

# THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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

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We read in this week's Torah portion, Vayigash, that when Pharaoh learned that Joseph's brothers had come to Egypt he instructed Joseph to give them grain as a gift for their father Jacob. But from a later verse, "And to his father he sent like this: ten donkeys laden with the best things of Egypt," we see that Joseph added to these gifts. Joseph did not ask Pharaoh's permission, but acted on his own initiative. The opportunity to do the mitzva of honoring his father had arisen, and he hastened to perform it in the most beautiful manner possible. Not only would Jacob receive a gift of simple grain, but "the best things of Egypt." The lesson is clear: Whenever the opportunity to perform a mitzva comes our way we must do so as soon as possible, to the best of our ability and in the finest manner we can.

As Rashi explains, Joseph's gift of "the best things of Egypt" consisted of "aged wine" and "Egyptian pol," a variety of broad bean. These beans were the crowning agricultural product of Egypt. Joseph sent his father the very best that Egypt had to offer.

Joseph knew that when his brothers returned and told their father that "Joseph is still alive" the news would cause him great pain over the fact that they had sold him in the first place. Joseph wanted to spare his father suffering and ease his anguish as much as possible. This desire was expressed in his choice of pol:

Pol is a legume; each bean is separate from the others. At the same time it was considered to be a very special type of food. Joseph's gift sent the message to Jacob that sometimes great benefit is derived precisely through separation. In truth, Joseph's separation from his family yielded much good, just as pol was regarded as a great delicacy in the ancient world.

Joseph also sent his father a quantity of aged wine. Wine is a substance that brings happiness and pleasure. Joseph and his brothers had abstained from wine throughout the 22 years of their separation as an expression of grief, as did Jacob. The wine was intended to bring Jacob pleasure.

However, regular wine would not do; Joseph sent him wine that was aged and thus of better quality. Joseph thereby alluded to the fact that although he had been in Egypt for an extended period of time, he had never lost faith that they would one day be reunited. For 22 years no wine had passed his lips, yet he had saved and preserved it in anticipation of his eventual reunion with his father.

From this we learn that whenever a Jew finds himself in "Egypt," beset by troubles and adversity, he must never despair. Even in the most difficult of circumstances he must strengthen his faith in G-d in the belief and hope that G-d will help him overcome his predicament. (Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 10, From: L'Chaim 5759, # 549) - lchaimweekly.org

**"How shall I go up to my father, and the lad is not with me." (44:34)** Every Jew must ask himself: How can I go up to my Father in heaven "and the lad is not with me" -- without bringing the days of my youth? A person must be especially vigilant that he not squander away his younger years. (Ma'ayana Shel Torah) ascent.org.il

**"The days of the years of my wanderings are one hundred and thirty years; the days of the years of my life were few and bad." (47:9)** How could Jacob have said this when the average life span after the generation of the flood was 120 years? All his life Jacob yearned for the everlasting peace and tranquility of the Messianic era. For as long, then, as the Redemption did not come, Jacob regarded the years of his life as qualitatively few and meager, because they did not contain that which is most important of all. (Lubavitcher Rebbe) ibid

## THE ANGUISH OF SHABBOS

Rabbi Hillel of Paritsh used to spend a substantial part of every year traveling through the towns of the southern parts of Russia in order to give instruction in the applied ethics of Chassidism, and to arouse people to repentance wherever the need arose.

He once arrived in a town where the Jewish tavernkeepers kept their businesses open on Shabbos. Reb Hillel was shocked to hear this, and invited them all to meet him. When he had explained to them what a serious matter this was they all undertook to conform to proper observance-though on one condition: that he persuade a certain wealthy tavernkeeper, whose turnover was the highest in town, to do likewise, for otherwise they would not be able to survive competition with him. The tzaddik thereupon sent for that man-once, twice, three times-but he ignored the invitation.

Reb Hillel stayed on in the town for Shabbos. In the morning the wealthy tavernkeeper suddenly suffered increasingly severe pains in the stomach, and his wife, fearing that they were brought on by the disrespect her husband had shown the tzaddik, hastened to seek him out so that he should intercede on his behalf. While Reb Hillel was at the Shabbos midday meal surrounded by a large company of chassidim, she burst into the room, and with tears in her eyes implored the rebbe to give her husband his blessing for a speedy recovery.

The tzaddik remained silent.

His chassidim were dismayed: "Rebbe, at least give the blessing that is traditional in such cases on the holy day - 'It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon!' "But Reb Hillel said not a word. The woman left bitterly disappointed,

On Saturday night, the tzaddik was discoursing with his chassidim at a table on which stood a samovar, in fulfillment of the Talmudic dictum: "Hot beverages after the departure of Shabbos serve as a cure." In ran the same woman, weeping and wailing, begging the tzaddik to have pity on her husband and to pray for him.

Reb Hillel simply said: "It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon."

The chassidim were amazed. On Shabbos itself the tzaddik had said nothing-and now, when the holy day was over, he said these words usually uttered only on Shabbos?

Reb Hillel continued: "If Shabbos itself will no longer have cause to cry out against him, then healing will come soon! Go along and tell him that if he gives a solemn handshake in the presence of three witnesses that he will close his business on Shabbos, then he will be cured."

Three chassidim hastened to his bedside to convey the rebel's words - and he earnestly gave his word of honor.

His illness passed, and the sanctity of Shabbos in that town became something noteworthy indeed. [Adapted by Yrachmiel Tilles from the rendition in A Treasury of Chassidic Tales (Artsroll), as translated by the incomparable Uri Kaploun.]

**Biographical note:** Rabbi Hillel of Paritsh (1795-13 Av 1864) was a chassid of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, the Tsemek Tsedek, and as the chassidim used to say, "half a rebbe" in his own right. He served as the Rabbi of Bobruisk for many years, and authored Pelach HaRimon, a work of deep chassidic thought. - ascent.org.il

### On This Date: Teves 8: Torah translated into Greek (246 BCE)

In a second attempt to translate the Torah into Greek (after an unsuccessful attempt 61 years earlier), the ruling Greek-Egyptian emperor Ptolemy gathered 72 Torah sages, had them sequestered in 72 separate rooms, and ordered them to each produce a translation. On the 8th of Tevet of the year 3515 from creation (246 BCE) they produced 72 corresponding translations, including identical changes in 13 places (where they each felt that a literal translation would constitute a corruption of the Torah's true meaning). This Greek rendition became known as the Septuagint, "of the seventy" (though later versions that carry this name are not believed to be true to the originals). Greek became a significant second language among Jews as a result of this translation. During Talmudic times, Tevet 8 was observed by some as a fast day, expressing the fear of the detrimental effect of the translation.

### On This Date: Teves 9: Passing of Ezra (313 BCE)

Ezra, who led the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel after the Babylonian exile (423-353 BCE), oversaw the building of the Second Temple, canonized the 24 books of the Holy Scriptures ("bible") and, as head of the "Great Assembly" legislated a series of laws and practices (including formalized prayer) which left a strong imprint on Judaism to this very day, passed away on the 9th of Tevet of the year 3448 from creation (313 BCE -- 1000 years after the Giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai). The passing of Ezra marked the end of the "Era of Prophecy". - Chabad.org

Our custom in aleinu (Siddur Tehilat Hashem p. 84) is to say "for they bow to vanity and nothingness," and markedly not to say "and pray1..." This wording is followed also in Musaf for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. The expectorating is after these words; the reason is that speech stimulates saliva, and we do not wish to benefit from this saliva. (From Rebbe's Havom vom TEVET 9).

*The conscious state of a Jew can be affected by external pressures that induce state of mind and even behavior which is contrary to his subconscious, which is Jew's essential nature. When the external pressures are removed, it does not constitute a change or transformation of his essential nature, but, on the contrary, is merely the reassertion of his innate and true character.*

- The Rebbe

**PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES**

<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	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

**DAILY MINYONIM:**

**Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM**  
**Sunday 9:00 AM**  
**Mincha/Maariv: 4: 45 PM**

**FAST OF ASARAH BETEVE'S**  
**Sunday Teves 10 (Dec. 15)**

**Fast Begins: 5:39 AM**  
**Mincha: 4:30 PM**  
**Fast Ends: 5:20 PM**

On the 10th of Tevet of the year 3336 from Creation (245 BCE), the armies of the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. Thirty months later (on Tammuz 9, 3338) the city walls were breached, and (on Av 9th of that year) the Holy Temple was destroyed. The Jewish people were exiled to Babylonia for 70 years.

**SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH**  
**December 13, 2002**

**Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 4:27 PM**  
**Friday Mincha: 4:45 PM**

**LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:19 AM**

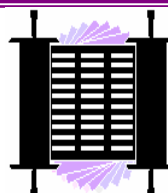
**SHABBAT MORNING**

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Chumash 3:50 PM**
- **Mincha 4:20 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 5:27 PM**

**Yartzeits:** Gertrude Sulami – Teves 15

**Happy Birthday** to Mrs. Sara Shusterman, Shmuel Levy & Robert Presser.

**Mazal Tov** to Dr. and Mrs. Dauer on the upshernish of their grandson, Moishy Kornfeld.



**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!**