	*Ki Seitzei*	REFLECTION	1236
12 Sep 2025	*Ki Savo*	OUR HERITAGE AND CAPABILITY	1261
18 Sep 2025	*Nitzavim*	INFINITE LIGHT, ERETZ YISRAEL AND ROSH HASHANAH	1291
25 Sep 2025	*Vayeilech*	RECOVERY AND CORRECTION	1308
2 Oct 2025	*Haazinu*	JOY AND DANCING	1328
9 Oct 2025	*Sukkos*	HOLY FIRE - A STORY	1370
16 Oct 2025	*Bereishis*	BOUNDLESS KINDNESS	46
23 Oct 2025	*Noach*	RECONCILING TURBULENT AND SERENE	72
30 Oct 2025	*Lech Lecha*	A PARABLE	97
6 Nov 2025	*Vayeira*	EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH	127
13 Nov 2025	*Chayei Sarah*	ORDER AND PEACE	153
20 Nov 2025	*Toldos*	METICULOUS AVOIDANCE OF NEGATIVE TALK	177
27 Nov 2025	*Vayeitzei*	FREE CHOICE	202
4 Dec 2025	*Vayishlach*	STRENGTH	227
11 Dec 2025	*Vayeishev*	WATER AND LIGHT	254
19 Dec 2025	*Mikeitz*	A RARE OPPORTUNITY	276
26 Dec 2025	*Vayigash*	SIMPLE SINCERITY IN ACTION	301

2026

2 Jan 2026	*Vayechi*	THE POWER OF STORIES	325
8 Jan 2026	*Shemos*	THE BURNING BUSH	350
15 Jan 2026	*Va'eira*	SHOWING APPRECIATION	369
22 Jan 2026	*Bo*	PERSONAL FREEDOM	401
29 Jan 2026	*Beshalach*	ACACIA WOOD	429
5 Feb 2026	*Yisro*	SOME GIANTS OF OUR PEOPLE	459
12 Feb 2026	*Mishpatim*	GIVING	488
19 Feb 2026	*Terumah*	DEVELOPING THE EMOTION OF LOVE	512

26 Feb 2026	*Tetzaveh*	DRESSING UP	536
5 Mar 2026	*Ki Sisa*	JOY CONTINUED	559
13 Mar 2026	*Vayakhel, Pekudei*	BRINGING JOY TO BRIDE AND GROOM - A STORY	586
19 Mar 2026	*Vayikra*	THE ART OF SACRIFICE	631
26 Mar 2026	*Tzav*	A FORMULA FOR FREEDOM	659
5 Apr 2026	*Pesach*	TIME USAGE, A STORY	1409
10 Apr 2026	*Shemini*	ALL OF ISRAEL HAVE A SHARE IN THE WORLD TO COME	689
16 Apr 2026	*Tazria, Metzora*	CAREFUL SPEECH	713
23 Apr 2026	*Acharei Mos, Kedoshim*	LOVE	757
3 May 2026	*Emor*	TIMES AND TIME	795
7 May 2026	*Behar, Bechukosai*	HUMILITY AND GREATNESS	822
14 May 2026	*Bamidbar*	THE BOUNDARY THAT SET ME FREE	862
19 May 2026	*Shavuos*	TWO OATHS	1417
28 May 2026	*Nasso*	TORAH TEACHER, MENTOR AND FRIEND	888
4 Jun 2026	*Beha'aloscha*	HUMILITY, ANTIDOTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM	915
11 Jun 2026	*Shelach*	MITZVOS BEYOND UNDERSTANDING	944
18 Jun 2026	*Korach*	IMPOSSIBLE?	975
25 Jun 2026	*Chukas, Balak*	CONQUERING THE LITTLE CITY	1004
3 Jul 2026	*Pinchas*	MODESTY	1053
9 Jul 2026	*Mattos, Masei*	THE LOVE FOR ERETZ YISRAEL	1080
16 Jul 2026	*Devarim*	UNWARRANTED HATE vs UNWARRANTED LOVE	1111
23 Jul 2026	*Va'eschanan*	AROUSAL OF THE JEWISH HEART	1135
30 Jul 2026	*Eikev*	APPRECIATING LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS	1163
6 Aug 2026	*Re'eh*	A WAKEUP CALL	1189
13 Aug 2026	*Shoftim*	A REFUGE FROM DIFFICULTY	1212
20 Aug 2026	*Ki Seitzei*	ONE SMALL ACTION	1238
27 Aug 2026	*Ki Savo*	GOOD RESOLUTIONS	1264
3 Sep 2026	*Nitzavim, Vayeilech*	HIDDEN JOY	1293

10 Sep 2026	*Rosh Hashanah*	ANGELS	1338
17 Sep 2026	*Haazinu*	DISCOVERING FAMILY	1330
24 Sep 2026	*Sukkos*	BEAUTY CONTINUED, WITH JOY	1373
1 Oct 2026	*Sukkos*	THE JOY OF SIMCHAS TORAH	1375
8 Oct 2026	*Bereishis*	THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT	48
15 Oct 2026	*Noach*	POWER OF THE WORD	74
22 Oct 2026	*Lech Lecha*	TAKING CHARGE OF OUR DESTINY	99
29 Oct 2026	*Vayeira*	HOPE AND EFFORT	129