



# L'Chaim

The Yeshiva Centre – Chabad NSW Headquarters  
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## Living with the Rebbe



This week's Torah portion, Vayigash, begins with the words "Judah came near."

Judah approached Joseph and asked that his younger brother, Benjamin, be released so that he could bring him to their father, Jacob.

Our Sages tell us that Judah was prepared for all possibilities when he approached Joseph, even the possibility of war. Judah was willing to do all that was necessary to free Benjamin and return him to his father.

Why did Judah adopt such a strong stance? The answer is that Judah was personally responsible for Benjamin's welfare, as he explained, "For your servant became surety for the lad." Judah had promised his father that he would take care of Benjamin and bring him home; thus he was willing to do anything, even wage battle, to fulfill his promise.

But how could Judah have even imagined that he could win a confrontation with Joseph? Joseph and his brothers were few in number. Joseph, by contrast, was the second highest ruler in all of Egypt, with the entire populace of the country under his command.

In truth, Judah could never have been victorious in a war conducted against Joseph. Nonetheless, Judah was ready to take even this drastic step should it become necessary. He knew he was responsible for Benjamin, and accepted his role as guardian without question.

True, Jacob had other remaining sons, all of whom were healthy and sound. But Judah realized that self-sacrifice is required when the life of even one Jewish child is at stake.

To save Benjamin, Judah was willing to give up his own life. This contains an important lesson for every Jewish father and mother. When G-d grants them the blessing of a child, it carries with it a great responsibility. Sometimes it is even necessary for parents to demonstrate self-sacrifice, to make sure that nothing untoward ever happens to even one of their offspring, G-d forbid.

One area in which the greatest efforts must be expended is that of education. Providing a Torah-true education for Jewish children is so important that parents must be willing to demonstrate even the highest levels of self-sacrifice in order to make it possible. *Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, vol. 1*

## Fresh Air, Fresh Food, Fresh Water

Imagine taking more than a few breaths in a room filled with air made stale from a party the previous evening. Or consider the taste of a corned beef on rye (hold the pickle, it has too much sodium) that's been in the fridge for a whole week. And who would even dream of taking a sip of water that had been sitting out for a whole month!

Though you might not become ill from breathing stale air for a few minutes or eating one questionable corned-beef-on-rye, you could become very sick from constantly breathing old air and eating old food.

Fresh air, fresh food, fresh water.

These commodities are necessary to live not only healthy lives, but to life in general.

Jewish teachings are collectively assigned the name "Torah" and Torah is often referred to as Torat Chaim - the Living Torah. Judaism is a living religion. For us to feel the vibrancy of Judaism, we must live it on a daily basis.

This means that in order to maintain our Jewish health, yesterday's "air" and last week's "food" are not enough.

The memories of a family Passover seder of years gone by are great for reminiscences, but what have I done freshly Jewish TODAY?

Chewing over, for weeks, a thought heard at a Jewish lecture attended last month is great, but what have I done TODAY that will be like a breath of fresh air for my soul?

Remembering on Friday night the Sabbath candles Bubby lit and the fresh challa Zaidy blessed is beautiful and will bring tears to many an eye, but lighting Sabbath candles this Friday before Shabbat and saying the blessing over the challa this Friday evening will be a refreshing and restful way to end a stress-filled and tiresome week.

Our Sages teach that "Every day the Torah should be like new." This does not mean that we should bend and bow every time a new translation of the Bible comes out, or fawn over a new "retelling" of the story of the Creation. It also does not mean that we can change, reshape, or alter those parts of Torah and Jewish tradition we feel are not conducive to life, today.

For, by calling Judaism a living religion we do not mean to say that it can grow and change without restrictions.

The Living G-d gives us a living Torah which is true and relevant for all times and all places.

Living Judaism means that Judaism is alive and that we are truly alive when we live it on a daily basis.

Throughout the day, breath deeply the fresh, life-supporting air of mitzvot (commandments). Savor the fresh taste of daily Torah study.

Experience Living Judaism.

## Aliyot Summary

**General Overview:** In this week's Torah treading, Vayigash, Judah responds to Joseph's demand that Benjamin remain enslaved in Egypt, pleading to be taken as a substitute. Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers. At Joseph's request, Jacob and his family come down to Egypt.

**First Aliyah:** In the end of last week's Torah reading, Joseph demanded that Benjamin remain behind in Egypt as his slave. This week's reading opens with Judah approaching Joseph and appealed to him to allow Benjamin to return to his father Jacob in Canaan. He spoke of Jacob's reluctance to allow Benjamin – Rachel's only remaining child – to make the trip to Egypt, and the great love Jacob harbored for his youngest son.

**Second Aliyah:** Judah continued: "When [Jacob] sees that the boy is gone, he will die." He explained to Joseph that he, Judah, had taken personal responsibility that Benjamin would return unharmed to Canaan. And as such, he asked to remain as a slave in stead of Benjamin. At that point, Joseph could not restrain himself any longer. He asked all the Egyptians present to leave the room, and he revealed his identity to his brothers: "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?!" He then reassured them, and asked them not to be upset about selling him into slavery: "For it was to preserve life that G-d sent me before you. For . . . another five years there will be neither plowing nor harvest, and G-d sent me before you to ensure your survival in the land..."

**Third Aliyah:** Joseph directed his brothers to quickly return to Canaan and bring Jacob and their families back to Egypt, where Joseph promised to provide them with food until the famine ends. Joseph embraced his brothers and cried. Pharaoh was informed that Joseph's family had arrived, and he, too, instructed them to come to Egypt where he would

give them the "best of the land." The brothers went to Canaan – laden with gifts from Pharaoh and Joseph – and informed Jacob that Joseph was alive, indeed he ruled over all of Egypt. "And the spirit of their father Jacob was revived."

**Fourth Aliyah:** Jacob and his entire family left Canaan and headed to Egypt. En route they stopped in Beersheba, where G-d told Jacob not to fear going to Egypt, for it is there that he will be made into a great nation. Furthermore G-d told him: "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up."

**Fifth Aliyah:** This section names the seventy members of Jacob's family that went to Egypt.

**Sixth Aliyah:** Jacob arrived in Egypt, to the province of Goshen that Pharaoh had allotted his family. Joseph went there to greet his father. Joseph prepared his family for meeting Pharaoh, and instructed his brothers to tell Pharaoh that they are shepherds, who only wish to tend to their flocks in Goshen until the famine ends. Indeed the brothers followed this script, and Pharaoh acceded to their request. Jacob was then brought before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed him.

**Seventh Aliyah:** While Joseph supplied his family with food, the rest of Egypt was in a desperate plight. First they expended all their money in exchange for food that Joseph sold them. Then their money ran out, and they paid for provisions with their cattle. Finally, when they had no money or chattel left, they sold their land and themselves to Pharaoh into servitude in exchange for provisions. Meanwhile, in the land of Goshen, Jacob's family prospered and multiplied exceedingly.

## Thoughts that Count

For in order to preserve life has G-d sent me before you...to prepare for you a posterity on the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance (Gen. 45:5,7) The darkness of the exile makes it hard to perceive G-dliness, or to arouse the natural, innate love for G-d that is the birthright of every Jew. But G-d has mercy on His people Israel, and in every generation sends us one tzadik (righteous person) like Joseph, whose function is to diffuse light to each individual soul and enable it to contemplate G-d's greatness. *(Torat Chaim)*

Do not be sad, nor be angry with yourselves that you sold me (Gen. 45:5) Sadness and anger are connected and feed off each other. Joseph told his brothers not to be sad; once they were in a better frame of mind, their anger would naturally dissipate. *(Rabbi Chaim Ben Attar)*

And he sent his brothers away and they departed, and he said to them, "Do not quarrel by the way" (Gen. 45:24) There are many true and valid ways of serving G-d within the context of Judaism, all of which are positive and holy (provided that they do not contradict the fundamental principles of the Torah). Joseph was counselling his brothers to avoid quarreling over "the way," meaning individual "styles," of G-dly service, for they are all "the words of the living G-d."

*(Divrei Yisrael)*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN AND SPIRITUAL LEADER



We are currently in the month of Tevet. The word "Tevet" is related to the Hebrew word "tov," which means "good." However, in this month, we commemorate many sad events, including the Tenth of Tevet.

The tenth of Tevet (this year coinciding with January 6) is the day on which the evil king Nebuchadnezzar laid siege upon Jerusalem, which eventually led to the destruction of the first Holy Temple, and the Babylonian Exile. The tenth of Tevet is considered an especially solemn day, because it is the first in a series of events which led to the present exile. Therefore it is a day to reflect upon all of those events and the actions that led to them, and to reflect upon which of our own actions need improving in order hasten the end of exile and prepare for the imminent Redemption.

And yet, as stated previously, Tevet is connected to good. We see from this that we have the power to transform bad into good, sorrow into joy, darkness into light, and exile into redemption. Since Tevet marks the beginning of the calamitous events which befell our people, our Sages named this month "Tevet" to inspire the positive, good energy that is within every one of us.

Tevet has the added significance of being connected to the number ten, as Tevet is the tenth month of the year counting from Nissan. Additionally, we commemorate the siege of Jerusalem on the tenth day of the tenth month.

Ten is a number of great power. Yom Kippur is on the tenth day of Tishrei. G-d gave us ten commandments. The Torah mentions nine times that the Jews sang to G-d and the tenth song will be song with the coming of Moshiach.

We must harness this additional power to fulfill the service of Tevet, which is to transform the darkness into light.

*Pinchus Feldman*

Rabbi Pinchus Feldman OAM

**Smile its Friday** - Rifka told her young daughter. "You should read your Bible, Sarah, just like Grandma does." Sarah replied, "I don't have to yet, mummy. Grandma's studying for her final Exams"

## Lioness of G-d by Aaron Goldsmith

It was a few weeks before Chanuka, 2003. Our synagogue in Postville, Iowa, was viewing a video of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. A clip was shown where a man had told the Rebbe that his name was Robert and that he had never received a Jewish name. The Rebbe told him that since the name "Robert" begins with the letter "R," which has the same sound as the Hebrew letter "Raish," Robert should take the name Reuven. I found this interesting but did not think much about it afterwards. and did not think much else about it.

I was at the end of my last term as City Councilman. Postville had become a center for media attention, the subject of multiple documentaries, countless articles and even a book. Hadassah Magazine had come to do its own feature about our community.

Postville offered a most striking story about how a group of Lubavitcher Chasidim had developed a substantial presence in a quaint, all-white and all-Christian Iowa farm town. The pursuit of a reliable kosher meat source became a success story about diversity.

Postville's Rabbi Aron Schimel put together a fantastic Chanuka program and invited all of the Jewish Community and the non-Jewish neighbors as well. Booths offered potato latkes, kosher pizza and the chance for children to make their own menorah.

Moshe Yess, an entertainer and singer, made everyone laugh and sing. He told

his classic joke about his return to Torah Judaism and that he has once been a "Hippie" but was a "Chippie" (a cross between a chasid and a Hippie).

The highlight of the evening came when we lit the menorah, with the participation of Postville's Mayor. I noticed that there was a photographer at the event and I found out that she had been sent by Hadassah Magazine.

The following day I walked into the kosher store and saw the photographer looking a little out of place. I introduced myself and asked her if she was enjoying her visit. She responded that she was having a nice time. I asked her if she learned anything new. She replied, "Yes, I learned the difference between a Hippie and a Chippie!"

I was surprised at her answer, not because she remembered one of Moshe Yess' lines from the night before but because she did not "look Jewish" and yet she was able to pronounce the guttural "ch" of "Chippie."

I asked the young woman, "Are you Jewish?" and she answered, "Yes!" I then asked her what her name was and she said, "Arwin."

"Arwin?" I said in surprise. I had never heard that name before. "What kind of name is it?"

"My parents were involved with eastern philosophies and the name came from that," she told me. I

asked Arwin if she also had a Jewish name but she shook her head "no."

We spoke for a few moments about how one can acquire a Jewish name and I offered to help her. She was very happy at the idea. I remembered the video clip of the Rebbe that I had seen a few weeks earlier and my mind went straight to a name that begins with the Hebrew letter "alef," similar to the "A" that begins the name "Arwin." I thought that "Ariella" would be a good fit but before I told this to Arwin, I told her that I would return with a suggestion in half an hour.

I went to my office and searched in a list of Hebrew female names. "Ariella" just seemed to fit. I went back to Arwin and suggested the name Ariella. She smiled and said, "That sounds so beautiful, what does it mean?" I told her that it is the feminine form of "a lion of G-d."

She became very serious and said "you are not going to believe this, but 'Arwin' means lioness of G-d!"

We talked briefly about the Lubavitcher Rebbe and Robert, Divine Providence, and the gift of prophecy that G-d gives to Jewish parents in choosing their children's names. Arwin-Ariella was moved by her own little Chanuka miracle. And perhaps the Hadassah photographer who came to capture images of Postville's Jews ended up capturing a new image of herself!



Hundreds of Jewish Families turned out at "Chanukah in the City" otherwise known as the Giant Menorah in Martin Place run by The Yeshiva Centre - Chabad NSW Headquarters, there was entertainment for the family as well as representatives of the Australian Government

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# Moshiaich

On the verse, "Remember the Sabbath to sanctify it," Rashi writes: "Take heed to remember the Sabbath constantly, so that if you encounter something special [such as a delicacy, in the course of the week], set it aside for Shabbat." The same applies to the future Redemption, referred to as "the Day which is entirely Sabbath and repose for life everlasting." Even when we are still in the weekdays of the exile, we should constantly keep in mind and prepare for the Redemption. (From a talk of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, 11 Sivan, 5744 - 1984)

# It Happened Once

In the course of this long and bitter exile the Jews have suffered many trials and tribulations at the hands of gentile monarchs who sought to line their treasure chests with Jewish money.

Once, in the kingdom of Bohemia, King Wenzel found himself in a predicament common to the aristocracy - he needed gold! And as always, he turned to his Jewish subjects to fill his coffers.

The Jewish community was accustomed to the cruel demands of the king, but this time the demand was more exorbitant than ever. Reb Shmuel, the leader of the community, was presented with an ultimatum: "In eight days, the Jews of Prague must hand over the sum of 20,000 pieces of silver. If you fail to do so, the king will withdraw his protection from the Jews of the realm."

Panic spread throughout the community, as word of the royal edict became known. Not long before, dozens of Jews had been massacred by wild mobs. If not for the intervention of the king's soldiers, who knows how many more would have died? The city elders calculated the total worth of the community. Even if the Jews sold all of their possessions, they could never hope to meet the king's demands.

Then Reb Shmuel stood up. "I am a descendant of King David and I am sure that his merit will protect me. I will intercede before the king."

The next day, all the congregation gathered to pray for Reb Shmuel's success. As for himself, Reb Shmuel had a plan. Together with his beautiful and intelligent daughter Reb Shmuel headed for the palace, but first, he had one stop to make.

Many years before, as he traveled through the forest, Reb Shmuel chanced upon a leather casket. Upon examination he realized it belonged to the local landowner, and he rode off to return it to its rightful owner. The grateful nobleman offered a reward, but Reb Shmuel refused, saying, "Our Torah teaches that we are obliged to return lost objects."

"I will never forget your kindness, and I am at your service if you ever need a friend," the noble swore.

Now was the time to collect this debt. Reb Shmuel explained the situation to his noble friend.

"As you are aware, the king does not receive Jews without their being summoned. However, he is always interested in beautiful women. Perhaps he will receive your daughter," replied the noble.

This is exactly what Reb Shmuel had expected when he framed his plan.

Days later, all eyes focused on the young Jewish woman as Rachel entered the king's throne room.

"Ah, so you wish to speak to me. Well, I will hear you, but first, you must kiss this bridegroom who stands before you," and the king pointed to a large Christian statue which stood behind his throne.

"Your majesty," Rachel replied, "it is customary for the groom to approach the bride, and so I will wait for him to come to me."

The king laughed out loud at her clever response. "I see she is not only beautiful, but very bright. Allow the Jewess to speak!"

"Your Majesty, my father asks permission to say four words to the King."

"Four words! What could he say in only four words?! Very well, admit him, but if this is a joke this day will be your last!"

Reb Shmuel entered and stood before the throne. "G-d said to Satan!" he pronounced in a booming voice.

The king waited to see what would follow, but Reb Shmuel said nothing. "Very clever, Jew. Well, go on now and explain yourself."

"Your Majesty, these words are from the book of Job, when the L-rd condescended to speak to the lowest of the angels, Satan. Therefore, Sire, I infer that Your Majesty will deign to speak with me, the lowest of your subjects."

"Well said. Since you compare G-d and myself, I shall speak with you."


Then Reb Shmuel threw himself at the king's feet, beseeching him to rescind his onerous demand. When Reb Shmuel had finished, the king spoke: "I will forgive the Jews this time. But, tell me, what do you wish for yourself? Every messenger wants something for himself."

"No, Your Majesty, I desire nothing for myself at all." "No, that is not acceptable. It will not be said that King Wenzel fails to repay any good deed. From this time forth, you will be admitted to my presence at will, and you will be the official representative of the Jews in the royal court."

And then, as an afterthought, the king asked, "What is your name, Jew?" "My name is Shmuel," he replied.

"Shmuel is your given name. From this day, I decree that your family name will be that of the angel to whom G-d spoke. You and your descendants will forevermore be called 'Satan.'"

And so, to this day, descendants of this brave and righteous man who risked his life and that of his beloved daughter to save the Jews of Prague bear the strange last name of Satan or "Stein."



**Candle Lighting Times**  
**Friday 2 January 2009**

City	In	Out
Sydney	7:52pm	8:53pm
Brisbane	6:29pm	7:26pm
Surfers Par	6:28pm	7:26pm
Melbourne	8:28pm	9:33pm

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