

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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

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Once a renowned cardiologist visited the Rebbe. "You should devote your attention to treating healthy people, not only the sick," the Rebbe told him.

"Am I to improve on what the Almighty has done?" questioned the doctor.

"Yes," responded the Rebbe. "An ordinary laymen, and how much more so a doctor, should be able to improve on what the Almighty has done."

"Are you asking me to make man perfect?" answered the doctor.

"No," the Rebbe responded. "Making people perfect is a job for Mashiach. But every person should try to make his life and those of the people around him a little bit better."

As the following concepts emphasize, each of us has his or her own mission in making our portion of the world "a little bit better." Often, our missions are intertwined, and as one person steps forward, he takes others with him.

This week's Torah portion is named **Lech Lecha**, recalling G-d's first command to Abraham. Lech means "go." G-d was telling him to go out, to leave his native land and his father's household, to emerge from the cocoon of protected existence and set out on his own path in the world.

Our Rabbis interpret the second word lecha as meaning "for yourself." Rashi explains that setting out on such a journey is fraught with danger, and there was a possibility that Abraham would lose everything he had. Therefore G-d promised him that the journey would be to his benefit. His wealth, his family, and his reputation would increase.

R. Moshe Alshich offers a deeper interpretation. Lecha means "to yourself." By journeying throughout the world, Abraham was setting out on a path of self-discovery. The purpose of his journey to Eretz Yisrael, his descent to Egypt, his return to the land, and all his wanderings was intended to enable him to understand his own identity and express his positive qualities in his surrounding environment.

Abraham's story is not merely a page from a history book. On the contrary, as our Rabbis teach, "The deeds of our forefathers are a sign for their children." Abraham was a singular individual, one man who taught the belief in G-d to a world that did not want to listen.

We are, however, all singularly unique. The Baal Shem Tov taught that G-d loves every Jew with the love parents lavish on an only child born to them in their old age. Just as He commanded and guided Abraham on a journey to his true self, so, too, with loving patience, He guides each one of us on our own journey through life. Through a web of interlocking designs, He directs us all to a common intent - that we each reveal to ourselves and to others the unique G-dly potentials that we have been granted.

The Baal Shem Tov teaches that everything which a person sees or hears serves as a lesson for him in his relationship with G-d. Since everything that happens in this world is controlled by Divine providence, and man was "created solely to serve his Creator," it follows that any and every event or entity that a person encounters is intended to help him advance his relationship with G-d.

For that purpose, G-d leads us all from the cradle onward, step by step, through a variety of experiences - the sum total of which are intended to enable us to discover and express our inner G-dly potential.

When Abraham set out on his journey, he took with him "the souls he had made in Charan": the people he had motivated to join him in his mission. This too is a lesson. Man's journey through life is not intended to be a lonely trek on mountain crags or in desert settings. Quite the contrary, G-d leads us through a world with other people with whom we interact in synergy, both giving and receiving. For they are on similar journeys, parallel in purpose if not necessarily in route.

As a person grows to appreciate these concepts, he will be able to maximize his opportunities in life, making his experiences happier and more fruitful. He will not be encumbered by fear or worry, because he will realize that at every moment, a watching hand is guiding him, directing him to encounters intended to advance his personal growth and his contribution to the world. (From: Keeping in Touch)-sichosinenglish.org

Go you from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you (12:1) "From your land" -- from your will (eretz, the Hebrew word for land, is etymologically related to the word ratzon--will). "From your birthplace" -- from your emotional and behavioral self (which is the product of a person's environment). "From your father's house" -- from your intellect (In the terminology of Kabbalah, the intellect is referred to as the father within man, since it is the progenitor of and authority over his feelings and behavior patterns). (The Chassidic Masters) – chabad.org

The Covenant

The following story was told by Rabbi Israel Spira, the Rebbe of Bluzhov, who had witnessed it firsthand in the Janowska Concentration Camp:

Each morning at dawn, the Germans would lead us out of the camp for a day of hard labor that ended only at nightfall. Each pair of workers was given a huge saw and expected to cut their quota of logs. Because of the horrendous conditions in the camp and starvation rations on which we supposed to subsist, most of us could barely stand on our feet. But we sawed away, knowing that our lives depended upon it; anyone collapsing on the job or failing to meet their daily quota was killed on the spot, G-d forbid.

One day, as I pulled and pushed the heavy saw with my partner, I was approached by a young woman from our work detail. The pallor of her face showed her to be in an extremely weak physical state. "Rebbe," she whispered to me, "do you have a knife?"

I immediately understood her intention and felt the great responsibility that rests upon me. "My daughter," I begged, concentrating all the love and conviction in my heart in the effort to dissuade her from her intended deed. "Do not take your own life. I know that your life is now a living hell, from which death seems a blessed release. But we must never lose hope. With G-d's help, we will survive this ordeal and see better days."

But the woman seemed oblivious to my words. "A knife," she repeated. "I must have a knife. Now. Before it is too late."

At that moment, one of the German guards noticed our whispered conversation and approached us. "What did she say to you?" he demanded of me.

We both froze. Conversing during work was a grave transgression. Many a camp inmate had been shot on the spot for far lesser crimes.

The woman was first to recover. "I asked him for a knife," she said. To my horror, she then addressed her request to the guard: "Give me a knife!"

The German, too, guessed her intention, and a devilish smile flickered on his lips. Doubtless he had seen the bodies of those who, out of desperation, threw themselves during the night at the electrified fence that surrounded the camp; but this would be a new, novel sight for him. Still smiling, he reached into his pocket and handed her a small knife.

Taking the knife, she hurried back to her work station and bent to a small bundle of rags that she had placed on a log. Quickly unraveling the bundle, she took out a tiny infant. Before our astonished eyes, she swiftly and skillfully circumcised the week-old boy.

"Blessed are You, G-d our G-d, King of the Universe," she recited in a clear voice, "Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to enter him into the covenant of Abraham our Father."

Cradling the child in her arms, she soothed his cries. Then, she addressed the heavens: "Master of the Universe! Eight days ago you gave me a child. I know that neither I nor he will long survive in this accursed place. But now, when you take him back, you will receive him as a complete Jew."

"Your knife," she said, handing the holy object back to the German. "Thank you." (Adapted from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe by Yanki Tauber, From: Week in Review, Vol IX No 6 Lech Lecha 5758) – meaningfullife.com

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 13 CHESHVAN).

Joyful Emptiness

The beginning of all paths and the foundation of all ascents is to open yourself to receive from Above. And how do you receive from Above? By being empty -- because a full vessel cannot receive, while an empty vessel has a hollow to be filled. That is why we must run from depression; because a depressed person is so filled with his own self-pity, there is no room left to receive anything, no opening for life to enter. But a humble, open spirit is vibrant with joy. He is found wherever He wishes to be found.

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

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate NEW TRACTATE	SHABBOS (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)	
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)	
NEW	9:00 PM	Tanya (men and Women) with Rabbi Wolf	
<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	Halacha

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM

Mincha/Maariv: 4:50 PM

GOOD SHABBOS!

SHABBOS PARSHAS NOACH

November 7, 2003

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 4:37 PM
Friday Mincha: 4:50 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 8:58 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen**
- **Chumash 4:00 PM**
- **Mincha 4:30 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 5:38 PM**

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Dorothy Melvin in memory of her mother, Sol Tiano's yartzheit.

Yartzheits: Sheva Karp – Cheshvan 14, Charlotte Bronson – Cheshvan 14, Sol Tiano – Cheshvan 15, Abraham Spira - Cheshvan 15, Chanina Lubliner - Cheshvan 15.

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

RESERVE THE DATE – NOV. 15

There will a Shul Group gathering next Saturday night, Cheshvan 20 (Nov. 15) at the home of Dr. and Dr. Dauer 630 N. Arden Dr. at 8:00 PM. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is invited.