

# THE CHABAD WEEKLY

Vol 6, # 3

Chabad of North Beverly Hills, 409 Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, 90210

[beverlyhillschabad.com](http://beverlyhillschabad.com)

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In the Midrash, our Sages tell us that Abraham "recognized his Creator" at the age of three, after which he began to disseminate the belief in One G-d. As a result of his faith, Abraham was even thrown into the "fiery furnace." Yet the Written Torah completely ignores these incidents. Rather, we are introduced to Abraham in this week's Torah portion, Lech Lecha when Abraham receives the command from G-d at the age of 75: "Go out (Lech lecha) from your country, and from your family, and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you."

As in everything else in the Torah, the omission of Abraham's early life is deliberate. Indeed, we learn from this that it wasn't until he received this Divine command that the Jewish people embarked on its unique existence.

Until that point Abraham was like any other human being, distinguished only by the fact that his superior intellect had led him to recognize the Creator. Nonetheless, the essential nature of his connection with G-d was still finite, as it was limited to the capacity of the human mind. Even Abraham's willingness for self-sacrifice was based on intellectual (and therefore limited) calculations on its necessity.

The Jew's connection with G-d, however, is not based on a rational acceptance of His existence. Rather, it is a connection that is deeply embedded in his essential being. The bond between the Jew and G-d is analogous to that of parent and child, i.e., simply because the child is part of the parent.

A human being does not have the ability to forge a connection of such magnitude. Only G-d, Who chose the Jewish people, can create a phenomenon of this nature.

When G-d commanded Abraham to "go out" of his country and birthplace, He was telling him to abandon his prior existence and acquire a brand-new, higher essence. With this command, Abraham was transformed into a Jew - a person connected to G-d simply by virtue of his essential make-up.

This radically alters the way we should look at and interrelate with our fellow Jews, as the change that was initiated with Abraham affected every single Jew throughout the generations. Every Jewish person, regardless of external factors, is connected to G-d with a super-rational bond that transcends even personal awareness of it.

In practical terms this means that it is not necessary for a Jew to wait until he learns enough to acquire an intellectual understanding of Torah and mitzvot. Rather, because he is already connected to G-d by virtue of his Jewish soul, he can immediately begin to observe G-d's commandments, which will in turn lead him to the proper understanding. (Adapted from Volume 25 of Likutei Sichot, From: L'Chaim 5761, #691)

**And G-d spoke to Abram: "Go you from your land..." (12:1)** From the time that G-d said to our father Abraham, "Go from your land..." and "Abraham went on, journeying southward", began the process of birurim -- of extracting the sparks of holiness that are scattered throughout the universe and buried within the material existence. By the decree of Divine providence, a person wanders about in his travels to those places where the sparks that are to be extracted by him await their redemption. The Cause of All Causes brings about the many circumstances and pretexts that bring a person to those places where his personal mission in life is to be acted out. (Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch) – [chabad.org](http://chabad.org)

*Yaakov was a clever young man, a genius, who lived in a small village in White Russia. He studied Torah assiduously, and indeed, amassed a huge body of knowledge. In the same village lived several Lubavitcher Chasidim, who had long been trying to convince the talented lad to come with them to the Rebbe.*

*But Yaakov, who was not raised in a Chasidic home, was not interested. "I don't need a Rebbe," he would answer them. "If I come across a problem in the Talmud, I just keep studying till I solve it myself."*

*Nonetheless, one time his curiosity got the better of him, and he accompanied the Chasidim to the Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom Dovber (known as the Rebbe Rashab). They arrived in Lubavitch on a Friday. That Shabbat, Yaakov found himself in an unprecedented state of spiritual elevation. The general atmosphere of the town was rubbing off on him.*

*After Shabbat, as they prepared to leave, Yaakov wrote a short note to give to the Rebbe, as was customary. He trembled as he waited his turn for a private audience. When Yaakov entered the Rebbe's chamber he found the Rebbe sitting and studying a book. The Rebbe did not lift his eyes to look at him. Yaakov tiptoed over to the desk and placed his note on it. The Rebbe gave no sign that Yaakov was even in the room.*

*Suddenly the Rebbe stood up and paced back and forth. As if talking to himself, he began to speak in Russian: "On! Nyet on!" ("It is him! It's not him!") On! Nyet on! On! Nyet on..." The Rebbe paused for a long while before uttering his final pronouncement: "Nyet on!" He then sat down and resumed his study.*

*Yaakov left the Rebbe's chamber confused and puzzled. Not only had the Rebbe ignored him, but his strange words kept reverberating in his head. Yaakov did not know what to make of it.*

*One day Yaakov was reading the newspaper when he noticed a contest being sponsored by the University of Petersburg. Whoever solved the mathematical problem printed in the paper would win a prize of 300 rubles. Yaakov saw the contest as a personal challenge. He studied the problem and sent off his answer by mail. A short time later a letter arrived from the University informing him that he had won. Enclosed with the letter was a personal invitation from the head of the mathematics department, and a train ticket.*

*Yaakov traveled to Petersburg. The professors were initially surprised by Yaakov's traditional Jewish attire, but quickly discovered his rare genius. After awarding him the monetary prize, they offered him a full scholarship to the University, which Yaakov accepted.*

*In the beginning Yaakov maintained his distinctive dress and customs, and even learned a little Torah. But the more he progressed academically and socially at the University, the further away from Judaism he wandered. The external trappings were the first to go; eventually Yaakov completely abandoned the path of Torah and mitzvot.*

*A few years later Yaakov was appointed as a full professor. Of course, beforehand, Yaakov had to renounce his Judaism. But he didn't blink an eye as he furthered his academic career.*

*As time passed, however, Yaakov's conscience began to bother him. Although he deeply regretted his actions, he found himself unable to take practical steps to rectify the situation. In those days, a gentile who converted to Judaism or a Jew who accepted Christianity but later rescinded were subject to the death penalty.*

*By that time Yaakov had become an accomplished hunter; the sport served to divert his attention from his frequent pangs of conscience. One day while out in the field, Yaakov's horse began to gallop uncontrollably. The reins were useless, and it was clear that barring a miracle, these were the last seconds of Yaakov's life. At that moment Yaakov resolved to repent and return to G-d. Incredibly, the horse stopped galloping and came to a halt.*

*That night Yaakov packed a small bundle and snuck out of the house, leaving his non-Jewish life behind him for good. He wandered from city to city and from town to town, terrified of being discovered. His return to Judaism had endangered his very life, but his resolve to live as a Jew was unwavering.*

*One day, while Yaakov was dining at an inn in a remote village, the police burst in and began to check the patrons' identity papers. Yaakov, who was not carrying any identification, was taken into custody.*

*The investigator at the police station kept scrutinizing the photograph in his hand, then glancing up at Yaakov. From the corner of his eye Yaakov saw that it was a picture of himself as he used to look at the University: clean-shaven, nattily attired, and with a carefully coiffed lock of hair on his forehead.*

*The investigator was clearly hesitant. Unable to decide he began to mutter under his breath. "On!" ("It is him!") A second later he changed his mind. "Nyet on!" ("It's not him!") "On!" "Nyet on!" Back and forth he went, studying the photograph and Yaakov in turn. "Nyet on!" he ultimately concluded, and ordered that Yaakov be freed.*

*Yaakov left the police station flabbergasted; he knew where he had last heard those very words. Immediately he set off for Lubavitch, and remained there for the rest of his life. (From: L'Chaim #590)*

The Baal Shem Tov used to instruct his disciples in a regular Gemara study-session. His style of study was with great acuity and brilliance, and included a study of Rambam, Alfasi, Rosh and other commentaries of the Rishonim (early commentators) germane to the Gemara-text under examination. The Baal Shem Tov would translate the words (of the text) into Yiddish. When studying in Eirchin 15b the passage "The third tongue kills three persons," the Baal Shem Tov translated and explained: Lashon hara (the evil tongue; slander) kills all three, the inventor of the slander, the one who relates it and the listener. This is all in spiritual terms, which is more severe than physical murder. (From Rebbe's Hayom yom Cheshvan 6).

*Prepare yourself with this meditation, and when you feel anger overcoming you, run through it in your mind:*

***Know that all that befalls you comes from a single Source, that there is nothing outside of that Oneness to be blamed for any event in the universe. And although this person who insulted you, or hurt you, or damaged your property, is granted free choice and is held culpable for his decision to do wrong -- that is his problem. That it had to happen to you -- that is between you and the One Above.***

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	Chasidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

**SHABBOS PARSHAS LECH LECHA**  
*October 18, 2002*

**Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 5:58 PM**  
**Friday Mincha: 6:15 PM**

**LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:49 AM**

**SHABBAT MORNING**

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Chumash 5:05 PM**
- **Mincha 5:50 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 6:58 PM**

**DAILY MINYONIM:**

**Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:15 AM and 7:30 AM**

**Sunday 9:00 AM**

**Mincha/Maariv: 6:10 PM**

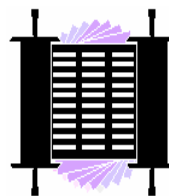
Starting Monday, October 14, the 6:00 AM Shacharis minyan will begin at 6:15 AM for the next two weeks. (Due to the halachic time when it is permitted to daven)

**RESERVE THE DATE**

There will be a Shul Group gathering next Saturday night, Cheshvan 20 (Oct. 26) at the home of Rabbi and Mrs. Shusterman at 8:00 PM.

Refreshments will be served.

Everyone is invited.



**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**

*Happy Birthday* to Shmuel Meyer Mayberg, Yisroel Noach Kornfeld, Joel Mandel & Eliyahu Harkham,