

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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As narrated in this week's Torah portion, Yitro, something most unusual occurred when G-d descended on Mount Sinai to give the Torah to the Jewish people. "And all the people saw the thunders," the Torah states. "They saw what is heard, and heard what is seen," elaborates Rabbi Akiva.

What an amazing phenomenon (the technical term for which is known as "synesthesia")!

But why was such a great miracle necessary to accompany the giving of the Torah? What possible benefit could be gained from seeing what is heard and hearing what is seen? To understand what occurred, let us examine the concepts of hearing and seeing and the different ways in which they impart information to us.

A person acquires knowledge through having witnessed something with his own two eyes or through hearing the information secondhand from someone else. Yet there is a fundamental difference between the two.

Our sense of sight verifies external reality in the clearest and most convincing manner. An individual who has actually seen something needs no further proof--he is as convinced as he can be. Hearing something, however, is a much less definite and absolute way to acquire knowledge, leaving room for later doubts as to what was really heard.

(Incidentally, this is the reason behind the principle that "a witness cannot serve as judge": a judge must be able to treat the defendant fairly, without harboring preconceived notions; once he has already witnessed the defendant committing a certain act he can no longer do this.)

At the same time, our sense of sight is far more limited than our sense of hearing. A person can only perceive physical objects through seeing, whereas hearing enables us to understand a more abstract and spiritual reality.

In our world, reality appears to be only that which can be seen with the physical eye, with spiritual matters being relegated to the more abstruse realm of hearing.

What occurred at Mount Sinai was a reversal of this order--spiritual reality was more easily perceived and understood, and physical existence became more indistinct.

This phenomenon was not a special miracle wrought by G-d in honor of the occasion, but was merely the natural outcome of His revealing Himself at Mount Sinai. The reality of G-d's existence took center stage at that moment in history; it was the physical world which seemed less sure of its existence. This entire incident lasted only a short while. Immediately after the Revelation our perception of reality returned to its former state. The world was not yet ready for such G-dliness to be revealed on an ongoing basis.

But when Mashiach comes and the world reaches a state of perfection, this is precisely what will occur. "And the glory of G-d will be revealed, and all flesh will see"--the underlying G-dliness hidden within physical reality will be revealed and apparent to all, until even our physical flesh will be able to perceive this. At that time, we will no longer require abstract proofs of G-d's existence; our belief in Him will stem naturally from actually seeing the G-dliness around us. (From Collected Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Vol. 6, from: Lchaim 5754, #303)

"Thus you shall say to the House of Jacob and tell the Children of Israel." (Yisro 19:3) Our sages state that "House of Jacob" refers to the women of Israel, and "Children of Israel" to the men; for when G-d gave the Torah to Israel, He told Moses to approach first the women and the men only thereafter.

The purpose of the exodus from Egypt was for the Jewish people to receive the Torah at Sinai, as it is written: "When you will have brought out the people from Egypt, you shall serve G-d upon this mountain." (Exodus 3:12) Of the exodus itself it is said that it occurred by virtue of the pious women of that generation. Thus when it came to the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, the women were given precedence, before the men.

The Messianic redemption, too, will be by virtue of the righteous women of Israel, as stated in the Midrash: "All generations are redeemed by virtue of the pious women of their generation." Thus the women will again be first to receive the wondrous teachings to be heard from Mashiach. --mashiach.org

This Shabbat is the fifteenth yartzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson. of blessed memory, wife of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and daughter of the Previous Rebbe. Born in the Russian village of Babinovitch (a small shtetl near Lubavitch) in 1901, she played an integral role in both her father's and husband's affairs throughout her life. And yet, she deliberately chose to function out of the limelight. Extremely modest, royal in bearing and above all kindly, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka was the embodiment of Jewish womanhood and an exceptional role model for Jewish women and girls.

On the anniversary of her passing several years ago, the Rebbe spoke about the special mission all Jewish woman have been entrusted with. The function of every Jew - man, woman and child - is to "make a dwelling place for G-d" on earth. But the goal of the Jewish woman is to take this one step further, and adorn G-d's abode on the physical plane so that it is "lovely" and appointed with "fine furnishings."

In particular, the Jewish woman fulfills her role of "spiritual decorator" through the three special mitzvot G-d has given her to implement in her private home: maintaining the kashrut of her kitchen, keeping the laws of Family Purity, and lighting candles on Shabbat on Yom Tov, together with her daughters. (The Rebbe specified that young girls should light first, so that their mothers can assist them if necessary.)

The Rebbe also called on women to renew their commitment to the Jewish education of their children, from the earliest age on. When a Jewish mother sings a lullaby to her baby about how the Torah is "the best, the sweetest, and the most beautiful" thing in the world, it instills a deep love and appreciation for Torah that lasts a lifetime.

The main point during these last few moments of exile, the Rebbe stressed, is to recognize the great merit and power Jewish women and girls have to bring about the Final Redemption, may it happen at once. (From: L'Chaim 5760, #604) - lchaimweekly.org

Rebetzin Chaya Mushka

It is well known that in 1950, upon the passing of her father, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, leadership of the worldwide Chabad-Lubavitch movement passed to Chaya Mushka's husband, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Less well known is the fact that despite the Rebbe's initial adamant refusal to accept the mantle, it was his wife, the Rebbetzin, who, notwithstanding the great personal sacrifice this would entail, finally prevailed upon him to accept the position with all its public and private hardships. She was steadfast: It is simply unthinkable that father's thirty years of total self-sacrifice and accomplishment should, G-d forbid, come to naught...

An erudite and wise woman, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka carried the mantle of her revered and exalted position in a most humble and unpretentious fashion. All her life she fulfilled the ideal of the psalmist, "The entire honor of a king's daughter is within." When calling the Rebbe's office at "770," or calling a high school girl ill in her dormitory, she always referred to herself simply as: "Mrs. Schneerson from President Street."

Gentle and courteous to everyone, the Rebbetzin saw her role as one wholly devoted to the work of her husband. Even when she relayed advice to those seeking his guidance through her, she would repeat his wording with precision, making sure that it was understood exactly as the Rebbe intended. -- chabad.org

There are two sorts of statutes: a) statutes that create life, and b) statutes created by life. Human laws are created by life so they vary from life and to life and according to circumstances. The Almighty's Torah is a G-dly law that creates life. G-d's Torah is the Torah of truth, the same in all places, at all times. Torah is eternal... (From Rebbe's Hayom yom shevat 22).

The soul never ages, it only becomes more vibrant.

-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

There will be no class on Sunday, January 26.

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 5:15 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS YISRO

January 24, 2003

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 4:58 PM
Friday Mincha: 5:15 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:30 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Chumash 4:20 PM**
- **Mincha 4:50 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 5:58 PM**

Yartzeits: Hinda Lubliner – Shevat 23,
 Rachela Sochaczewski – Shevat 25.

Happy Birthday to Rabbi Hertzel Illulian, Avi Tanenbaum,
 Meir Molayem, Asher Tanenbaum, Sara Malka Mayberg &
 Batsheva Lipsker.

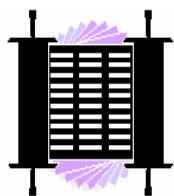
Happy Anniversary to Paul and Rhoda Mandel.

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Shabbos Shevat 22 is the 15th Yartzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka o.b.m., wife of the Lubavitcher Rebbe o.b.m and daughter of the Previous Rebbe o.b.m.

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GOOD SHABBOS!



PLEASE RESERVE THE DATE
PURIM KATAN - SUNDAY (FEB 16)
THE HACHNASAS SEFER TORAH
IN MEMORY OF THE
FATHERS OF RABBI AND MRS.
YOSEF SHUSTERMAN
WILL TAKE PLACE