

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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The Hiding Wife

The Prophets speak of the bond between G-d and Israel as a marriage, and of Israel's sins as a wife's betrayal of her husband. Following this model, the sages of the Talmud see the Sotah -- the "wayward wife" discussed in our Parshah -- as the prototype of all transgression of the Divine will. The Chassidic masters further investigate this prototype, finding in the particulars of the laws of Sotah insight into the deeper significance of transgression.

The Sotah is not a woman who is known to have actually committed adultery, but rather one whose behavior makes her suspect of having done so. Her faithfulness to her husband must therefore be established before the marriage relationship can be resumed.

A woman becomes a Sotah through a two-stage process: "jealousy" (kinui) and "hiding" (setirah). The first stage occurs when a husband suspects his wife of an improper relationship with another man and warns her, before two witnesses, not to be found alone with that individual. If the woman disregards this warning and proceeds to seclude herself with this person, she becomes a Sotah, forbidden to live with her husband unless she agrees to be tested with the "bitter waters." The woman is warned that if she has indeed committed adultery, the "bitter waters" will kill her; if, however, she has not actually been unfaithful, the drinking of these waters exonerates her completely. In fact, the Torah promises that, having subjected herself to this ordeal, her marriage will now be even more rewarding and fruitful than before her "going astray."

As applied to the marriage between G-d and His people: Israel can never truly betray her G-d; at worst, she can only be as a Sotah, a wife whose behavior gives the appearance of unfaithfulness and causes a temporary rift between herself and her husband. The process by which this happens was begun at Mount Sinai, where G-d, like a "jealous" husband, warned: "Do not have any other gods before Me." But no matter how far the Jewish soul strays, she never truly gives herself to these "other gods"; she is only "hiding" from G-d, indulging the illusion that there exists a dimension of reality that is outside of G-d's all-pervading presence and providence.

Even this she can do only because G-d has "set her up" to it by His "jealousy." In the case of the Sotah, simply secluding herself with another man does not make her a "wayward wife" -- unless such seclusion has been preceded by a warning from her husband; in other words, it is the husband's "jealousy" which makes her act a betrayal, not the act in and of itself. By the same token, a soul's "hiding herself" from G-d is possible only because G-d has allowed for this possibility by proclaiming "Do not have any other gods before Me," thereby giving credence to the illusion that there can be anything other. Were it not for this Divine contrivance, sin -- that is, a denial of the Divine reality -- would not be possible.

To continue the analogy: When the Jewish people act as a Sotah, they are tested with the bitter waters of galut (thus: "Because of our sins we were exiled from our land"). Indeed, two thousand years of exile have proven that, despite all appearances, the Jewish soul is inseparable from her G-d. The Jew may be persecuted for centuries, may assimilate for generations, but ultimately there comes a moment of truth, a moment which lays bare the question of who and what we are stripped of all distortion and self-delusion, and our innate faithfulness to G-d comes to light.

And like the bitter waters of the Sotah, galut is more than just a test. It is a "descent for the sake of ascent," a crisis in the marriage which ultimately deepens and enhances it by unearthing deep wells of loyalty and commitment which remain untapped in an unchallenged relationship. The trials of galut call forth the quintessential powers of the Jewish soul, intensifying the bond between G-d and His people. Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; adapted by Yanki Tauber - chabad.org

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When a man or woman utters a Nazarite vow... he shall abstain from new and old wine... grape beverages, grapes and raisins (Numbers 2:2-3) The laws of a Nazarite teach us a most significant principle about our belief in the coming of Moshiach: Torah law decrees that if one declares on a weekday, "I undertake to become a Nazarite on the day that Moshiach will come," he is bound by it from that very moment. (If, however, he made his vow on a Shabbat or festival, it becomes operative on the next day, as it is uncertain whether Moshiach will or will not arrive on a Shabbat or yom tov.)

This clearly shows that Moshiach can arrive at any moment, as we say in our daily prayers, "Every day we hope for Your salvation." (Peninei HaGeula) (From: L'Chaim 5755, #371) - lchaimweekly.org

Pirkei Avos

"The world stands upon three things" (Avos 1:2) The word for "world" in Hebrew is 'olam', which is cognate to the word helem'-concealment'. The world was created in such a way that G-liness is buried and concealed within it. Only by removing the concealment will the light of G-dliness hidden within it be revealed.

Every person is obligated to say, "The world (ha'olam) was created for me." Do not read this as "the world," but "the concealment" (ha'helem). Every person has the mission and obligation to remove the concealment through the service of G-d.

How does he do this? Regarding this, Shimon HaTzaddik used to say: "The world stands upon three things...." The concealment remains until removed by three things-Torah, Divine service, and acts of kindness. Then the inner light is revealed. Rebbe Harayatz, Ma'amarim 5700, p.160 (Pirkei Avos in the Light of Chassidus by Yekutiel Green) - www.ascent.org.il

Listening To Life's Messages

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher RebbRabbi Menachem M. Schneerson
by Rabbi Dovid Shraga Polter

Dry Cleaner: A garment, before being worn, is completely clean, smoothly ironed, and lies properly on the wearer. After it is worn for a while, it usually becomes creased, dusty or stained. Of course, one does not throw away the garment. Rather it is taken to a dry cleaner to have it restored to its original condition.

To treat the garment, the cleaner will place it in a machine and then add a hot liquid and various chemical agents to remove the dirt and grime. Afterwards, he will iron the garment by pressing it with a weight, and the garment will once again be "as good as new."

From this process, we gain insights into the soul (neshamah) of a Jew. When G-d gives a neshamah to a Jew, that soul is pure, "ironed" smooth and a perfect fit. As we say in our daily morning prayers: "The soul You have given me is pure."

With time, however, as the soul becomes involved in worldly matters, and if it is not used to fulfill the will of G-d, it tends to become "creased." Dirt may cling to it if the person neglects a mitzvah or commits a forbidden act.

Whatever the case may be, Torah teaches us that we must not despair over the condition of the soul and its fitness to sustain the individual's spiritual life. To restore the soul to its original state, we must place it in a conducive environment, and infuse it with the warmth of Torah and mitzvos.

The "warmth" must also be "moist," so that the soul will cling to all that is holy. This can be accomplished through heartfelt prayer, as it is written: "Pour out your heart like water," and through concentrated Torah study, as stated: "All who thirst go for water" and "There is no water but Torah." To complete the spiritual cleansing process, other ingredients must be added, such as generous contributions to charity, keeping kosher and observing Shabbos.

Then, if a person places the "weight" of Torah observance upon himself, which initially may seem a heavy burden, it will prove not to be a hindrance but an enhancement - a process that will "iron out" the neshamah and return it to its original unblemished condition. (Igros Kodosh of the Rebbe, Vol. 4, p. 335) - sichosinenglish.org

In putting on the tallit-katan in the morning, with "clean" hands¹ and in a place where a b'racha may be said, recite al mitzvat tzitzit; (L'hitateif b'tzitzit is only said for a large tallit that has the size for "enwrapment.") If one may not say a b'racha when putting on a tallit-katan, then before davening, hold the four tzitzit and say the b'racha then. However, if one is wearing a large tallit as well, no b'racha is said for the tallit-katan. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, SIVAN 14)

*Souls wait up in heaven for thousands of years, longing for their moment upon this earth to do another soul a favor.
Angels burn with jealousy each time a human being turns himself around and creates beauty in this world.
Heaven is nice, but on the best things, earth has exclusive rights.*

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

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY 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 Sukka (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	Chasidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

There will no class next week on Monday and Tuesday, May 27-28.

DAILY MINYONIM

**Shacharis: Mon -Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 7:55 PM**

SHABBOS PARSHAS NASO
May 24, 2002

Candlelighting: Los Angeles 7:36 PM
Friday Mincha: 7:50 PM
Early Minyan: 6:15 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:18 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent
- Pirkei Avos 6:40 PM
- Mincha 7:25 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:36 PM

Kiddush is being sponsored by the Sussman Family in memory of Mr. Sussman's family's yartzheit.

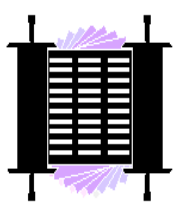
Seuda Shlishit is being sponsored by Mrs. Margaret Novak-Dattel in memory of her family's yartzheit.

Yartzeits: Mordechai Leib, Esther Shantzi, Avrohom Meir, Sara, Dovid Hirsh, Goodel, & Eliezer Neuman - Sivan 14, Yehuda Salzberg - Sivan 19, Elimech, Esther & Kraindel Sussman - Sivan 20.

Happy Birthday to Sara Meisel, Chaya Gittel Lipsker, Levi Hirsh Isaacs and Ahuva Esther Graff.

Happy Anniversary to Yossi & Gila Lipsker.

GOOD SHABBOS!



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