

THE PIKESVILLE TIMES



Best wishes for a Happy Shavuot, to accept the Torah's teachings with joy and with a healthy personal perspective!

The Director
Rochel Kaplan

Dear Reader,

When G-d gave the Torah at Mount Sinai, its letters could possibly incorporate three sizes: small, medium, large. The Torah scroll, written with medium-sized letters, conveys the message that a person ought to be a Benoni, an in-between-er (neither wicked nor the exclusive Tzadik, as discussed in the book of Tanya). However, in the book of Leviticus, Torah portion of Vayikrah, the first word (Vayikrah וַיִּקְרָא-and he called; Hashem called to Moses) there is a curious anomaly written with a smaller aleph. The reason for this would be to highlight the great humility of Moses to whom G-d spoke directly face to face and who had complete self-effacement even in G-d's presence. When Hashem called upon Moses to approach Pharaoh to take the Jewish people out of Egypt, Moses' response was, "Who am I that I should go."

In the Book of Chronicles 1:1 (Divrei Hayomim), the name Adam is an out-sized aleph. Rabbi Yitzchak Ben Yehudah, a 13th-century French commentary, explains that the large Aleph comes to teach us that there was no greater person-either in a physical sense (Adam was exceedingly tall) or in his superior wisdom. The Alte Rebbe explains that this represents Adam's lofty soul. So we ought to emulate Adam too.

To appreciate the small Aleph lesson, one must begin with the lesson of the large Aleph. Humility without self-confidence is not healthy humility. It is just meekness and timidity. As a creation of Almighty G-d, a human being must have a sense of self-worth. Moreover, every Jew possesses tremendous worth as a child of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. Recognizing our illustrious chain in the realm of "Fortune 500" no less, we should be secure in our worthiness and carry our Judaism proudly.

With self-worth, rooted in the G-dly spark within, sans ego, one is on the right path. We should seek to be super-vigilant to maintain appropriate pride, foundational to a necessary measure of humility, in order to function and to withstand challenges. Adam began with a sturdy recommended sense of self. He took it too far which resulted in the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. In all his humility, Moses successfully brought Torah to his people at Matan Torah, which subsequently removed the "stain" of the primeval sin. His humility enabled a continuous engine of positivity.

We each possess a strain of both Adam and Moses inside of us and it is our responsibility to emulate them both. The Torah states, Talmud Tractate Yevamot 61a: "...You, the Jewish people, are called Adam." Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi: Every soul that has ever lived on earth was once part of Adam Harishon, the first man. Generally speaking, Adam's soul splits into 613 strains. However, more specifically, it splits into innumerable sparks-which are the souls of every Jew from the beginning of time until the end of days. Also, every Jewish soul possesses a dimension of Moses, for he was one of the "Seven shepherds" who transmitted energy to the Jewish soul since a shepherd provides sustenance and life to his flock. Moses was the ultimate shepherd, called the "faithful shepherd," in the Zohar.

Clayton Kershaw, a pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers, considered one of the games' greatest pitchers ever, was the recipient of numerous awards, including a pitching resume nearly entirely unmatched. He is still exceptionally humble. "I did not do anything to deserve this gift," Kershaw once said. "G-d gave me an ability to throw a baseball. He chose me for a reason, and I want to honor Him with that."

So, develop the courage to be different, to stand out, and be extraordinary! It is wise and best to view oneself with extreme honesty; regarding others, be respectful even when not deserving. Keep your focus on Aleph.

Advice from Dr. Sigmund Freud

The nature of most people is not to offer feedback. People think it is irrelevant. However, sharing feedback with others could be very meaningful to them. Great leaders and influencers would also be greatly rewarded with feedback from those whom they mentor.

In 1903, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom Ber Schneerson, traveled from Lubavitch in White Russia to Vienna with his son to meet Dr. Sigmund Freud, a renowned neurologist, and psychotherapist. At the time of the visit, The Rebbe (recognized as the Maimonides of Chassidic Philosophy) who was suffering physical ailment also experienced a sense of spiritual despondency. After years of Avodah-spiritual self-work, he lamented that it fell short of his quest and expectation to see the refinement of his faculties and the clarity of ideas. He remained in Vienna for three months. We know only very few things discussed. Dr. Freud had to know how many hours a day the Rebbe works and how much progress the Rebbe makes.

The professor wanted to understand the nature of Chassidic philosophy.

The Rebbe answered:

"The discipline of Chas-

sidut is that the head

heart what the

want and that

implement in

that which

derstands."

asked: "How

achieve this-

and the heart are

divided by a vast ocean."

"The task is to build a bridge

that will span these two continents. At least to connect them with telephone lines and electrical wires,

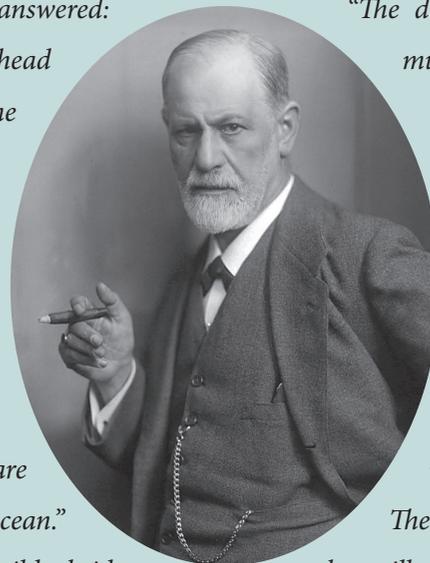
so that the light of the mind should reach the heart."

Balancing intellect and emotion, which is foundational to Chabad's teachings, to link mind and heart, was the crux of their discussion. Dr. Freud's advice was as follows: "You must get feedback from your disciples, students and followers, who study, internalize, and are impacted by you."

In effect, even the greatest of leaders need the feedback of appreciation.

It is not about ego or arrogance. It answers the following concerns: The worthiness of one's life's work, energy, and investment. Can people's souls truly open up? Can a piece of heaven be revealed on our earthly planet?

Essay related by Rabbi Joseph I. Schneerson, the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe who heard it first hand from his father and later transcribed by Rabbi M.M. Schneerson and summarized from a lecture by Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson.



IYAR

A Manual for Healing



By Dr. Avi Z. Rosenberg MD, PhD

It is often said that doctors are the worst patients. This oft quoted maxim highlights a limitation of even the best trained doctors. How might an understanding of the month of Iyar explain the above paradox and provide a deeper insight into the source of all healing?

Iyar has many unique attributes in the Jewish calendar: (1) It follows the celebratory and redemptive month of *Nissan*, (2) it is the eight month of the year, (3) nearly two-thirds of *Sefirat haOmer* occurs during *Iyar* and (4) among the various acronyms for *Iyar* is - אני ה' רופאיך - I am G-d your healer. While these appear as discrete attributes, they are perhaps interconnected. Further, they inform the life of a physician especially during these tumultuous times.

The numbers seven and eight have a prominent place in Jewish tradition and in the mystical dimension. **The number 7**, reflects the totality of creation (i.e., seven days of creation, reflected in 7 days of the week) and the seven Sefirot describing supernal emotive traits. The seventh month of the year, *Nissan*, the month when we celebrate the historic redemption from the Egyptian exile, is a month from which the exodus of all generations and for that matter, each day derives its energy. The redemptive process is laden with miracles which by definition are beyond the laws of creation/nature. By contrast, **the number 8** reflects a transcendent value not encapsulated by the limits of nature. For example, the bris on the 8th day of life, 8 days of Chanukah and 8th day of Pesach). It is thus curious that the miracle of miracles occurred in the 7th month of the year and not the 8th month where transcendence of nature would be expected. This is intended to amplify the limitless attributes of Hashem, inserting transcendence in the contracted world (*Nissan*) and extending our awareness of this attribute in the month of healing, *Iyar*.

The month of *Iyar* encompasses two aspects of healing. In the counting of *Sefirat haOmer*, we achieve spiritual healing through our daily reflection on 1/49th of the combinatorial supernal emotive traits. And as regards physical healing, we observe in the above acronym, "I am G-d your healer", that the transcendental tetragrammaton name is used. Highlighting that even physical healing emanates from beyond the limits of the physical realm. Therein lies the limits to *our* abilities as healers. From *Iyar* we learn that healing, while mediated through us as health professionals using our understanding of the laws of nature, the healing results are in fact derived from a realm beyond creation and nature. Therefore, it is not surprising that despite the extensive training in the biological and psychosocial underpinnings of disease, how to be a patient is not par for the course of clinical training. Objectivity of healing others is within our reach, but to heal ourselves is just beyond our grasp and we ask daily 'Heal us, O L-rd, and we will be healed'!

Over the last year, physicians the world over have risen to the challenge of ameliorating the suffering of humanity by emulating the Creator, but we have also had a glimpse of the extent AND limits of medical knowledge.....May we merit a time speedily when the Healer of healers is revealed and there will be no more suffering with the coming of Moshiach!

Dr. Avi Rosenberg is a Physician Scientist at Johns Hopkins University in the Department of Pathology and a mohel serving communities regionally and beyond.

Healthy Spirit

Hashem's Pharmacy from the Talmud and Midrash:



A sliced carrot looks like the human eye. The pupil, iris and radiating lines look just like the human eye... And YES, science now shows carrots greatly enhance blood flow to and function of the eyes.



A tomato has four chambers and is red. The heart has four chambers and is red. Research shows that tomatoes are loaded with lycopine and are indeed pure heart and blood food.



Grapes hang in a cluster that has the shape of the heart. Each grape looks like a blood cell and all of the research today shows grapes are also profound heart and blood vitalizing food.



Kidney beans heal and help maintain kidney function and yes, they look exactly like the human kidneys.



Celery, bok choy, rhubarb look just like bones. These foods specifically target bone strength. Bones are 23% sodium and these foods are 23% sodium. If you don't have enough sodium in your diet, the body pulls it from the bones, thus making them weak. These foods replenish the skeletal needs of the body.



Sweet potatoes look like the pancreas and actually balance the glycemic index in diabetics.



A walnut looks like a little brain, a left and right hemisphere, upper cerebrums and lower cerebellums. Even the wrinkles or folds on the nut are just like the neo-cortex. We now know walnuts help develop more than three dozen neuro-transmitters for brain function.



Avocados, eggplants and pears target the health and function of the womb and they look just like this organ. Today's research shows that when a woman eats one avocado a week, it balances hormones, sheds unwanted birth weight, and prevents cervical cancers. And how profound is this? It takes exactly nine months to grow an avocado from blossom to ripened fruit. There are over 14,000 photolytic chemical constituents of nutrition in each one of these foods (modern science has only studied and named about 141 of them).



Onions look like the body's cells. Today's research shows onions help clear waste materials from all of the body cells. They even produce tears which wash the epithelial layers of the eyes. Garlic, a working companion, also helps eliminate waste materials and dangerous free radicals from the body. ☘



The Value of a Friend

Part 1

by Ruti Rosenbloom

Gavi Rosenbloom obm

Love has tremendous power to transform.

As parents, teachers and leaders in various roles, we share a common dedication to refine all entrusted in our care while enriching our environment. Theories relate methods and relativity to optimize care. However, three essential approaches in dedication can be found which carry varying results. Tolerance allows space for everyone, yet they remain separate cells detached and indifferent from each other as they develop separate interests. The care parents have fosters growth for everyone without discrepancy, although this direction is limited to the view of the caretaker. Deep love recognizes individual sovereignty with compassion to guide not dictate. Love appreciates individual qualities and preserves their dignity as they see the holiness in someone else. The person loved feels dignified and appreciates the compassion. Continuous growth is thus achieved. Acceptance allows their growth on their terms, including compassion for the challenges they may face. Full acceptance in loved ones allows them to travel any path and flourish into their ultimate potential.

In Pirkei Avot 5:16, Rabban Gamliel explains a love without dependency never goes away. External factors of beauty, money, and prestige, rationalize and give purpose to our choices as to who we care about. Yet all of these are conditions placed on the relationship which can change. Gavi searched and sought the soul in his friends and family. External motives did not gain his interest, rather he focused on the essential qualities. He put value in his relationships and I believe this effort expresses the truest intentions of Gavi's strongest asset, a lion heart. He was a friend to all who knew him and received them humbly. Rabban Yochanan asked his students to find a path which is good for a person to follow and found the best answer in Elazar ben Arach. Rabi Elazar answered "having a good heart. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai explains a good heart leads to a good eye, a good friend, a good neighbor and good planning.

Gavi took the teachings of The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson to heart. Gavi recognized the Rebbe's dedication in his life to empower his chassidim, friends and the individual in effort to prepare the world for the geula, unifying the physical world with the spiritual realm.

I thought the reader would appreciate another view. Gavi left me cherishing many good memories. I find myself often longing for more and never satisfied. So essential to Gavi was how deeply he cared for others. One of my daughters shared with me what she misses most. Everyday, Gavi would take her aside and ask how her day was. "He would

look right at me and listen carefully. He filled me with confidence". So, I thought it would be strengthening to listen to friends share and recollect their time with Gavi. Here are two special friends and their reflections and stories.

Moshe Bell: I was Gavi's shliach in yeshiva. Gavi was a real neshama and I never met anyone in my life like him. I feel extremely honored to have known him. The first time we met he was walking down the street with two friend's, Yehuda and Hillel Goodman. Gavi came towards me, tapped my shoulder and gave a warm greeting, saying "Hay, what's good"? Immediately I could tell he was connected to something higher. His greeting was genuine, not about making a good impression nor



was he shy, he knew himself and was a real person. He had amazing energy about him. Anyone who knew him understands this exuberance, especially unusual for a person so young. In Chassidus, we learn about the power of Ein Sof, this infinite light. Gavi was connected to this powerful infinite light all the time. He was in a higher realm which most people are not connected to. Extremely humble, he did not appreciate compliments. There is so much he could take credit for but Gavi did not. Wherever he travelled, he brought this incredible energy and vibrancy felt by everyone. Everyone loved him. He could have had a name for himself as a real genius. He explained to me, if I give my 100% I can do anything. I knew him and understood that he really could. I believe he could have been a Rosh Yeshiva or a CEO of an impressive company. He had an amazing head. Even so, he kept his abilities quiet and didn't want people to know who he really was and how much he knew. I learned with him often and regularly. He would take in everything I would say in a whirl of energy and give over right away from memory. Later, he would remind me of the lessons and over time I realized he knew more than me. Gavi was extremely good at math. Once, an acquaintance shared a challenging math equation he was working on and Gavi gave the answer in 43 seconds. I turned around to make sure no one else realized he knew it. He read often, including newspapers, something no one else did. As young as Gavi was he wanted to write a book. In yeshiva I realized Gavi had a good head for learning and offered a deal with him to learn Mesechta

Kiddushin in two and a half months by heart. That is a total of one hundred sixty five pages. As an incentive, I offered him a prize option valued up to seven hundred dollars. I told him to come back to me with a list of prizes. He did come back to me and gave me a list of seven books offered on amazon, each cost approximately a dollar and fifty cents. Amazed it didn't make sense to me this was all he wanted and a bit later I realized he did not care for material things. He would sit with the gemara, music playing in his headphones, learning from a gemara without translations. As Gavi was learning, he was taking notes and talking to me, talking to friends, internalizing, and then gave over by heart all he learned to me. Gavi wanted to live a simple life, he would say to me and that is why he kept himself concealed. Rather, he lived to make people smile. In a room with Gavi, you could be certain, the atmosphere brought the most amazing vibes. Travelling with him gave a feeling of security and magnetic energy. Uniquely, I have never encountered a person like him in my life. He wanted to give this good energy to people and he did not care if they were lower or higher people. He wanted to share what he was experiencing with everyone around him. This is a true Baal Shem Tov yid. A Baal Shem Tov yid is someone who only feels Hashem and loves everyone without limits. To reflect this quality, I remember Chanukah 2019. Our yeshiva journeyed to an army base. The trip was not well planned and we were stuck, squished into a van without proper seating for three hours in traffic. When we finally arrived it was late. The group of bochorim were tired and drained and the soldiers felt uncomfortable. Each stayed separated until Gavi broke the silence with dancing, uplifting the energy and smiling at each person. The pace changed and quickly the vibe transformed. This was my most special trip to mitzvoyim. Gavi gave of himself fully to make others happy and did a great job of it.

On a cold and rainy night, yeshiva friends were standing outside when Gavi noticed and greeted them. He asked if anyone needs something and a boy asked for pizza. Gavi ran out in the cold and rain to buy a pie of pizza with his own money. When Gavi gave the pizza to the kid, he just smiled. Gavi had this infinite-like power where he would just wake up and spring to go jogging with friends. Anytime I would ask him to learn as a chavrusa he would come straight away or join by phone, even late at night he was ready to learn. This was a pure love of Torah.

Once Gavi told me he researched and he found Hashem a few years ago. Teenagers have questions and when Gavi told me this, many of my questions went away and I was assured Hashem was true. Fridays he would send me voice notes wishing a Good Shabbos and I could hear the Hashem in him. Many times Gavi said he wanted to go and live in a quiet place. Now, I understand what he meant. A special neshama with a special mission in this world, this is Gavi.

to be continued...

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Thank you!

Good To Know

Ethics of The Fathers is traditionally studied in the spring between Passover and Shavuot, one chapter each Shabbat

Yehudah ben Teima chapter 5:20

Very little is known about Yehudah ben Teima. According to some he was Rabbi Yehudah ben Dama, one of the Ten Martyrs.

He authored the following teachings:

Love Heaven, fear Heaven, tremble and rejoice with all the mitzvot.

If you harm your fellow in a minor way-consider it major. If you helped him in a major way-consider it minor.

If your fellow helped you in a minor way-consider it major. If he harmed you in a major way-consider it minor.

Accustom yourself to accept hardship and to overlook insult.

Yehudah ben Teima said: "Be brazen as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion, to fulfill the will of your Father in heaven."

"May it be your will, L-rd our G-d and G-d of our fathers, that the Holy Temple be rebuilt speedily in our days."

At first glance, it appears to be a prayerful appeal to the Almighty to send Moshiach. One wonders what it is doing in the middle of the twentieth Mishnah of the fifth chapter of the Ethics, following the injunction to "Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, fleeting as a deer, and mighty as a lion, to do the will of your Father in Heaven." But Rabbi Yehudah ben Teima is instructing us on a truth that lies at the heart of the Jew's belief in Moshiach and the Redemption.

To believe in Moshiach is not merely to believe that he will someday come. It is to expect him on a daily, hourly, and momentary basis. It means that no matter what we are discussing, the subject turns to Moshiach at the slightest provocation.

It means that while discussing the need to be "fleet-footed" in fulfilling G-d's will, one is struck with an immense yearning to instantaneously be able to fulfill all of the mitzvot-so many not applicable- until the Jewish people are settled in the Holy Land with the Temple standing. It means that in the midst of studying a chapter of Jewish law, a plea erupts from the depths of one's heart, "May it be Your will that the Holy Temple be rebuilt speedily in our days."

Maimonides enumerates the Thirteen (basic) Principles of the Jewish faith: Beginning with aspects pertaining with belief in G-d and with the final two, dealing with the era of Moshiach; belief that a leader will arise who will bring the entire world to recognize and serve the creator, ushering in an era of universal peace and Divine perfection. What exactly is a "basic principle" in Judaism? More than a required set of beliefs to follow, there are thirteen principles which are yesodot, "foundational". Inasmuch as the foundation of a building is indispensable, and without the foundation an entire edifice would collapse, these basic principles are foundational to the entire Torah.

In the words of Maimonides: "*The Twelfth Principle* concerns the era of Moshiach: to believe and to validate his coming, not to think that it is something of the future-even if he tarries- one should await him." This explains why belief in Moshiach entails not only the conviction that he will "eventually" arrive, but the anticipation of his imminent coming.

Of course, man has been granted freedom of choice. But the choice between good and evil is not a choice of what to be-one cannot change their quintessential self-but the choice of how to act. Man can choose to express his true essence in his behavior or choose to suppress it. So, while man may choose how to act in any given moment, the very nature of humanity, and of G-d's creation as a whole, mandates that it not only can, but will, attain the perfection of the era of Moshiach.

Moshiach means that the true nature of creation will ultimately come to light. That "evil" is but the shallow distortion of this truth, and has no enduring reality. That man will free himself of hate and ignorance. That every human being will fulfill their divinely ordained role as outlined in the Torah, transforming the world into a place suffused with the wisdom, goodness and perfection, of its creator.

Excerpt from an essay "For Real" by Yanki Tauber

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The Cosmic Roots of Marriage

Kabbalah of Marriage
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Love

Love is a paradox. Many paradoxes, in fact. It is the most altruistic and the most selfish of human emotions. The most giving and the most fulfilling. The most spiritual and the most physical. The most natural and the most irrational. The source of our deepest pleasures and our deepest agonies.

We call it an "emotion," yet love is much more than a feeling. Everywhere we look — nature, human society, physics — the giver/recipient equation is the very math of existence. Yet, the math doesn't add up. One plus one never equals two. In love, one plus one equals one. And also, three.

The key to love is selflessness and the fulfillment it brings. As counter-intuitive as it may sound, the ostensibly self-consumed, egotistical human being can gain no greater satisfaction than through giving and committing. The reason? The soul. The soul's selflessness is as great as the body's selfishness.

Perhaps the ability to truly love is the area in life most profoundly impacted by the teachings of Kabbalah. The more in tune a person is with the soul, the greater the capacity for pure love, unsullied by ulterior motives and ego.

Love is the language of the soul. Without an understanding of the soul, we are breaking our teeth, speaking with a horrible accent, and constantly confusing our verbs for nouns. Kabbalah teaches us the language of the soul and allows us to unleash its unlimited capacity for love.

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