



L'Chaim

The Yeshiva Centre - Chabad NSW Headquarters
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Living with the Rebbe



This week's Torah portion, Beha'alotcha, opens with the command to Aaron to kindle the lamps of the menorah, the seven-branched candelabra that stood in the Sanctuary.

Aaron, whose duties as the High Priest are also described in Behaalot'cha, was known for his love of every creature. Hillel said of him, "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving your fellow-creatures and drawing them near to the Torah."

What was so special about Aaron's way of life that we are enjoined to emulate it? Aaron did not wait for those who stood in darkness to come within the circle of light, but went out to them. He went, in Hillel's words, to his "fellow creatures," a word including those who had no other merit than that they too, were G-d's creations. Nonetheless, he "drew them near to the Torah," rather than drawing the Torah near to them. He did not simplify or compromise its commandments in order to bring it down to their level. Rather than lower the Torah, he raised people.

This facet of Aaron's life is suggested in this week's portion which opens with the command, "When you light (literally, 'raise up') the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the menorah" (Numbers 8:2).

The lamps of the menorah of the Sanctuary are a symbol of the Jewish soul - "The lamp of the L-rd is the soul of man." Aaron's task was to raise up every soul, to bring out the Divine within the Jew from its concealment in the subconscious.

The Sages sought an explanation for the fact that the word "raise up" (behaalot'cha) is used, instead of the more obvious "light" or "kindle." And they concluded that the verse meant that Aaron was to kindle them "until the flame rises up by itself."

Aaron's spiritual achievement was therefore not only to light the flame in the souls of the Jewish people, but to take them to the stage where they would give light of their own accord. He did not simply create disciples, people who were dependent on his inspiration. He engendered in them a love of G-d that they could sustain without his help.

This was Aaron's path, "loving peace and pursuing peace, loving his fellow creatures and drawing them near to Torah." And this must be the path of every Jew, lighting the dormant flame in the souls of Jews wherever they are to be found, preferring to be close than to be aloof, to be kind rather than severe, in bringing all our people nearer to Judaism.

Excerpted from Torah Studies by Jonathan Sacks, based on talks by the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL...

Two people have an argument. They're not close friends, just acquaintances. They belong to the same organization. Or they're co-workers, members of the same synagogue, together on some community committee.

The argument might start as a question or a suggestion. The "offender" might make a remark he thought perfectly innocent; the "offended" might not speak up, from shyness, shock or a myriad of reasons. But the "offended" seethes, and the "offender's" next statement increases the aggravation and agitation.

Somehow a conversation starts. The aggrieved decides to confront his "antagonist." They'll have it out - politely. He'll speak his mind, explain why his feelings are hurt, why the other has been unjust, admit his own culpability, offer solutions and reconciliation. The other, willing to be reasonable, listens, explains, rationalizes, accepts and debates. As they approach a compromise, though, things deteriorate. They end up where they started, or worse, farther apart and more antagonistic, more stubborn, with more animosity.

A day goes by. A week. Two weeks. A month, maybe two. They have to work together, or be sociable - attend the same services or functions. One of them approaches a third party, laying out his case. The third party knows both, very well. A friend, a boss, a counsellor, a rabbi - both accept the third party as objective.

He suggests another attempt. Try again. Find different words. He knows them both and the other isn't mean-spirited. They all share a common goal, a unity of purpose. Think of the greater good, the organization, the value and contribution of the other.

A second attempt is made. It's harder to get started this time. Hard feelings, suspicions, resentments, trivial mountains linger, ramble through the thoughts and words. There's a stiffness and reluctance between them. Each resists revealing too much and sidesteps the overtures.

At first they neither converse nor confront, but fence, feinting, diverting, approaching, probing. Then, as if choreographed, they begin interacting, working it out and working together. An understanding, perhaps only tentative, is reached. The relationship, maybe scarred, is deeper and stronger.

Without the second attempt, the intellectual impediments and emotional obstructions would remain, seemingly immovable, certainly growing more entrenched. And, truthfully, sometimes one must approach the other more than once, and more than twice. Still, if the will is there, however concealed, then, eventually, ultimately - although more than occasionally after great effort and some sacrifice of pride and ego - "words from the heart go to the heart."

The Rebbe often used that expression, "words from the heart..." He frequently emphasized, and frequently advised, that if one speaks sincerely, intending good - good for the other person - surely the words must have an impact. A negative response, or one less than desirable, indicated a deficiency in the words or the heart of the speaker. For surely, if the words were from the heart, they would reach another heart.

Whether the matter involves Jewish observances, a personal relationship or a business arrangement, if disharmony has displaced unity, we should remember that one note, by itself, isn't off-key. The discord is in our hearts.

Aliyot Summery

General Overview: In this week's Torah reading, *Beha'alotcha*, G-d instructs Aaron concerning the Tabernacle Menorah lighting. The Levites are initiated into the Tabernacle service. The "Second Passover" is instituted. At G-d's behest, Moses makes two trumpets, and is instructed how and when to use them. The Israelites leave Mount Sinai, and proceed towards the Land of Canaan. The people unreasonably complain about their "frugal" manna diet and receive a meat supplement, albeit with tragic results. Moses appoints seventy elders to assist him in bearing the burden of the people. Miriam speaks negatively about Moses and is punished with *tzara'at* (a skin disease).

First Aliyah: G-d commands Aaron to light the golden Tabernacle Menorah on a daily basis. Moses is then commanded to initiate the Levites into Tabernacle service. This inauguration procedure included shaving their bodies, immersion in a *mikvah*, and the offering of certain sacrifices.

Second Aliyah: The exact prescribed initiation procedure is followed, and the Levites are consecrated to G-d -- in stead of the firstborn who lost their hallowed status when they participated in the sin of the Golden Calf. Towards the end of this section we learn the Levite service age-requirements and retirement age.

Third Aliyah: On the first anniversary of the Exodus, the Jews are instructed to bring the Paschal Offering. Certain individuals, however, couldn't participate because they were ritually impure. These people lodged a complaint, which Moses then transmitted to G-d. G-d responds by designating a "Second Passover" to be observed exactly one month later. Anyone who could not offer the Paschal Offering in its proper time must do so on the Second Passover. G-d then informs Moses the laws of the Second Passover.

Fourth Aliyah: From the day the Tabernacle was erected, it was covered by a cloud during the day, and a fire by night. When the cloud lifted, this signaled G-d's wish that the Jews should journey onwards -- following the cloud until it came to rest in a new location of G-d's choosing. In some

cases the Jews only stayed overnight in a particular location before the sign came for them to depart again, and on other occasions they would stay in one place for many years. This section then discusses Moses' two silver trumpets. These trumpets were used for several purposes: 1) To assemble the nation or its leaders. 2) To signal the beginning of a journey. 3) The trumpets were blown when the Jews went to battle. 4) The trumpets were sounded when certain communal sacrifices were offered in the Tabernacle.

Fifth Aliyah: Nearly one year after the Jews arrived at Mount Sinai, the cloud rises from the Tabernacle, signaling their impending departure. The Tabernacle was dismantled and they traveled in formation as outlined on last week's Torah reading. Moses pleads with his father-in-law Jethro to join them on their journey to the Land of Israel.

Sixth Aliyah: No sooner than the Jews start traveling, and they start complaining. First they complain about the "arduous" journey. Then they grumble about the manna, expressing their desire for meat. Moses turns to G-d and insists that he cannot bear his leadership role any longer. G-d tells Moses to gather seventy elders who will assist him in his leadership duties. He also promises to provide the Jews with an abundance of meat -- "until it will come out of their noses..." Moses gathers seventy elders and brings them to the Tabernacle where his holy spirit is imparted upon them. Two additional elders, Eldad and Medad, remain in the camp, and the holy spirit descends upon them, too, and they prophesy as well. Joshua is displeased by this, and Moses placates him.

Seventh Aliyah: G-d causes a wind to sweep in huge numbers of quail from the sea. The people gathered piles of quail and started enjoying meat. Those who ate gluttonously died in a plague. Miriam, Moses' sister, spoke negatively of Moses' decision to become celibate. G-d was highly displeased by this talk against His servant, and Miriam was stricken with *tzara'at* ("leprosy") for one week.

Thoughts that Count

And the men said to him, "We are defiled by the dead body of a man. Why should we be kept back?" (Num. 9:7)

We do not find in the Torah any other instance where a mitzva (commandment) that must be done at a specific time can be completed at a later date. Only the Passover sacrifice is permitted to be fulfilled one month later. Why is this case special? There were many Jews who tried or wanted to bring the sacrifice at the correct time but for various reasons could not. They pleaded not to be excluded. In the merit of their requests, a later date was given to them. The future Redemption will also come about in the same manner. If we will stubbornly do all in our mean to end our own exile, and beg and plead with G-d with all our heart and soul, the Redemption will come. (Rabbi Shlomo Cohen of Radomsk)

Have I conceived all these people? Have I given birth to them? (Num. 11:12)

Moses said to G-d: "I'm not the one who must suffer because of the Jews. You are responsible." A parent must share the suffering and distress of his children and have mercy on them, for good and for bad.

(Rabbi Simcha Bunim)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN AND SPIRITUAL LEADER



Despite the passing of the "me" generation and the "greed" generation, the "now" generation - an entire society that wants and expects immediate gratification and reward NOW - has persisted.

"We want Moshiach NOW!" These words have been the "theme song," if you will, of Jewish children around the globe for nearly two decades. In an age when everyone wants everything NOW, it's about time we started putting our energies into the right area - wanting, demanding, and persisting until our goal is achieved - the revelation of Moshiach and the commencement of the long-awaited Redemption.

So what can you and I realistically do to hasten Moshiach's arrival? The same thing we do when we want a tangible possession - we work hard to earn it.

Specifically, our Sages have taught that giving charity brings the Redemption closer. Also, by performing additional mitzvot and/or enhancing some of the mitzvot we already do, we prepare ourselves for the Messianic Era and can actually hasten its arrival.

Finally, we can adopt the attitude toward wanting Moshiach that we have about anything else we really want: we become obsessed with it, talk about it constantly, tell other people about it, and work at it until it happens. And this, ultimately, is how we will bring Moshiach NOW.

Pinchus Feldman

Rabbi Pinchus Feldman OAM

Smile it's Friday! The obituary editor of the Jerusalem Post is not one to admit his mistakes easily. One day he got a phone call from an irate subscriber. The caller complained that his name had been printed in the obituary column. "Really?" replied the editor in a Fearful Voice. "And where are you calling from?"

The Ballad of Banjo Billy - By Yehuda L. Efuné

Banjo Billy's looking for a home/ Banjo Billy's walking alone..." That's a line out of Pinchas (Pete) Spicer's signature song, and so he is. Pete had been traveling the world for almost a year when he stopped over in Morristown, New Jersey on his way down to Nashville, Tennessee and New Orleans, Louisiana. The day he arrived, he caught my eye. Was it the psychedelic skullcap on top of his long hair, or simply the air of a traveler he had about himself? He certainly stood out in our yeshiva dining hall where most of the students are sporting dark pants, white shirts and black kippot or hats!

I started talking to Pinchas and he told me that he plays the banjo. Who on earth plays the banjo these days? It had been raining all that day in November, but toward evening it had cleared up to so we stepped out into the fresh air of the yeshiva's spacious grounds. Pete sat down on a step and started tuning up his banjo, tweaking the knobs and twanging the strings. The instrument seemed to have a character of its own... students came out of the building and stood around to listen.

"This song is my Jewish answer to 'Country Boy'," he was saying, "I call it 'Kosher Boy!'" As he strummed the first chords, more guys joined us. One of the rabbis walked by; without stopping he turned his head and smiled. I listened to the song, its notes and lyrics.

"Hey, Pinchas. Did you ever study the Tanya? There are some deep Chasidic ideas in that song..." I said to him.

"Really? Like what?"

"Okay, let's see... the guy decides to keep kosher, right? But then someone tries to get him to have some rabbit stew, or some kangaroo, and he has to keep on saying 'No thanks, I'm a kosher boy now!'"

"Yeah, well, that's just about my own experience starting to keep kosher."

"Well, I guess you've been doing it right. It's important not to get caught up fighting the challenges. Usually the best thing is to

say 'no' and just walk away. That's what it says in Tanya - that's the basic book of Chabad Chasidic philosophy."

"Really? What else does it say," asked Pinchas, intrigued.

"Well, it's basically a kind of self-help book for the soul. Another thing it says is that you should never feel bad about the different challenges that come up; overcoming them is the whole point."

Pinchas had planned to move on after a few days. Originally a music teacher from Sydney, Australia, he had quit his job in order to travel the world. Eventually he was planning on making his way to Israel where he hoped to settle.

But Pinchas changed his ticket and took some time out of his travels to study Torah. He stayed a month at the Rabbinical College of America in Morristown, New Jersey. I studied a chapter of Tanya with him. Sometimes, we walked around the campus, or strolled in the corridors if it was raining. In the evenings, Pinchas played his music. One day I introduced him to Rabbi Boruch Klar, the person behind the annual Jewish Renaissance Fair in New Jersey. A week later Pinchas was playing at Rabbi Klar's Chabad Center in West Orange.

"Here's a song I wrote on the road, y'know, on that road that leads toward the 'City of G-d.' You learn about all the mitzvos, and sometimes all those does and don'ts can seem like a bit much. This is a song about it called 'One More Mitzva.'

Light applause, then Pinchas began: "Now doing a mitzva's a beautiful thing, of that you can be sure/ my rabbi says it'll lift me, get me closer to the L-rd/ but when I asked him, 'Hit me! How many do I need?/ he said, 'Oh, not too many, just six hundred 'n' thirteen...'

"Well I started wearing tzitzis, doing tefilin every day/ at first I was afraid about changing my ways... Then I stopped eating all those foods that we are not allowed/ I'm a Kosher Boy now, oh L-rd, You must be proud/ But when I heard you're not allowed to eat at all sometimes/ I said 'Well one fast is alright, but L-rd, don't give me nine!' "And I looked up to the sky and said, 'Don't give me one more mitzva, I declare/ I'll try to serve You in Your way but don't put me in despair/ Oh L-rd, You know that I love You and I'll never say goodbye/ But don't give me one more mitzva, or I'm gonna cry...'

"He's the next Bob Dylan!" said one member of the audience. But Pinchas prefers to see himself closer to Dylan's singer/songwriter role-model, the restless Woody Guthrie whose playing cheered on the Oklahoma dust bowl refugees, as they rode freight trains, walked and hitchhiked west toward the promised land of California. In a way we're all refugees, even if our memory of home has faded in the two thousand years since we had to leave. Pinchas brings to mind in his songs the epic journey of the Wandering Jew. "I don't remember yesterday, or the day before/ I usually lose all track of time/ but one day I'll know, what all this traveling's for/ soon as I see this land of mine..."

But as well as chronicling his progress until now, Pinchas is a modern-day minstrel bringing news of better times ahead. "Once upon a starry night, I went out to greet the moon/ I heard a voice a-calling' out 'Moshiach's coming soon!'... And I looked up to the sky and said 'Just give me one more mitzva, I declare/ I know how to serve You in Your way, I'm no longer in despair...'"

Banjo Billy is looking for his home, but the roads that lead to Jerusalem have been long and winding. Keep your eyes open, though. He might be passing back through your town on his way.

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Chabad NSW Headquarters

36 Flood St. Bondi NSW 2026 Australia

Dean and Spiritual Leader:

Rabbi Pinchas Feldman OAM

Rabbinic Administrator:

Rabbi Yossi Feldman

Director of Outreach

Rabbi Elimelech Levy

Email lchaim@yeshiva.org.au

Editor Levi Epstein

Moshiach m a t t e r s

The Midrash relates that Moses was privileged to see the Book of Adam, which records all the generations that would ever be born, along with their leaders. Moses saw that the last generation before Moshiach would possess souls of a very lowly spiritual stature. However, He saw that they would be involved with Torah and its commandments with self-sacrifice, despite all obstacles, and that they would give great pleasure to G-d. Moses was in awe of these souls, and considered himself smaller than they, the last generation to be born before Moshiach's arrival. *(Sefer Hamaamarim Tav-Shin-Yud)*

International Unity lecture
Healing Through Unity
 with former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel
Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau

Monday
June 15 2009
7:30pm

via large screen broadcast
 The Yeshiva Centre
 36 Flood Street Bondi
 Free admission
 Refreshments served
 Men & Women welcome



This year is a Hakhel year, a year of gathering and connecting, celebrating Jewish unity of heart through unity of purpose.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, Former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel, is a survivor of the Buchenwald concentration camp and has been awarded the prestigious Israel prize for "bridging rifts in Israeli society". Join hundreds of cities around the world as Rabbi Lau shares a message of healing and hope for our uncertain world.

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This event is part of worldwide Hakhel celebrations

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Candle Lighting Times
Friday 12th June 2009

City	In	Out
Sydney	4:35pm	5:33pm
Brisbane	4:42pm	5:38pm
Surfers Par	4:40pm	5:36pm
Melbourne	4:49pm	5:50pm

Dedicated in Loving memory of
Pinchus ben Yitzchak Halevi
 22 Sivan

Volunteers are required for Yeshiva Shul Please approach Zeev Gavson or Call 0412 1800 12