

Living Jewish



Tell your Children

Relying on Hashem

Faithful to the instructions he had received from Heaven, the Baal Shem Tov once invited a group of his students to accompany him in a wagon to a certain town, so that they could learn the attribute of *bitachon* (faith in *HaShem*).

The local innkeeper was pleased to see them and welcomed them graciously. The next morning, while they were *davening*, a police officer walked in with a stick in hand, banged the table three times and left.

The students, baffled, froze in their places, but their host remained as cheerful as he had been before. Half an hour later the same man returned, banged the table three times, and left.

When the Baal Shem Tov asked the innkeeper to explain these strange events, he said, "this is a warning. He's reminding me to bring the rental payment to the *poritz*. It is repeated three times, and if I do not bring the money at that point, my family and I will be thrown into the dungeon."

Hearing this, the Baal Shem Tov told him, "judging from your calmness, you have the money ready, so why don't you go and pay your rent? We will await your return, and then we will be able to take our places at your table peacefully."

The innkeeper answered, "Truthfully, at the moment I don't have a single coin, but *HaShem* will surely not forsake me. He will provide the money. Let us eat without haste, because three hours still remain to the time limit."

They ate together unhurriedly, and the innkeeper's face disclosed no sign of his dangerous plight.

At the end of the meal, the officer strode in for the third time and once again banged on the table, but the innkeeper, unruffled, remained calmly in his place.

After *benching* (saying the Blessing after a Meal) with *kavana* (focused intent), the innkeeper went off to get dressed in his *Shabbos* clothing.

When he rejoined them and announced that he would now go pay his dues, the Baal Shem Tov asked him again if he had the money he needed.



Painting by Alex Levin, artlevin.com

Shaking his head, the host answered, "I haven't got a single penny yet, but I am sure *HaShem* will take care of me!"

He took his leave and the Baal Shem Tov and his students went out to the porch overlooking the road that stretched out before them, to see him off as he set out on his mission by foot.

From the distance they saw a wagon driving towards the innkeeper, which slowed down as he exchanged a few words with the wagon driver. The wagon then continued on its way.

After a few moments, its driver backtracked, called out to the innkeeper, and then handed him some money. The wagon then resumed its route towards the inn, where the curious onlookers asked the driver what had transpired.

"I had proposed a deal to the innkeeper," he said, "and offered to buy all the liquor he is due to make this winter, but he didn't agree to my price and continued on his way.

"Seeing his stubbornness, but knowing his honesty, I decided to give him the amount he had asked for. He then excused himself and hurried ahead, explaining that he was on his way to pay his rent."

The Baal Shem Tov turned to his students and said, "look how powerful is

the attribute of *bitachon*!"

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It had been a long, long ride, and the *tzaddik*, Reb Mendel of Bar, who was traveling together with the Baal Shem Tov, felt really thirsty.

The Baal Shem Tov told him, "If you will have true *bitachon* in *HaShem*, you will definitely find water."

Shortly afterwards a *goy* approached them and asked if they had seen horses roaming around, for he had lost his horses three days earlier and had been desperately searching for them. They replied in the negative and then asked him if he had some water.

"Sure I have!" the *goy* answered, and he gave Reb Mendel a drink.

Reb Mendel asked the Baal Shem Tov, "if the purpose of the *goy's* wanderings was just for my sake, to relieve me of my thirst, why did he have to travel for three days?"

The Baal Shem Tov replied, "Actually, *HaShem* prepared him earlier, in case you would exhibit true *bitachon*, because then your desire would have been granted immediately!"

Sipurei Chassidim Zevin, reprinted from The Weekly Farbrengen by Merkaz Anash, on-line at TheWeeklyFarbrengen.com

Shabbat Times

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat
Jerusalem	6:13	7:23
Tel Aviv	6:30	7:25
Haifa	6:23	7:25
Beer Sheva	6:30	7:25
New York	6:50	7:48

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 Please guard the sanctity of this publication

Beware of Heights

The mitzvah to erect a maakeh - a guard-rail around the roof of your house, can be interpreted as a lesson on the importance of humility.

The rooftop represents pride and self-importance, and the requirement to place a guardrail around it means that we must limit and contain our pride, for pride and arrogance are the root of all spiritual deterioration.

Moreover, the Sifri states that even the roof of the Heichal—the Temple sanctuary, requires a maakeh. In spiritual terms, this means that we must be cautious of pride even when it stems from spiritual achievement, for it is equally as harmful as the pride caused by material success.

Certainly, we should be proud and confident about our devotion to G-d and His Torah. At the same time, we must be careful not to allow this to develop into feelings of self-importance and arrogance.

For even upon the roof of the Heichal, i.e., even at the height of spiritual achievement, there is a risk of spiritual downfall if your pride is not contained.

Likutei Sichos of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, vol. 24, pp. 141–142, reprinted from Ohr HaChassidus

From our Sages

When you go forth to war against your enemies...and you shall take him captive (Deut. 21:10)

In the war against the Evil Inclination, it is insufficient to merely conquer and subdue it; one must also "take him captive" and utilize one's negative impulses to serve G-d. In truth, there is much to learn from the Evil Inclination, whose G-d given role is to constantly attempt to cause man to sin. We would be well advised to emulate its dedication in fulfilling G-d's Will.

(The Baal Shem Tov)

When you build a new house, you shall make a guard rail (ma'ake) for your roof (Deut. 22:8)

Rearranging the letters of the Hebrew word ma'ake, defined by Rashi as "a fence around the roof," yields an acronym for "hirhurei aveira kashim mei'aveira" - "thinking about a sin is even worse than doing it." A person's head is his "roof," the loftiest limb of his body. We must guard it with a "railing," lest we use it for the wrong purpose.

(Toldot Adam)

Being Kind by Accident

The Torah promises that in the merit of fulfilling the mitzvah of shikchah - leaving any forgotten sheaves of grain for the poor, "Hashem, your G-d, will bless you in all that you do."

Rashi observes that the Torah promises this great reward for a mitzvah whose fulfillment came about unintentionally! "It can hence be said," Rashi concludes, "if a sela [coin] dropped from one's hand, and a poor man found it and was sustained by it, then he who lost the coin will be blessed on its account."

The significance of a mitzvah performed without conscious intent can be understood in light of the Rambam's ruling in the Laws of Divorce (2:20), that when a husband is halachically obligated to divorce his wife, the court may use physical force to prevail upon him to agree to give his wife a get - a bill of divorce, even though a get is only valid when given willingly.

The Rambam explains that this get is still valid because the genuine desire of every Jew is to observe all the mitzvot and to refrain from the prohibitions. Therefore, when he agrees under pressure to do a mitzvah, he is actually just acknowledging his true will and desire.

The same is true whenever a person fulfills

You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep driven away and hide yourself from them; surely you shall bring them back to your brother (Deut. 22:1)

G-d has implanted within us a wonderful character trait: a willingness and urge to be kind to another Jew that is even stronger than the desire to be kind to ourselves. We can always find reasons why we deserve our own suffering, G-d forbid, but when it comes to another's distress, it is absolutely impossible.

(Hayom Yom)

When you build a new house you shall make a guard rail for your roof... if anyone falls from it (Deut. 22:8)

When a couple marries and makes the transition from their parents' homes to their own, the need to earn a livelihood brings them into contact with many new things. They must therefore make a "railing" beforehand, setting the proper limits and spiritual standards, to ensure that no harm comes from their involvement in worldly matters.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

a mitzvah. Even if he seems to do so out of habit, or for ulterior motives, what truly motivates him is the "sincere desire of every Jew to observe all the mitzvot" (Rambam, *ibid.*). Moreover, this desire to obey G-d's will is rooted in the essential nature of the soul that transcends even the conscious mind. It can thus influence a person's actions without his knowledge at all.

As such, when a Jew unknowingly drops a coin, it is possible that his subconscious desire to fulfill the mitzvah of tzedakah is what caused him to drop the coin, in the hope that a poor person will ultimately find it. He is therefore credited with this mitzvah, which stemmed from the innermost desire of his soul, even though he is entirely "unaware" of the mitzvah he fulfilled.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Toras Menachem, Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat, vol. 1, p243, reprinted from Ohr HaChassidus. From our Sages and Moshiaich Now! reprinted from www.LchaimWeekly.org - LYO / NYC

Nothing Bad Comes from Hashem

The Rebbe's grandfather, Reb Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, was the Rav of Nikolayev. Once, there was a typhus epidemic and Reb Meir Shlomo fell ill. At that time there was no known cure for the illness. All the victims were quarantined in a building outside the city to avoid spreading the disease, and they were treated by a doctor who visited daily. Very few people returned from the building alive.

When the great chassid, Reb Asher Grossman, found out that Reb Meir Shlomo was quarantined he came to visit him. He was not allowed to go into the building, so he stood outside, as close to Reb Meir Shlomo's room as possible. He started to read aloud from a Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh "*Lehaskilach Bina*". In that Igeres the Alter Rebbe explains that nothing bad comes from Hashem and if a person is imbued with this awareness, he will merit to see open good. Reb Asher did not even know if Reb Meir Shlomo heard him or not; he just hoped. He returned every day and read the section of Tanya again.

After a few weeks, Reb Meir Shlomo was discharged from the quarantine, having made a full recovery. When he saw Reb Asher he called to him excitedly, "You saved my life! The reading of those holy words gave me the strength to overcome all the pain and depression and I was able to overcome the illness!"

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Chassidus page

Chai Elul - The 18th of Elul

The 18th of Elul is the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov, founder of the chassidic movement, and the Alter Rebbe, founder of the trend within Chassidism known as Chabad. Eighteen is the numerical equivalent of the letters Chai ("alive"). Thus the 18th of Elul is referred to as Chai Elul.

The Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe relates there are two versions of a chassidic aphorism: "Chai Elul breathes vitality into Elul," and "Chai Elul breathes vitality into the service of 'I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine.'" The two versions parallel the two dimensions of Chai Elul. The first version reflects the contribution of the Baal Shem Tov, and the second version, the contribution of the Alter Rebbe.

The Baal Shem Tov imparted the vitality of emunah ("faith") to every dimension of our lives, revealing every individual's potential for an ongoing dynamic bond with G-d. He taught a way of life that enables us to express the infinite spiritual power of our beings in our observance of the Torah and in every aspect of our experience. These teachings make faith a vibrant force which encompasses every dimension of our conduct, infusing it with vitality from the soul's essential power.

The unique quality of faith is that it permits a connection with G-d that transcends the bounds of intellect. This advantage is, however, potentially problematic, because the spiritual plane on which a person operates through faith is far higher than his level of personal awareness. Since faith taps into a dimension of soul that transcends the limits of the individu-

al's identity, a gap is created between the infinite potential made possible by faith and one's finite mind.

The teachings of the Alter Rebbe enable us to bridge this gap, because the Alter Rebbe explained how to bring our spiritual potentials that transcend intellect into the realm of understanding. To borrow from chassidic terminology, the Alter Rebbe showed us how to introduce emunah (which transcends intellectual categories) into the intellectual process called Chabad. (Chochmah, Binah, and Daas; lit., "wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.") Through the teachings of Chabad, the functioning of our minds is shaped by the G-dly power of our soul.

Because the heavenly source of a person's soul radiates powerfully on his birthday, the contributions of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe to our Divine service are especially potent on Chai Elul. The vitality generated by the Baal Shem Tov's teachings energizes the intensified Divine service which characterizes the whole of Elul. Now unique to Elul is the concept reflected in the verse, "I am my Beloved's" – that man, rather than G-d, takes the initiative in heightening the love relationship we share with Him. This aspect of Elul requires that man be capable of proceeding in his Divine service on his own initiative. And this ability was granted us by the Alter Rebbe's teachings.

Adapted from Timeless Patterns in Time, Adapted from the Published Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Reprinted from Sichos in English

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The *tzaddik*, Reb Noach of Lechovitch, shared the following story with his chassidim: Hirshke, a simple Yid, earned his livelihood by selling merchandise in the market. Before daybreak he would go out to the countryside to meet the *goyishe* farmers before they arrived in town, and bargain with them over their goods.

One day a visiting *maggid* (preacher) came to town and spoke of the intrinsic value of living with *bitachon*, (faith in Hashem) and explained that no man ever earns a *kopke* more than what *HaShem* has ordained for him. Hirshke took those words to heart. On the following market day he decided not to rush out early to try and reach the farmers before his competitors did. His anxious wife, seeing him lying in bed, urged him to get up.

He told her what he had heard from the *maggid*, concluding that whatever *HaShem* had planned for him, he would be able to buy at home. She did her eloquent best to convince him otherwise, but Hirshke refused to leave the house.

A while later, when they heard the other buyers outside clinching their deals with the *goyim*, she pleaded with him again, but to no avail.

Then one of the farmers called out, "We're not selling any more stuff until Hirshke shows up!"

The *goyim* began banging on his shutters, shouting for him to get up. Hirshke got dressed, brought the farmers inside and bought everything at a discounted rate without having to bargain.

From that day on, he never had to leave his house, for the *goyim* would come to him, and he made a respectable livelihood till the end of his days.

Reb Noach finished the story and added, "this worked for him, because he was a simple fellow whose faith was whole and uncomplicated. It wouldn't be the same for someone else who tried to upgrade his *bitachon* by adding the sophistication of reason...."

Sipurei Chassidim Zevin, reprinted from The Weekly Farbrengen by Merkaz Anash, on-line at TheWeeklyFarbrengen.com

Moshiach Now

The World was Created Solely for Moshiach

Our awareness of our individual purpose is intertwined with a consciousness of the ultimate purpose of all mankind. Our Sages state: The world was created solely for *Moshiach*. G-d created man and the cosmos so the world - and each person - will be able to reach the unity with G-d that will be in the era of the Redemption.

Every particular person has a role to play in bringing the world to its ultimate fulfillment. Knowing this, we all should dedicate the purpose of our lives to use our unique potentials to bring the entire world to a more complete state of fulfillment. This sense of purpose is contagious. As we manifest it in our own lives, it spreads to others. And as the ripples grow wider, more of the world becomes involved, making *Moshiach's* coming more than a dream, but a factor of immediate relevance.

Adapted from Keeping in Touch, teachings of the Rebbe, reprinted from Sichos in English

Human Interest

Kfar Chabad Magazine - 40

Editors, contributing writers, graphic designers and administrators of the Kfar Chabad Magazine met last week to celebrate its 40th anniversary. The magazine was founded in 1980 by Yosef Yitzchok Gopin and Aharon Dov Halperin in the village of Kfar Chabad as a local publication. It was soon published bi-weekly and then weekly. It is the longest-running from weekly publication in Israel.

Halperin became its editor in chief and saw its growth to become the mouthpiece of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement in Israel and even a transmitter of messages from the secretariat of the Rebbe at 770 Eastern Park-



way. The Rebbe was a regular reader of Kfar Chabad and has edited Sichos specifically for publication in the magazine. Rabbi Halperin received guidance and blessings from the Rebbe on his work. The magazine was a bold voice to correct the MiHu Yehudi immigration law to follow halachic conversions, and for Shleimus Haaretz – against concessions of land.

At the gathering, the Rebbe's letter to the 500th issue was read. "Each and everyone should do what they can in all areas of Judaism, Torah and its Mitzvos and it is clear that the same is with the publishing and distribution of the newspaper," the Rebbe wrote.

Rabbi Yitzchak Arad, head of the Da'at Institute in Rehovot, revealed that part of the reason he actually joined Chabad was fueled by his reading of the Kfar Chabad Magazine and its scholarly articles. He now writes a weekly column for them.

Adapted from COLlive

Cooking Tip of the Week

Pineapple Coleslaw: 250 grams of both red and green cabbage, mixed with 2-4 green onions sliced on a diagonal and one can of drained pineapple pieces. If you like it spicy slice one or two hot peppers. Sunflower or pumpkin seeds give a nice crunch. For dressing mix 3 tbs olive oil, 1/4 cup lemon juice, 3 tbs apple cider vinegar with a splash of honey and sirachi sauce if you like it sweet. Salt and spices as you prefer.

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Halacha Corner – When May One Pay Back More

If a person bought an *aliyah* in *shul* and committed to pay by a certain date, he may not arrange for the payment date to be postponed in exchange for increasing his donation, since that would constitute *ribbis ketutzah* (interest set in advance). If one borrows money from a *pushka* (a charity box) or from someone who is collecting money (either for a *moisad*, an institution, or for poor people), it's permissible to give back more money than they borrowed; the additional money is considered *tzedakah* (charity) and is not considered *ribbis me'ucheres* (late interest)—as long as they had not resolved at the time they borrowed the money to give back more. However, if the money is being collected for one specific *ani* (poor person) it is already considered as belonging to the *ani*, and one may not put back into the *pushka*—or repay the collector—more than they originally borrowed, since it would be considered *ribbis me'ucheres*. If a person borrowed money from another, but is not sure of the amount and therefore wants to pay back a sum that may exceed the amount they borrowed, they may do so *lehotzie misafek* (in order to eliminate any doubt)—but it must be limited to the maximum amount they may have borrowed.

HaRav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita, Mara D'asra and member of the Beis Din of Crown Heights; 1 Minute Halacha, Vol. 1, #400; reprinted from crownheightsconnect.com

Farbrenge

Question: There is no point in trying harder in Elul. It's fake! I will just return to my old ways after the Chagim. I am just an imposter - acting like a tzadik so I will get a good judgement. Is that really what Hashem wants?!

Answer: While it is true the Rosh HaShana is the Day of Judgment, the inner meaning of Rosh HaShana is Kabbalos Ol (acceptance of Hashem's Kingship). From the kiddush of a particular Yom Tov, we can discern the meaning of the day. On Rosh Hashana the kiddush reads, "Blessed are You Lord, **King over all the earth**, who sanctifies Israel and the Day of Remembrance." In other words, the focus is not on what we will receive but, rather, what Hashem wants: our acceptance of His Kingship.

In describing our preparations for Tishrei, Chasidus provides the analogy of an abandoned building. Unwanted guests frequent the ruins and from time to time the owner chases them away. One day the owner cements up the openings and the unwanted visitors can no longer get in. When we lack Kabbalos Ol we open ourselves to unwanted thoughts, speech and actions. As we fall and repent, fall and repent, we are like the owner, chasing away the intruders. However, Kabbalos Ol is the cement which seals our openings. It is the foundation of tshuva; uprooting the source of the bad. Once we have accepted Hashem's Kingship, we will be better able to do tshuva on the past.

Most people that enter shul on Rosh HaShana feel a unique arousal due to the holiness of the day. Yet, without the proper preparation in Elul, that arousal will pass after the Chagim. However, with a proper preparation in Elul, one will experience the Chagim in a deeper, internal (penimious) and more profound manner. This will create a lasting imprint for the coming year.

You are not an imposter or a fake. The inner desire of every Jew is to do Hashem's Will. Your efforts in Elul are an expression of this inner point. Whether *you return to your old ways is not the measuring stick of your sincerity*. You just may need to consider exploring some new classes and teachings this Elul. Your local Chabad house has classes or can direct you to classes that you may find inspiring.

Most importantly, don't give up. As we are taught, Hashem leads us in the direction we want to go.

Aharon Schmidt; marriage, pre-marriage & individual coaching; for an appointment or to share a question contact: 0525-246-528, coachingandcounseling1@gmail.com

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