



The El Paso
CHABAD TIMES

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The 10th day of Shevat, Shabbat, January 23, marks the 71st anniversary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's leadership. It was on this day in the year 5710-1950, in the shadows of the devastation of the Holocaust, that the Previous Rebbe passed on and the Rebbe assumed the mantle leadership of the Chabad Lubavitch movement and started an unprecedented revolution, changing world Jewry forever.

Much has been written about the Rebbe's life and eternal impact of the world. The army of shluchim (emissaries) today numbering over 5,000 in literally every corner of the globe is the greatest and most obvious testament to the Rebbe's continued leadership and inspiration to so many. Despite the enormous responsibilities of creating and nurturing this mammoth operation, the Rebbe always remained focused on the needs and great potential of each individual.

Spend a few moments reflecting on how you can do more good every day. Give charity before Shabbat begins. Treat others with respect. Commit yourself to observing another mitzvah. Dedicate more time to Torah study. Because each act of kindness makes this world a better place and hastens the arrival of Moshiach when goodness, peace and freedom will abound for all.

To learn more about the Rebbe, visit TheRebbe.org



El Paso County Judge Ricardo Samaniego lit the shamash on the giant Menorah in front of the Chabad Lubavitch Center for Jewish Life on the first night of Chanukah. The event was broadcast live and covered by local media.



Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg and Mr. Adam Frank lit the giant Menorah at the Chanukah Family Festival; a drive-in celebration featuring the Clan Tinkers Family Circus at the West Towne Marketplace, with over 70 cars in attendance.

Join Torah Classes on Zoom!

Tanya: Sun. 7:30am
From the Rebbe: Sun. 3:30pm
Talmud: Tues. 12:00pm
Parsha: Tues. 7:30pm
Women's Class: Wed. 7:00pm

www.chabadelpaso.com/zoom



Your Purim Guide
February 25 - 26
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The Rabbi’s Message



Seventy years ago, on the 10th of Shevat, (this year it falls on Shabbat January 23) the Rebbe held a Chassidic Farbrengen (gathering) to observe the first Yartzeit since the passing of his father-in-law, the previous Rebbe.

At this event the Rebbe

formally assumed leadership of the Chabad Lubavitch movement and during the night he said: “In America it is customary to make a statement upon assuming a new position. My statement is that there are 3 loves in Judaism: the love of G-d, the love of Torah and the love for our fellow Jews. It’s crucial to appreciate that all 3 loves are interdependent.”

Love for our creator can only be realized through passionate Torah study, which in turn can only be wholesome when accompanied by a genuine love for every Jew. To share the beauty of Torah with another and to ensure the message reaches every corner of the earth.

These loves are meant to make our world a better place, a more

Three Loves

righteous place and a space where the will of G-d is realized all the time.

In Chassidic parlance this is called making a home for G-d in this world. Home is where you are most comfortable and expressed, so we need to make our world a place where G-d is most comfortable and expressed.

Every one of us is crucial to accomplishing this global and historic task. Each one of us has a mission no one else can accomplish, and the entire world is waiting for each one of us to do our part through Torah study and Mitzvah observance.

There are always givers and takers, and there is no greater gratification than to be a giver.

When we fulfill our unique mission we enhance the entire world. It can be difficult and exhausting, but there is no greater joy than contributing to the world what only we can.

As we celebrate 70 years from the historic day that the Rebbe made the “statement” of his leadership, let us absorb the message of the 3 loves and ensure that the entire world becomes brighter and more joyful through encouraging everyone in fulfilling their mission in bringing more goodness and kindness to our world - one Mitzvah at a time.

Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg

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From Our Mail Box

While I was in the waiting area at ... waiting for the Covid vaccination, I was thinking about how blessed I was, especially the past 10-11 years. So much has transpired, all wonderful to enrich my life spiritually and physically.

I have no doubt that Hashem is allowing me to be able to do more, learn more and be a positive influence for others. While I realize that our lifespan is limited, I feel that more good years are ahead.

Thank you for all you have done for me and you know you can always call on me.

.....

Thank you and Shainy for your generosity. Covid has created unconventional times for us, but with the support of you and others, we were still able to have a beautiful Bris for our baby. For that alone we are forever grateful. Congratulations on your new addition as well.

.....

Thank you so much for the wonderful Shabbat Care Package. Beautifully done, as all Chabad El Paso does. My Shabbat will be extra special.

.....

Thank you for the Chanukah bag of treats. Thank you, Rabbi Greenberg, for your articles in the newspaper so maybe more people will understand our ancient and wonderful religion.

Best wishes for success, health & imparting wisdom in your new “home.”

.....

...Your classes have become very important to me. They inspire me and take me to even deeper depths of Judaism. Although I am usually quite a communicator, I felt speechless at the end of the 6 week classes [of the JLI course entitled Secrets of the Bible]. My eyes

were filled with tears, as I valued all I had learned, all you helped to illuminate in ways far beyond what I learned through years at temple or even from my parents.

I appreciate how you always paused each class to review, how you summed up, and with the last class how you reviewed everything and clearly tied it all together. It was profound for me, and I was left speechless.

For me you are definitely one of the gifts during the last 9 months of the pandemic, and for me a time of major isolation.

.....

Well, these classes [that you deliver on Sunday afternoon on Zoom] are so good. I certainly understand your comment some weeks ago that such talks by the Rebbe have been the central influence in your absorbing deep messages of Judaism that you can use as guidance on the path. These classes are certainly deepening my path.

.....

I used the link you sent this morning and listened carefully to the class from Tuesday evening. I appreciate how each class logically builds an understanding by adding detail to detail. There is a logical development of thought and connectedness to the details. And each class leads to a clear conclusion that includes practical application in each of our lives.

At this point I am anticipating that I will be able to join via Zoom to the JLI 6 classes beginning in February and hopefully some of the Tuesday and Sunday classes before that. Until then I appreciate access to the recordings.

.....

Thank you for sharing this [pre Shabbat] message with me. I shall read it many times to always remember the message.

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A Message

from the Lubavitcher Rebbe



Blessings and Greetings!

You write of your state of mind, in which you find it difficult to make decisions on any matter and remain in doubt as to whether you are doing as you ought, and so on.

In view of your upbringing, of which you write, there is certainly no need for me to emphasize the subject of Divine Providence, a fundamental principle in our faith and in our Torah, the Torah of Life. The meaning of this concept, hashgachah peratis, is straightforward — that G-d, Who created and directs the world, watches over every man and woman,

not only in public matters, but also in his private affairs. This concept enables us to understand the principle of trusting in the One Who conducts the world and Who is the essence of good, for accordingly, everything is also for the good, plainly and simply.

Every believer’s mind, too, understands that the first direct result of this trust is that there is no worry and no confusion. For when a person is weighing in his mind what he should decide and how he should act, at that time, too, G-d is watching over him and helping him, helping all those who desire what is good and

No Need to Worry

upright. And when one conducts himself according to the directives of the Torah, this is the good path, and such conduct in itself helps a person to go ahead with all his affairs in a way that is good for him.

As in all matters of faith, the above-mentioned principle likewise requires neither intellectual argumentation nor profound and complex philosophical proofs. For every individual of the Children of Israel, man or woman, senses in his soul that he truly has faith — even when he is not thinking about whether this principle is correct or whether it is a rational imperative. As the Sages affirm, all Jews are “believers, the descendants of believers.” This means that the faith that is within them, both in their own right and as a heritage from their forebears who were believers, and all the spiritual properties that became theirs in their own right and also as a heritage, — this faith and these spiritual properties are utterly strong within them all. This is self-explanatory.

I hope that these lines of mine, limited as they are in quantity, will suffice to rouse your thoughts and to guide you toward the truest and innermost point within your own self — that in your

innermost soul you most definitely trust that G-d watches over you. All you need to do is to bring forth this thought from within your soul to your day-to-day life. After all, “there is nothing that stands in the way of the will.”

As was said above, the way to accomplish this is not by profound intellectual debate, but by relying on your inner feeling that you place your trust in G-d — not by seeking out doubts, nor by creating problematic queries that are not at all problematic and in fact do not trouble you. Averting your attention from all of this will no doubt help you to rid yourself easily of all the confusing factors that have been spoken of.

It would be advisable that before the morning prayers on weekdays, a few times a week, you set aside a few cents to be donated for tzedakah — preferably on Mondays and Thursdays and on the eve of Shabbos. And it goes without saying that such an undertaking should be made without a formal vow.

With blessings for a strengthening of your bitachon and for good news regarding all the above,

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Chanukah Family Festival



From the Rabbis' Blog

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Dedicated by **Northeast Feed**



Rabbi Levi Greenberg

Remember when local schools announced they were closing for 2 weeks in March 2020 due to the mysterious novel Coronavirus? Many thought COVID would disrupt our lives for a very short time but here we are 10 months later with most local schools barely resuming in-person instruction and the future is anyone's guess.

Imagine the school and business closures only lasted 2 weeks as initially announced, you can be sure we would have forgotten the virus ever existed by now, just like most people can't tell you when the

swine flu pandemic happened. But after 10 months of unprecedented global disruption, you can be sure the COVID era will be seared into the collective memory of humanity for a very long time.

The weekly Torah reading these past few weeks describes the story of the exodus from Egypt and specifically the ten plagues G-d inflicted on the Egyptians for enslaving the Jews.

Many who are familiar with the story of Exodus don't realize that more than ten months elapsed from when Moshe and Aharon first demanded Pharaoh let the people go until they actually left. Each plague was a one month procedure. For three weeks Moshe warned them of the impending plague and each one lasted a week.

Only after enduring miraculous harassment for close to a year, Pharaoh finally snapped and chased the Jews out of the land in mere hours, which presents the glaring question: Why could G-d not whisk the Jews out of

Egypt within hours of Moshe arriving with the promise of redemption?

Imagine Jews in Auschwitz were told that G-d would first patiently afflict their oppressors for 10 months and only then take them out of the barbed wires. They would surely forgo seeing their murderous captors suffer and prefer to get out of there immediately. Why did the exodus from Egypt need to happen over such a long period of time?

The 10 plagues were not just a punishment for the Egyptians' sadistic behavior. They were designed to disprove their heathen ideology and prove to them and to the rest of the world that G-d is in control of the universe. Had the Jews been whisked away from slavery in a matter of hours, days or even weeks, it would have been big news for a while but forgotten almost as quickly as it happened. Only because Egypt endured more than 10 months of divine harassment in such a public way did the knowledge of G-d's omnipotence remain seared in

humanity's collective memory forever.

The COVID era is unique in the fact that people everywhere experienced its disruptions personally. But aside from the devastating pain, loss and financial ruin it wrought, it also revealed the deep reservoirs of perseverance and goodness we all possess. The outpouring of concern for neighbors, friends, community members and complete strangers is simultaneously astonishing and heartening. Many utilized the many extra hours suddenly available because of the closures to increase their Torah study and try out new Mitzvahs, discovering a new appreciation for their Judaism.

These past 10 months will reshape our lives and the world we live in for generations to come and it is up to us to choose which part of the experience will make its most indelible mark. Let's ramp up the unique positivity we can generate specifically during this once-in-a-lifetime situation and ensure that we can be proud of this era's lasting effects.

17th Annual Raffle

Dear Friend,

Celebrating 34 years of community and friendship, we are filled with a sense of pride and gratitude. Pride in the beautiful community we have become and gratitude to you for partnering with us in this revolutionary endeavor. Your commitment and support is what enables us to reach out to every Jew in the region regardless of social status, background or affiliation.

At Chabad we aim to facilitate the spiritual growth of every Jew. To provide opportunities to discover our glorious heritage, the beauty of Torah and mitzvot, at a comfortable pace and in a non-judgmental environment. During these challenging times we have continued our programming online and in socially distant settings to ensure that every Jew have the opportunity to continue to grow in their Judaism and feel part of the community.

We are hosting our annual fundraising raffle to help support the many ongoing activities. Please participate by purchasing one or more tickets and become a partner in ensuring a vibrant Jewish future in El Paso. The grand prize is two round trip tickets to Israel (\$3,000.00).

One (1) ticket - \$100.00 | Three (3) Tickets - \$250.00
The raffle drawing will be held on February 15, 2021.

Chabad remains dedicated to strengthening Jewish identity, unity and education in El Paso.

With much appreciation for your support,

Rabbi Yisrael and Chana Greenberg
Rabbi Levi and Shaina Greenberg

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Purim – The Story, Celebration and Customs

Danger In Exile

Jewish morale was at an all-time low. The Temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed, the nation conquered, and for almost 70 years, had been dispersed in foreign lands. The prophesied end of Exile had not materialized, and the blight of assimilation had set in. Just then, the enemy arose to carry out his evil plans. This time it was Haman. Descended from the Jew-hating tribe of Amalek, Haman devised his scheme to solve ‘the Jewish problem’ once and for all, by annihilating every Jew, men, women and children, throughout the world, in a single day.

Rallying The Jews

And it almost worked. Were it not for Mordechai. A descendent of King Saul, and advisor to King Achashverosh, Mordechai sensed the danger. Donning sackcloth and ashes, he went to the gate of the palace, crying aloud, rallying the Jews to return to Torah. His niece, Queen Esther, called for him. He told her that she must go to the King and plead for her people. Officially in disfavor, she feared to go, but saw that she had no choice. She undertook a three-day fast of penitence, and called upon the whole Jewish people to do likewise. Then she went to the King.

Victory

It is a story of great courage and self-sacrifice--first and foremost by Queen Esther and Mordechai, and ultimately by the whole Jewish nation. For throughout the duration of the whole year, not one single Jew chose to convert, even to save his life. The nation was awakened to a whole-hearted return to Torah and mitzvot, and throughout the year strengthened their faith and observance. And in the merit of this, they were able to rise up against their enemies and destroy them, on the 13th of Adar, the very day destined for the “final solution.” The Jewish people had shown their true character. They had earned the right to leave Exile, to return to the Holy Land, and rebuild the Temple. As it was in those days, so may it be with us today. Each year in fulfilling the special mitzvot of the Purim festival, we reaffirm our commitment to the eternal values of the Torah... and we share in the very same merit that redeemed the Jewish people in the days of Mordechai and Esther.

Purim - Then and Now

One of the Purim mitzvot is the reading of the Megillah - the Scroll of Esther, in which the miracle of Purim is recounted. The Talmud tells us that “whoever reads the Megillah backwards does not fulfill his obligation.” Our Sages explain that “backwards” does not only mean in reverse order; it also means that whoever reads the Megillah merely as ancient history has missed the point. The Purim story is directly relevant to our contemporary world. As the Megillah itself tells us, that when we celebrate Purim each year, the miraculous events of Purim are “remembered and reenacted” in our lives.

Haman, Then and Now

One does not have to look far to find Haman’s

modern-day heirs. Now, as then, there are evil schemers who seek to scapegoat the Jewish people and - Heaven forfend - to erase us from the face of the earth. Each time they rise up to destroy us, their schemes are foiled by the miraculous Hand of G-d. The most striking example in recent times was the Persian Gulf War that ended victoriously on Purim, 5751 (1991).

From Redemption to Redemption

Throughout our history, we have seen miracles. Despite centuries upon centuries of persecution, we have survived and flourished, by the Grace of G-d. Yet we have remained in exile for nearly 2,000 years, hoping and praying for the final and complete Redemption - the Redemption that will end suffering and exile forever. May the observance of Purim be a precursor to the coming of Moshiach, our Righteous Redeemer, whose imminent arrival will bring about a better life for all the nations of the world.

Purim Mitzvot

Here are the details about the Mitzvot of Purim, how to do them and their significance.

1) Listen to the Megillah

Listen to the reading of the Megillah (the Scroll of Esther) twice: once on Purim eve, Thursday night, February 25, and again on Purim day, Friday February 26.

To properly fulfill the mitzvah, it is crucial to hear every single word of the Megillah.

At certain points in the reading where Haman’s name is mentioned, it is customary to twirl graggers (Purim noisemakers) and stamp one’s feet to “eradicate” his evil name. Tell the children that Purim is the only time when it’s a mitzvah to make noise!

2) Give to the Needy

Matanot La’evyonim

Concern for the needy is a year-round responsibility; but on Purim it is a special mitzvah to remember the poor.

Give charity to at least two, (but preferably more) needy individuals on Purim day, February 26.

The mitzvah is best fulfilled by giving directly to the needy. If, however, you cannot find poor people, place at least two coins into a charity box. As with the other mitzvot of Purim, even small children should fulfill this mitzvah.

3) Send Food Portions to Friends

Mishloach Manot

On Purim we emphasize the importance of Jewish unity and friendship by sending gifts of food to friends.

On Purim day, February 26, send a gift of at least two kinds of ready-to-eat foods (e.g., pastry, fruit, beverage), to at least one friend on Purim day. Men should send to men and women to women. It is preferable that the gifts are delivered via a third party. Children, in addition to sending their own gifts of food to their friends, make enthusiastic messengers.

4) Eat, Drink and Be Merry

Purim should be celebrated with a special festive meal on Purim Day, at which family and friends gather together to rejoice in the Purim spirit. It is a mitzvah to drink wine or other inebriating drinks at this meal.

5) Special Prayers (Al Hanissim, Torah reading)

On Purim we include the Al HaNissim prayer, which describes the Purim miracle, in the evening, morning and afternoon prayers, as well as in the Grace After Meals. In the morning service there is a special reading from the Torah Scroll in the synagogue (Exodus 17:8-16).

Purim Customs:

Masquerades and Hamantashen

A time-honored Purim custom is for children to dress up and disguise themselves - an allusion to the fact that the miracle of Purim was disguised in natural garments. This is also the significance behind a traditional Purim food, the hamantash - a pastry whose filling is hidden within a three-cornered crust.

Pre/Post Purim Observances:

Torah Reading of “Zachor”

On the Shabbat before Purim a special reading is held in the synagogue of the Torah section called Zachor (“Remember”), in which we are enjoined to remember the deeds of (the nation of) Amalek (Haman’s ancestor) who sought to destroy the Jewish people.

The Fast of Esther

To commemorate the prayer and fasting that the Jewish people held during the Purim story, we fast on the day before Purim. This year the fast is observed on Thursday, February 25. The fast begins at 5:21 am and ends at 6:26 pm.

The “Half Coins”

(Machatzit Hashekel)

It is a tradition to give three coins in “half” denominations - e.g., three half-dollar coins - to charity, to commemorate the half-shekel that each Jew contributed as his share in the communal offerings in the time of the Holy Temple. This custom, usually performed in the synagogue, is done on the afternoon of the “Fast of Esther,” or before the reading of the Megillah.

Shushan Purim

In certain ancient walled cities - Jerusalem is the primary example - Purim is observed not on the 14th of Adar (the date of its observance everywhere else) but on the 15th of Adar. This is to commemorate that fact that in the ancient walled city of Shushan, where the battles between the Jews and their enemies extended for an additional day, the original Purim celebration was held not on the 14th but on the 15th of Adar.

The 15th of Adar is thus called “Shushan Purim” and is a day of joy and celebration also in those places where it is not observed as the actual Purim.

Celebrate Purim In Style!

Megillah Reading with Social Distancing

Thursday, February 25
6:30pm & 8:00pm

Friday, February 26
7:30am | 12:00pm | 4:30pm

at Chabad Lubavitch - 6516 Escondido Drive

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