

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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As we read in this week's Torah portion, *Chayei Sarah*, after Sarah passed away and Abraham wanted to bury her in the Cave of Machpelah, the sons of Chet offered to give him the land for free. "A mighty prince you are among us," they said, "in the choice of our tombs bury your dead." However, Abraham refused their offer, and insisted on paying "the full price."

As Rashi comments, "the full price" means "its full value." Abraham was adamant about paying the full value of the field in order to completely dissociate it from its former owner, Efron. Had Abraham received it as a gift, Efron would have still retained a certain claim on the land, even though it now officially belonged to Abraham. By paying "the full price" for the Cave of Machpelah, Abraham severed any connection it might have had to its previous owner.

King David did the same thing many years later after he conquered Jerusalem. Jerusalem had been already captured and was under his control, yet David did not wish to receive it as a gift from Aravna. Like Abraham, David insisted on paying "the full price" for the site, in order to possess it in the absolute sense.

The spiritual service of every Jew is to refine and elevate his surroundings, through learning Torah and observing mitzvot, to the point that he becomes the true "owner" of his particular corner of the world. Just as Abraham paid "the full price" for the field he bought from Efron, so too is it necessary for every Jew to pay "the full price" - to expend real effort and exertion - in his service of G-d.

A Jew must never say to himself, "I have been blessed with a good head and many talents. Why should I have to work hard if everything comes to me easily? Even my Evil Inclination isn't so powerful that it has to be fought all that vigilantly."

In the same way that Abraham and David refused to accept what was easy, rejected "gifts" and insisted on paying "the full price," so too must we invest real effort on the spiritual "labor" of Torah and mitzvot. For it only through hard work and a little "elbow grease" that we will truly succeed in refining our surroundings and by extension, the entire world. (Adapted from Volume 10 of Likutei Sichot, From: L'Chaim 5762, # 693) - lchaimweekly.org

"G-d had blessed Abraham in all things." (24:1) There are those righteous people whose main goal in life is to be whole and one with G-d. But this is not the way of the true tzadik. Indeed, the way of Abraham was to concern himself with "all things." He did not worry just about himself, but about others as well. And so he was blessed in a like manner. (Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev)

"The man took a gold earring, weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets." (24:22) The commentator Rashi explains that the half-shekel alludes to the half-shekel that each Jew donated to the Holy Temple, while the two bracelets allude to the two Tablets containing the Ten Commandments. Thus, with these gifts, Eliezer implied that when establishing a Jewish home, Torah and the performance of mitzvot form its pillars. The half-shekel illustrates the mitzva of charity, while the two bracelets, symbolizing the two Tablets, allude to the Torah itself which is included in the Ten Commandments. (Likutei Sichot) - ascent.org.il

This Shabbat we bless the month of Kislev, the third month of the year when counting from Rosh Hashana. The Torah, by contrast, starts counting from Nisan, the month in which the Jewish people left Egypt. >From this perspective, the third month of the year is Sivan. However, both "third months" share an intrinsic connection: Kislev and Sivan are months in which the Torah was given. In Sivan, on Shavuot, G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. In Kislev, on the 19th of the month (Yud Tet), the inner part of Torah (Penimiyut HaTorah) was more fully revealed when Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism, was released from prison. From that point on Chasidic teachings began to be disseminated publicly.

In truth, all of Torah, including the Torah of Moshiach, its highest and most esoteric level, was revealed at Sinai. But it was given to mankind in a concealed form, and only a select few in any generation had access to it. It would not be until several thousand years later that the wellsprings of Chasidut began to flow outward in preparation for the ultimate revelation of Moshiach.

The connection between Kislev and redemption is also seen in the fact that the holidays of the month of Kislev are associated with oil. On Chanukah, the oil in the Temple's menorah burned miraculously for eight days. And Penimiyut HaTorah, which was revealed on Yud Tet Kislev, is described by the metaphor of oil, as the awareness of G-d it brings prepares us for the outpouring of G-dly knowledge that will accompany the ultimate Redemption. May it happen immediately..(From: L'Chaim 5759, #543)

STORY:

The Rebbe Maharash carefully scrutinized the chasid who had just entered his room for a private audience. "Tell me," he asked, "have you allotted time to learn Torah with others?"

The chasid shifted uneasily. A talented silversmith and skillful watchmaker, he had traveled for many days from his town, Vladimir, to be with the Rebbe, and this private audience was definitely the culmination of his visit.

No, he explained, he had not scheduled any learning sessions with others, but he was not to blame. He had just taken up residence in Vladimir and the Jewish population there was comprised of boors, through no fault of their own. They were descendants of the Cantonists -- the Jewish children who had been brutally kidnapped from their grief-stricken parents to serve forcibly in the Czar's army, eventually forgetting the sacred laws and rituals of their youth.

There were only two villagers capable of officiating as chazan; the chasid was the only one in the entire community learned enough to read from the Torah, and it was his sacred duty to prepare the weekly Torah portion. This, besides his daily private study schedule and business, argued the chasid, left him with no additional time to teach others.

"I do not understand you," said the Rebbe Maharash disapprovingly. "For what reason did you leave your previous residence in Polotsk -- which is famed for its religious adherence -- and exchange it for Vladimir, a wilderness barren of Torah and mitzva observance?"

The chasid agreed wholeheartedly. Polotsk had been an exemplary place to live, inhabited by exceptionally pious people who filled its synagogues from dawn till dusk, and whose yeshivot boasted advanced levels of religious education of no small repute. But what could he do? His business had deteriorated steadily and he barely eked out a meager existence in Polotsk. Besides, he had expressly asked for and received the Rebbe's consent and blessing to move to Vladimir. The blessing had materialized to the fullest extent with his business succeeding beyond his wildest dreams.

"You are mistaken," said the Rebbe Maharash, "thinking that you were sent to Vladimir for business purposes. Whoever believes in G-d and Divine Providence can, and must, understand that G-d does not uproot a G-d-fearing family from a place of Torah to an irreligious environment for material reasons. This notion stems from your misconception of your purpose. In truth, your purpose is not to work with silver and watches but to spread G-d's Torah and its commandments wherever possible. Your move to Vladimir was Divinely orchestrated to enable you to teach and inspire the masses, whether the knowledgeable soldier or the illiterate Cantonist children."

The Rebbe Maharash continued, "Have you forgotten the teaching of the saintly Baal Shem Tov that a soul descends to this physical world for seventy or eighty years to do another Jew a favor, a physical favor and especially a spiritual one? He who assumes that his steps are predestined according to his material needs is

(story cont.) lacking in his faith. Cannot the same Divine blessing rest in Polotsk as in Vladimir? My blessing for your material success was intended to accompany your own efforts in disseminating Judaism; without it, my blessing will come to nothing."

"Let the reader beware," wrote the Previous Rebbe, who recorded this story in a letter to one of his followers, "do not read this story as if it were just another anecdote, entering one ear just to exit the other. Rather, let the words of the Rebbe Maharash permeate his very essence, and let every person ask himself – what am I doing to fulfill the Divine mission that has been entrusted to my care in the place which has been Divinely ordained for me?!" (Reprinted from the weekly magazine, *Beis Moshia ch*, From: *L'Chaim* 5757, #442) –lchaimweekly.org.

R. Aizik Homil er related: When I came to Lyozna I met el der chassidim who had been chassidim of the Maggid and of R. Menachem Mendel of Horodok. They used to say:
Have affection for a fel low-Jew and G-d wil I have affection for you; do a kindness for a fel low-Jew and G-d wil I do a kindness for you; befriend a fel low-Jew and G-d wil I befriend you.
(From Rebbe's Hayom yom Cheshvan 27).

That the spark of G-d within us will ponder G-d, what is the surprise?

*But when the animal within lifts its eyes to the heavens, when the dark side of Man lets in a little light, that is truly amazing.
How can darkness know light? Only with the power of He who is beyond both darkness and light.*

From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; rendered by Tzvi Freeman.

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasiddus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

SHABBOS PARSHAS CHAYEI SARA
Shabbos Mevorchim
November 1, 2002

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 4:43 PM
Friday Mincha: 5:00 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 8:54 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tehillim 8:00 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen**
- **Chumash 4:00 PM**
- **Mincha 4:30 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 5:43 PM**

Kiddush is being sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Dovid Sochaczewski in memory of his father's yartzheit.

Happy Birthday to Dr. Barton Tanenbaum, Rivka Illulian & Suzanne Spira.

Yartzeits: Dov Sochaczewski – Cheshvan 29

**There will be no classes on Sunday and Monday,
Nov. 3rd and 4th.**

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 5:00 PM



A Sefer Torah is being written in memory of the fathers of Rabbi & Mrs. Shusterman. Anyone who is interested in participating should contact Mendel Shusterman at (310) 497-2643

GOOD SHABBOS!