

#14

*Soul Sisters Singing*

**Inheritor of 999 Villages  
Leaves All For Torah!**

*Esther Malka*

**S**havuot is coming!

And on this Yom Tov, it's customary to read the Book of Ruth, the story of the Moabite princess who accepted upon herself Hashem's Torah, just as the Jewish People did at Har Sinai. Reading her story helps us re-experience the feeling of willingly coming under the Yoke of the Hashem's Kingship. But now, I want to take the opportunity to tell the story of a another *Ger Tzedek*, one that always leaves me awestruck.

Many people are familiar with the story of the *Ger Tzedek* of Vilna, Count Valentín Potocki, otherwise known as Avraham ben Avraham, *zichrono tzadik levracha* (the remembrance of a tzadik is a blessing). This righteous Ger gave up his life rather than return to the idolatrous practices he had shunned upon embracing the Torah, only a short time before. Because he refused to return to Catholicism, he was killed by the church on the second day of Shavuot. May his memory protect us.

Who was Avraham ben Avraham, Count Potocki?

For those who haven't heard of his story— or even just to refresh our memories— here's a brief summary of his amazing, short life. After that, be'ezrat Hashem, I will tell over a few short stories about him, that are not as well-known, but are equally amazing.

Valentín Potocki was born in 1700 to an extremely wealthy Polish noble family. His father owned 999 villages. The family were supporters of the Jesuit movement, and sent Valentin, their only son, to study for the priesthood at the age of 16. There he met a fellow student who became his best friend, named Boris Zarembo.

Valentín was an intense student who took things very seriously. As a boy, growing up in Vilna, every Saturday he had felt an inexplicable restlessness. Now, his soul continued with this restlessness, dissatisfied with what he was being taught in the Catholic seminary.

Our vision is to create a connected group of spiritually seeking Torah committed women who continue to learn from, share and support one another in their lifelong journey to deepen their relationship with Hashem.



**Rabbi Coffman**  
Every Day Precious

**Rebb. Esther Hochstader**  
Na'aseh V'nishma  
Meron Response

**Rebb. Devorah Fastag**  
Importance of Eretz Yisroel

**Avishag Faynberg**  
United for Torah



"The only extreme you should have is balance."

**Rebb. Shira Smiles**  
*Mishpacha - 19 Adar 5781*

For instance, he quickly perceived that the teachings of the church were not in agreement with the teachings of the “Old Testament”, or what is known by Jews as the Tanach. There were many discrepancies, which only caused Valentin to search further for the Truth.

He found a Rabbi with whom to discuss his questions, and after awhile he realized the Torah was the Truth he was searching for. He contrived a plan through which he and Boris Zaremba could make their way to Amsterdam to convert. Valentin converted first, followed a few years later by Boris (who by then was married, and he and his family settled in Eretz Yisrael. But that’s a different story).

Now known as Avraham ben Avraham, Valentin threw himself into Torah study with a passion. After awhile he left Amsterdam, and made his way from country to country, eventually finding himself in a town near Vilna. No one knew who he really was, or connected him to the missing Valentin Potocki, whom the church had been searching for. There, in the town of Ilya near Vilna, Avraham spent all his days in a Bet Midrash learning Torah, and the local Jewish women brought him food to sustain him.

One day, some unruly children disturbed his learning in the shul, and when he reprimanded them, one of them complained to his father, who figured out who this unknown scholar really was— the missing son of Count Potocki— and, perhaps under the influence of anger and some strong drink, he reported him to the authorities, who came and arrested Avraham ben Avraham. They offered to let him go if only he would return to Catholicism, but of course he refused.

His parents were informed, and they came and tried to persuade him to return, and even brought him home—but he refused to give up his Jewish faith. They tried to save his life by attempting to have him declared insane, but no one believed this. His demeanor and words were supremely coherent. No one was able to out-argue him on Scripture or his beliefs. Thus, the Inquisition took him once again into their custody and although they tortured him (as only they knew how) they couldn’t shake his belief in the Truth.

No one could move the Ger Tzedek of Vilna from his belief in the One True Hashem, and so, he was condemned to be burned at the stake for being a heretic. On the second day of Shavuot, Avraham ben Avraham sanctified Hashem’s Name by dying for his belief in the One True Hashem.

### **He Hid in the Shadows to say Amen**

There is a blessing that is said by those giving up their lives Al Kiddush Hashem—“Baruch Hamekadesh Shemo B’rab-bim”. It is said that a famous rav who lived in Vilna at the time, hid in the shadows near the square where Avraham ben Avraham was to be burned (Hashem Yerachem aleinu) in order to be able to hear and say “Amen” when Avraham pronounced this blessing, because the one who answers “Amen” puts the final seal on the blessing, as it were. “Amen” means, “Yes, it is true!”.

The whole Jewish community of Vilna was in deep mourning for this great tzadik. They bribed the non-Jewish guard at the site of the execution, to release the ashes and two fingers that remained of the Holy Ger, to be buried there in the cemetery. The Vilna Gaon admired Avraham so much, that he requested to be buried next to him when his time would come.

To cap this inspiring saga, here are some vignettes I have gleaned over the years, which may not be as well-known.

Rav Eliyahu, the Vilna Gaon, befriended Avraham ben Avraham, and visited him while he was imprisoned by the Inquisition. When the Gaon once visited Avraham and found him weeping, he assumed he was weeping over his fate— but Avraham insisted this wasn’t the case. He was sad because he had never married and had no children or parents or siblings among the Jewish nation. This is very sad, indeed.

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The Vilna Gaon comforted him by quoting the verse in Yeshayahu (44:6): “I am first and I am last, and besides Me there is no G-d.” The Midrash states: “I am first — I have no father; I am last — I have no son.” The Gaon explained that “I am first — I have no father” means “I am the Father for those who have no father,” and “I am last — I have no son” means “I am better than 10 sons.” (Quoted here from “The Incredible Story of the Righteous Convert of Vilna” by Rabbi Menachem Levine, Aish HaTorah).

The Vilna Gaon offered to use his knowledge of various combinations of Holy Names, through which he would be able to save Avraham ben Avraham, but the latter declined. To give up his life for the Sanctification of Hashem’s Name, was his dearest wish and he wouldn’t give up this privilege for anything.

### **Last Question- Should I Walk Slower or Quicker**

The sad day came when the Ger Tzedek of Vilna was being led to his execution. His path to the town square led him past the Vilna Gaon’s home, and the Gaon was waiting by his window in order to give Avraham chizuk, strength. But Avraham had only one question: Should he walk quicker (in order to show his eagerness to fulfill this supreme mitzvah) or slower (to prolong his time on this world, since every minute on this world is a precious gift, not to be wasted)?

As Avraham approached the Gaon’s window, he called out, simply, “Faster or slower?”

To which the Gaon replied, “Faster!”, indicating that he deemed the willingness to do this supreme mitzvah was of paramount importance. And so the Ger Tzedek hastened his steps towards the execution square.

When he arrived and was placed on the platform to be burned, the executioner looked at the Ger Tzedek’s face flaming with love for Hashem, and realized for the first time that he was a very holy man. He became frightened, and called out, “Are you going to take revenge on us, when you reach the Higher World, for what we are about to do to you?”

To which Avraham replied, “Let me tell you something. When I was a child, and used to make little men out of clay together with other little boys, one time another boy destroyed all my little clay figures. I became very angry and shouted, that when I would grow up to become the powerful and wealthy Count Potocki, I would take revenge on him for this! But when I did in fact grow up, I had no interest at all in taking revenge for a foolish childhood prank.

So, now, do you think that when I reach the Higher World, I will care at all about what was done to me on this Lowly World?”

### **I will Bring My Informer to Olam Haba**

Indeed, these next words (which I learned from the Aish HaTorah article) are the most profound lesson I took away from the whole story of Avraham ben Avraham:

Before his lofty soul left his holy body, he declared: “If I will only merit [to attain] the World of Truth, I will not rest and will not be silent until I manage to bring the man who informed on me to [reward in] Olam Haba! Through him I merited this great fortune of being burned al kiddush Hashem.”

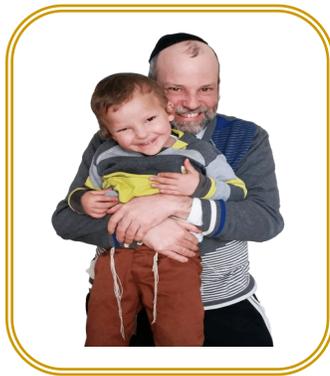
This is the epitome of forgiveness, and although each person is accountable for his deeds before Hashem— but we are taught by the Sefer Tomer Devorah, (by Rav Moshe Cordovero) and by many other great Sages and Gadolim, that forgiveness brings salvation to the world. Everything that happens in the world, happens only because Hashem agreed that it should happen, and for a purpose. When we acknowledge that Hashem is behind everything, and accept it, this overturns decrees, not only against individuals, but against the whole Jewish people, and brings the Geula.

Let us take away this, that of unconditional forgiveness—and use it to bring the Redemption once and for all!

May the merit of Avraham ben Avraham save us and bring us closer to that great day when Hashem’s Truth will be revealed to the entire world, Amen.

# Ask the Rabbi

Rabbi Chaim Coffman



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# The Purpose of Counting the Omer

## Every Day Precious

The purpose of counting the omer is to remind us that every day is precious in our *Avodas Hashem*. When we take a true accounting of what we have done on a daily basis, we have to be truly honest and evaluate the things we were successful with and things we failed at. If we do this then we know where we stand and what we have to fix up before Yom Kippur.

The only problem is that we have difficulty looking at ourselves in an honest way, always making excuses why we did this or that.

## Yetzer Hora Never Stops Fighting Us

As we approach Shavuos and recommit ourselves to keeping G-d's Torah and mitzvos, we have to realize that the yetzer hara never stops fighting against us, wanting to dull our spiritual side and cool off our enthusiasm.

By staying up all night, we are telling G-d that we are serious in our pursuit of spirituality and will stop at nothing to get close to Him. This means we actually have to put that into action which is a lot harder than it seems! As long as we are trying and making a sincere effort, we will renew and recharge our spiritual batteries and reach our great potential!

May we merit a real *kabbalos hatorah* and a meaningful Shavuos

Rabbi Chaim Coffman



# Matching Up!

"He settles the solitary into a Family"



**Baalah Teshuva, single - 40**

**F**

Lives in Yerushalayim, works in high tech  
Contact for further information  
Rivka Levron - rivkaarachel@gmail.com

**Breslover - 24**

**M**

Israeli son of Anglos, bi-lingual  
Yiras shamayim, learns in kollel  
Single, never married  
Contact for further information  
Nissan Levron- 5805428@gmail.com

**Ger but Raised Jewish - 25**

**M**

Very disciplined, serious Torah learner,  
very intelligent, kind, sensitive, loves  
people, wants to stay in learning first  
few years. Contact person  
Melanie Coffman - mcwriter1@gmail.com

**Sans Chassid - Kohen - 57**

**M**

American Now Living in Beni Brak  
In Yisroel about 15 years, Mostly Tzfat  
Yiras shamayim- Teacher  
Now single with custody of two sons  
Contact for further information  
TR Kriger - threeteasat@gmail.

**Ger from Kansas - 30**

**M**

Very involved in the yeshiva  
wants to live in EY, friendly,  
loves Torah, wonderful middos,  
everyone loves him, wants to learn  
for the first few years.  
Melanie Coffman- mcwriter1@gmail.com

**Baalah Teshuva, single - 27**

**M**

Yeshivah Educated in Jerusalem, Nachal  
Haredi service, Bagrut, bi-lingual,  
current in "Yad Benyamin" Yeshivah.  
Contact TR Kriger - threeteasat@gmail.com

**Baalah Teshuva, single - 47**

**M**

From L.A. now living in Tzfat.  
Big heart, chessed, mitzvos...  
Looking for someone to  
grow with. Rabbi Shlomo Epstein  
Janis Bulman 052-7657-972

**Ger Tzedek - 44**

**M**

From Chicago, converted in 2005,  
three children, bi-lingual, learns in  
Tzfat, gabbi for Rav Sofer.  
Contact - Janis Bulman  
052-7656-972

**Spanish Ger from Mexico - 37**

**M**

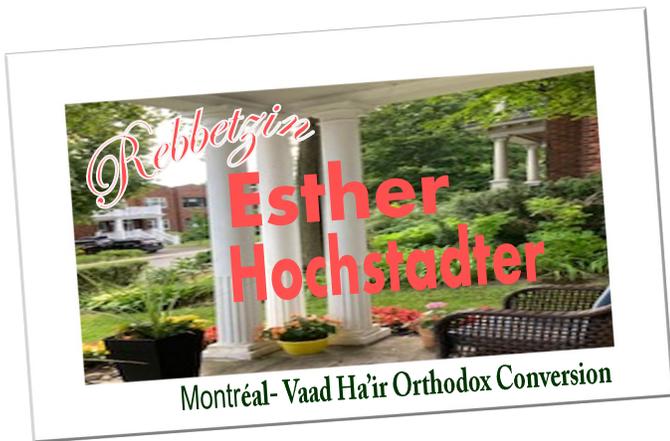
Chabad sofer now living in Yavneal.  
Spanish, Ivrit speaker & some English.  
Shmuel Blalock 053-3182-34053 /053-3125-613

## Simple Shidduch Ads

Contact person should be someone  
other than a close family member.  
No names or pictures of suggested  
person.

## We cannot assume responsibility!

You need to check out these individuals  
yourself or appoint someone else to do so.



# "Naaseh ve Nishma" & The Missing Piece

**A**

sk any school age Jewish child which two crowns the Jews received from Hashem at Har Sinai and why—and they will swiftly answer “Na’aseh v’nishma נעשה ונשמע”  
“We will do and we will listen!” Which was our response as a Nation, when we were offered the Torah.

The Gemara in the tractate of Shabbat (88a) quotes Rav Eliezer as he explains that the Jews did not merely mimic angels when they pledged to do and then to listen, as is written in Psalm 103 verse 20—but rather, when they committed themselves to the Torah, they experienced the “Secret of Connection”, the depth of what it meant to put one’s complete trust and faith in Hashem, Who is in control—and that’s the root of נעשה ונשמע, Na’aseh v’nishma. Now, doesn’t this sound like enough of a prerequisite to ready us to receive the Torah? Enter the strength of a Ger Tzedek! Yitro represents the universality of Torah— and without Torah being accepted by the nations of the world, Hashem’s Kingdom is incomplete. Torah is Hashem’s blueprint for the world’s rectification.

The Baal Shem Tov’s famous disciple Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polonye teaches that the relationship between the Jews and the nations of the earth, is like the relationship between the “guf and the neshama”, the body and soul. They cannot exist without each other. Rabbi Uri Chiriqui brings the teachings of Rabbi Yehuda Halevy, the Ramchal, and the Ramban, who all affirm that the root of all mitzvot are included in the Ten Commandments. However, the Ramban is the one who divided all the mitzvot and categorized them according to their source in the Ten Commandments.

As Jews, we are obligated to keep the 613 mitzvot. If you add up all the letters of the Ten Commandments, your total is 620. So where are the missing 7 commandments? But if you guessed that they are the Seven Noachide Laws, you are correct! Once again, we see that the Torah’s universality is completed by Gentiles’ acceptance of their responsibility.

Hence, the *Ger Tzedek* who ultimately seeks and finds Hashem earnestly, and is ready to sacrifice so much personally for the sake of the truth of Torah—ultimately this represents the greatest example of נעשה ונשמע- “We will do and we will listen!” And so, the missing piece is revealed.

May we merit to draw all sincere seekers of Torah, closer to Hashem, and ultimately greet *Mashiach tzidkeinu* as all the holy sparks return home !

Wishing everyone a joyous festival of Shavuot and I add my favorite Lubavitcher blessing

קבלת תורה

בשמחה ובפנימיות

-May we merit to receive the deeper aspects of Torah with joy!

Chag sameach! , חג שמח

*Esther Hochstadter*

## How does a Jew respond to tragedy?

When Rebbe Akiva lost his 24,000 students, he did not give in to hopelessness. He didn't give up or give in, when that last funeral concluded. Rather, when the last shiva was done, he gathered together five new students, and started over again.

Lag Ba'omer is a celebration of "never falling prey to hopelessness". Its a day of tenacity, resilience, and— to quote my dear father and mother-in-law, (both in their 90's, (עמו"ש) both holocaust survivors who lost everyone). One thing they always repeat is, "One never asks questions, one accepts what Hashem gives..."

We must keep the fire of Lag Ba'omer burning, and the passion energy and legacy of Rebbe Akiva alive! We must pray for the families who have lost loved ones, and beg Hashem to send them nechama, while finding Him in the darkness and confusion, and going forward with emuna.

—וידום אהרון And Aharon was silent. This was Aharon's response when he heard of his sons' death. This was the cry of our great Rabbis, that I heard from the Tziyun, the Grave, of Rabi Shimon, broadcast "live", as I was listening to the events unfolding before our eyes last Thursday night. No pointing fingers, no labeling, no accusing. Dis-unity destroys. Investigations will take place— but now is a time of mourning.— ויהי יתן אל לבו And those who remain living [in this world], should examine their hearts. We must look deep into ourselves.

1) How can we improve "our relationship between ourselves and others", לחבירו?

Rebbe Akiva's students were geniuses, but each one felt that his way was right, that his way to understand the Torah, was exclusive to any other way.

2) We can differ in opinions, we can each believe that our way is the truth— and perhaps, we are right— but we cannot hold a grudge and resent and castigate a fellow Jew.

3) We can choose to have faith, and learn to control our thoughts and feelings of negativity.

When tragedy befalls the Jewish people, our Sages teach "—" יפשפש במעשיו "One should examine his deeds". Individually, not collectively, we must do a deep "*Hitbodedut*"— an inner scrutiny, a dialogue with Hashem, and choose an area that we can best make a "tikun", or rectification within ourselves. In my opinion, now is not at time of asking what we can do as a community, but rather a time of deep soul searching— as we continue to climb the ladder of *Sefirat Haomer* until Shavuot.

The recent tragedy in Meron took place on the holy day of Lag Ba'omer, at the holy place of the Tziyun of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai (Rashbi) which is on the day of "Hod She'be'hod"—Humility of humilities. The essence of this sefira— cultivating our humility and evoking our modesty, not only in dress, but in behavior and speech— opens the chambers of our heart and allows us to feel genuine love for our fellow Jew, no matter what they look like and no matter what is their level of observance/ or lack thereof. This is the *avoda* that we must engage in— while simultaneously begging Hashem to have rachamim (mercy) on his children, and beseeching Him to bring comfort to all the grieving families worldwide— ונאמר די לצרותינו (And we say: "Enough!" to our troubles!!) We must yearn and yearn for Mashiach.

At the shiva calls here in Montreal, I saw acceptance, emuna, and strength. This theme was repeated over the radio in Eretz Yisrael as I listened to the unshakable emuna of so many grieving families. The words that come to mind are —נצחוני בני נצחוני "You have triumphed over Me, My sons, you have triumphed!"

The eternal faith of Hashem's children will be the fire that will hasten the arrival of Mashiach Tzidkeinu! .... בעה במהרה Besorot tovot

# The Importance of Eretz Yisrael

*Rebbetzin Devorah Fastag*

**B**efore reading Pirkei Avos we say *כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם שנאמר ועמך כלם צדיקים לעולם יירשו ארץ נצר מטעי* – *מעשי ידי להתפאר* – And your nation are all tzadikim, they will forever inherit the land, branch of my planting, the work of my hands, of which to be proud”.

We are told here that Am Yisrael will forever inherit Eretz Yisrael, and that this is proof that they have a place in Olam HaBa. But what’s the connection between the two? Although it does say here that Am Yisrael will forever inherit the Land, it does not say that they will inherit Olam HaBa. So how does the above pasuk prove that all of Yisrael have a place in Olam HaBa?

The Sfas Emes answers this question by explaining that inheriting Eretz Yisrael is tantamount to having a place in Olam HaBa. Here are his words: - *ויש לומר כי הכל אחד, עולם הבא וארץ ישראל* – “And it can be said that they are all one, Olam HaBa and Eretz Yisrael.

Why are they one? Let’s understand this a little more.

In Olam Habba we become attached to the Shechina. The Shechina is Hashem’s feminine way of dealing with creation, and about Olam HaBa Chazal tell us, “Tzadikim sit with their crowns on their heads, and they enjoy the pleasure of the glow of the Shechina”.

Because we exist in a physical world, it’s very hard to imagine what this pleasure of Olam HaBa will be like, but it is the greatest pleasure that exists.

And what is Eretz Yisrael? It is the means to attach oneself to the Shechina. For the Shechina exists here on earth as well. The Shechina on high, in Olam HaBa, is called the “Upper Mother” and the Shechina in Eretz Yisrael is called the “Lower Mother”. (The Shechina is called “Our Mother”, because all Jewish souls come from Her.) And you can’t get back to the “Higher Mother”, from which your soul came, unless you first go through the “Lower Mother”, which is in Eretz Yisrael.

The Shechina actually exists inside the Land itself, in the dust of the Land!

For this reason Chazal say that anyone who walks 4 amos in Eretz Yisrael inherits Olam HaBa.

But there’s one condition: You must keep the Torah in order to attach oneself to the Shechina. You need both.

Did you ever notice the parallel between the counting of the omer period and between the cycles of shmitta and Yovel? The omer period is seven days, seven times, adding up to seven weeks, or 49 days, and the fiftieth day is the giving of the Torah.

The cycle of Eretz Yisrael is 7 years (a shmitta cycle) seven times adding up to 49 years and the fiftieth year is Yovel. There is an exact parallel because both the Torah and Eretz Yisrael are necessary paths to reach the Shechinah which is at the 50th level of holiness.

Now, it's not hard to understand that you need the Torah to get to Olam HaBa, but why does one also need Eretz Yisrael to get to Olam HaBa?

Eretz Yisrael combines the concept of "Eretz – earth", (or the lower, physical world), with the concept of "Yisrael", which is very heavenly. Eretz Yisrael is where "Heaven" meets "Earth", being a combination of the two— the earthly Eretz with the heavenly Yisrael.

The pinnacle of the holiness of Eretz Yisrael is in the Beis HaMikdash, which Shir HaShirim calls our "neck". The neck connects the lower part of the body, which represents the earthly aspect, with the head, which represents the heavenly. Just as the blood cannot reach the head without passing through the neck, so we cannot reach the upper heavenly realms, without first passing through the "neck", which is Eretz Yisrael.

But what happens to a Jew who never was in Eretz Yisrael? How can he or she reach Olam HaBa without Eretz Yisrael? The answer is that sooner or later every Jew will be in Eretz Yisrael, even if it is after his/her death.

When a Jew dies, his soul passes through the cave of *Machpela*, which is one of the entry ways to Gan Eden. So all Jewish souls have a chance to be in Eretz Yisrael before entering Gan Eden.

But Gan Eden is only a temporary world of souls. The real Olam HaBa is not Gan Eden, but the world that will exist after *techias hameisim*, and *techias hameisim* takes place in *Eretz Yisrael*.

So during the period of *techias hameisim*, every Jew will be in Eretz Yisrael, and then go on from there to Olam Haba.

But if one possibly can, it is much better to live in Eretz Yisrael during one's lifetime.

True, not everyone has the opportunity to come, but if one could come, choosing not to come to Eretz Yisrael when this was possible, shows a lack of desire to connect to the Shechina.

Furthermore there are mitzvos that can be kept only in Eretz Yisrael, and even those mitzvos which are kept outside Eretz Yisrael are much more spiritually powerful when they are done in Eretz Yisrael.

Additionally, Torah learning in Eretz Yisrael is on a higher level, as it says "there is no Torah like the Torah of Eretz Yisrael". This is especially true for the mystical aspects of Torah.

Moshe Rabeinu begged Hashem to be allowed into Eretz Yisrael, even as a bird!!

The Zohar says that Moshe Rabeinu couldn't enter Eretz Yisrael because the sin of the golden calf prevented him from reaching the 50th level of hidden Torah wisdom (seen in the commentary of the Vilna Gaon). However, Rabi Shimon bar Yochai, whose soul had sparks from Moshe Rabeinu, did live in Eretz Yisrael, and he reached some of those hidden levels of Torah wisdom that Moshe was unable to attain, and opened them up for us.

Eretz Yisrael is the land of the geula in many ways. The Zohar says that shmitta represents the geula while Yovel represents Olam HaBa (seen in Sfas Emes).

So let's recognize our great privilege to be here in Eretz Yisrael. and look forward to Shmitta, which is next year! This is the land of the Geula, and as the Vilna Gaon said, keeping the "mitzvos hatluyos ba'aretz" - the mitzvos that are dependent upon the land – including, and perhaps especially, Shmittah- actually helps to bring the Geula. May it truly be the year of our Redemption!!

# Learning To Feel The Spiritual

## Janet Caterina

*In the beginning, before my conversion, I was married to a Jewish man.*

My family had complete and absolute acceptance of other religions, and I had no prejudice against any particular belief. This is largely due, I believe, to the Canadian tradition, as the political policies of Canada tend to reveal. So I credit my family, with their open-mindedness, for my ability to convert.

When I first started to do the mitzvos, I was delighted with the experience of joy that was brought into my home and my daily tasks. This was so incredible.

But what, you ask, did I do in my previous life before conversion? Believe it or not, I spent over 20 years, since the tender age of 16, in Transcendental Meditation, or TM, as it's called, and practiced meditating twice a day.

Through this practice, my perception of "consciousness" became greatly developed, and I therefore was more prone to experience religious activities in a very spiritual, otherworldly way, as compared with the usual person.

Naturally, when I started practicing Judaism, I greatly valued very spiritual experiences, and searched for others who had experienced "wow moments" similar to my own. I was looking for this as kind of a link from my past, that would serve as a type of "bridge" of sorts, into my new Jewish life.

During my first few years as a Jew, I was very busy searching for this, as well as evidence that other members of my new religion also, like me, experienced intense otherworldly experiences when performing the mitzvos. This somehow was important to me.

But everywhere I was led to look, those around me seemed to be doing a lot of studying. They studied Torah, they studied Parsha, they studied Talmud, they studied halacha, they studied about the chagim—but nowhere was anyone standing up and saying, "You know, this is what I experience when I close my eyes and light the candles on erev Shabbat!"

I longed to get people talking.

There just seemed to be no one to talk to about this fabulous, cosmic duality.

But there was one experience I could relate to. I remember at one lecture in Toronto, so long ago, when a whole room full of women sat together to hear a lecture about the mitzvah of mikvah.

The speaker did an extraordinary thing. She related, step by step, the process of preparation for the mikvah. Each of us was "emotionally present" with her as she went through the many procedures of preparation, until she was at the brink of the steps to the mikvah, ready to immerse. As she described her descent into the purifying waters, the whole room, (at least in my eyes) seemed to fill with a golden light, and my head was in a golden state as she plunged into the waters.

It seemed as if everyone in the room was unified at that moment. We were One. I still wonder if the other women had that same “buzzing” sensation in their heads, as their whole body became part of the light that filled and unified everything... I am certain that the teacher, by being able to unite the peoples' awareness, had something to do with this.

A woman once told me that she had a special spiritual experience when she was davening in shul at Rosh Hoshana. She said, “These golden rays of sunlight came through the window, and this became a golden Presence that filled my mind and body, and the whole room was filled with light”.

Before we go any further, let me say that, in comparing my experiences I had with TM, to my newfound experiences with Judaism, I discovered something amazing: Performing mitzvos, unlike TM, led to profound spiritual experiences that you could create with your eyes “open” instead of “closed”! In other words, they were experiences that were “in this physical world” instead of somewhere “up in a cloud” of elevated consciousness. This made performing mitzvos a more powerful way to develop one’s spirituality, as it didn't have to be practiced in seclusion, apart from the world, but is practiced IN the world.

But there were occasions that proved to me that the possibility for “transcendent unity” was indeed part of Judaism. One was a wedding. The value of ritual to bring us to a higher place? Maybe that was it. The step by step procedures during the chuppa, known to every Jew, were observed by a throng of people, all celebrating this moment, as the chassan and kallah stood on a raised dais in a beautiful shul in North Toronto. Bit by bit, we came closer to the climax. And when the groom stamped on the glass, and everyone shouted, “Mazel tov!”, I was again aware of the strong, united feeling that swept through us.

Nowadays I live in Eretz Yisrael. In our beautiful little community of Yavni'el, we somehow are very strongly united today. I have often marveled at it. It must be the magic spice that Israel throws into the mix. Starting 15 years ago, with just a few families, it has grown, bit by bit, until I can actually claim that I don't know all of its members. Nonetheless there is a strong emotional bond between all of us, that never ceases to amaze me.

Yet, at the beginning, the ideal of a united community seemed like a far-off reality to me at that point. It seemed to me that, at least from my viewpoint, there were differences between the various religious groups that kept people apart. But, then came an event, a few weeks ago, that changed my perception. Two of our amazing young adults in Yavni'el announced their engagement. We had all watched them, as babies, grow into mature young people— and guess what? They and their families are now attached to us, and we are like all one family. This milestone of community togetherness needed a proper celebration, and there wasn't much time to put it together.

With a true stroke of genius, an outdoor vort, or engagement party, was put together in a simple barnyard, of all places—with haybales serving as tables, and a tractor making up part of a mechitza. As I mingled with the families—and more and more kept on coming through the field and fences—it was obvious that we were all One. The unity was so strong, that I remarked to an incredulous listener —(whose identity I can't even remember now)— that in Yavni'el, it's as if we are all One.

Looking at all of the others present, I felt I had the same consciousness as every other person. It was a living, breathing, Unity of Souls. At last, the parameters of the Jewish Way— which had seemed strange to me at the beginning— were vindicated. Despite all of our apparent differences, we were united on a spiritual level, and you could feel it. At least I could. Didn't you feel it too? I would love to know!

# United For Torah

Avishag Faynberg

T

he period between Pesach and Shavuos is a time of preparation and anticipation towards receiving the most precious of all gifts: our holy Torah, and is therefore a time of immense joy.

It is the time of year when we count the days—from Pesach, when we left Mitzrayim, until Shavuos, the day on which we received the Torah.

Leaving the bondage of Egypt was not what earned us our freedom. It is only once we received the Torah and became committed to Hashem's commandments, that we truly became a free nation.

True freedom is not "freedom FROM" but rather "freedom FOR" - the freedom to aspire towards something great and meaningful.

However, this period of time— when we should be at the peak of our joy, waiting eagerly to receive the Torah—is ironically a time of mourning as well, since it is during this time when 24,000 disciples of Rabbi Akiva perished in a plague because they did not treat one another with respect.

To explain this irony, I would like to share and elaborate on a beautiful thought I heard from one of my teachers in High School:

On the day following the first day Yom Tov of Pesach, the Korban HaOmer was brought to the Beis Hamikdash, whilst on Shavuos, the Jewish people brought the Shtei Halechem offering. What was the main difference between these two offerings? Unlike the Korban HaOmer which consisted of barley, the *Shtei Halechem* was the first offering that was made of the new wheat harvest which grew during that year.

Apart from their taste, another difference between these two grains is that barley is considered animal fodder, while wheat is considered to be more appropriate for human consumption.

This difference, which may appear to be just factual and somewhat insignificant, touches on the most important lesson to be internalized during this period of time.

During the time between Pesach and Shavuos, our biggest *avoda* in preparing ourselves for *Matan Torah* is improving and refining our *midos*, which requires of us to break away from our negative animalistic inclinations and desires, and attain a higher level of humanity.

When the Jews left *Mitzrayim* they were almost at their lowest point of spirituality and were sunk into the 49th level of *tuma*, of impurity. With each new day leading towards Shavuos, they emerged from yet another level of impurity, until they reached the 50th day - Shavuos, when they finally attained the level of purity and were then worthy of receiving the Torah.

When we delve into our animalistic pleasures and desires, we become further disconnected from purity. One of the main things which differentiate us human beings from animals is our power of speech. When Hashem created Adam, he blew a living spirit into him and Adam became a living soul, as it says

“—” (בראשית ב:ז) — “And He blew into his nostrils a soul of life and Man became a living spirit.”

On the words

- living spirit, Targum Onkelos explains it means: - “speaking spirit” מללא - גרוח מללא - חיה

This precious gift of speech, a gift that makes us on a higher level above animals, is a powerful tool which can be either used to create or destroy.

On the one hand, we can build other people through our power of speech with words of praise, kindness, hope and encouragement— but on the other hand, we can hurt and destroy others with words of slander, mockery and insult, thus abusing our gift of speech. Therefore, in order to attain purity and be worthy of receiving the Torah, we have to work on refining our speech. We have to learn to speak and treat others with respect.

We can now understand why it is specifically during this time of joy and anticipation towards receiving the Torah that the disciples of Rabbi Akiva were smitten in a terrible plague.

This time between Pesach and Shavuot was precisely the period of time when they were expected to use their power of speech positively and treat one another with respect. Instead of raising themselves to a higher level of humanity in preparation for receiving the Torah, they regressed by abusing their power of speech and therefore were deserving of punishment.

In addition, being the disciples of Rabbi Akiva—whose motto was “To love another Jew as oneself”, and who taught us that Ahavas Yisrael is one of the greatest principles of the Torah— these disciples were expected to internalize this great teaching and work on loving, respecting and uniting with one another.

When Bnei Yisrael stood by Har Sinai awaiting to receive the Torah, they all stood united, as Rashi explains on the words - “And Bnei Yisrael stood opposite the mountain”: - “as one man - one heart” כאיש אחד בלב אחד - ויחון שם ישראל כנגד ההר -

( They all stood united then ready to receive the Torah. Being united was not a recommendation, but a prerequisite for receiving the Torah. ) שמות יט:ב .

We must all remember that we are one nation and our moments of dispute and friction are only a part of our external crust. However, when we peel that off, we get to the inner core of who we truly are - a nation who lives by ideals of kindness, empathy, loyalty and love towards another.

We are all Hashem's children and each of us is precious in His eyes. It is not our duty to evaluate the exact and true worth of another Jew, nor are we capable of doing so, but if we search carefully, we'll find something positive in each individual and in each community. Searching for the good is what helps keep us united and worthy of receiving the Torah.



**A** little boy determinedly pulled a rope tied to a pallet of wood down the sidewalk, gathering fuel in anticipation of his Lag B'Omar fire.

Even though this is not such an uncommon sight in Beitar this time of year, I momentarily stopped to watch. I also was going toward an upcoming event, and needed to put my pre-plan in motion. Due to an upcoming surgery, I had decided to go to four different places to daven: The Kotel, Me'aras HaMachpelah, Kever Rochel, and...Meron.

After a few hours in the ladies' section at the tunnel under the Kotel— a bit unnerved by a oddly-dressed and strangely-acting person—I decided, "I'm out of here", and left to finish my Tehillim over in the main Kotel plaza.

Oh my, what a propitious time to join with the Kotel crowd! Rabbi Yaakov Ades led the Mincha/ Maariv davening, as the skies darkened, the twittering "kedusha birds", the flock of swifts fluttered about in circles filling the sky above. Who can hold back their emotions, as Rabbi Ades cries, ay, yai, yai, yai yai—and every few minutes, breaks down into inconsolable sobbing—and all those within his radius seem to synchronize their tefillas with him. Somewhere in between, I was up to Tehillim 119 for a special request— when a melodious choir singing Shabbos songs tuned in from behind me, at the back of the Kotel plaza. It felt almost like Shaboos— so uplifting, and the tefilos and tears seemed to effortlessly ascend.

Only a short while later, walking on in Jerusalem, I looked up to see and hear the pounding on the pavement, as a crowd of protesters ran toward me, apparently the police had arrived. I mashed myself up against the wall to avoid being trampled and in moments they were past me. Sometimes it seems so soon, right after a spiritual cloud of inspiration we are quickly dropped down to again walk and be tested among men.

By our Forefather Avraham, at Me'aras HaMachpelah, I just laid my head down on a sthender (book stand) and cried the whole hour. Later that week, at Kever Rochel, I came to beg Hashem, how can this, the weakest of all generations—our sweet children— be tested with the greatest test of all times! With a push of a button and the flick of a finger, they can view on a screen, all possible varieties of sins, the averos common to every generation— and be pulled almost instantly into a drowning whirlpool of no return. This galus is unending, save us! And following the crescendo of the recitation of the 13 Middos of Rachamim shortly before 2pm, we screamed out from our hearts to the Ribbo Shel Olam, ascending our tefilos upward with the vast array of the blaring shofars.

After all this, I made my way up North to the chasunah of my granddaughter on Lag B'Omar and afterward planned on going to Meron. At the chasunah, it was as if we had stepped back into the shtetel days of Europe. The kallah carried roses which had been picked by her chossan. The chossan and his father had made a simple chuppah consisting of four twisted branches planted in the ground and covered with taleisim. The guitarist strummed after the recital of each of the Seven Brachos, as small boys sat and watched from the branches of an overhanging tree. All of this—the chuppah, seuda (festive meal) and dancing, were held under the starry skies of Eretz Yisroel!

Afterwards some of us headed to Meron but it wasn't to be. As we arrived at about 1:00am to the Tiberius bus station with tickets in hand, we saw that the buses were standing empty, everyone was milling around looking at their phones. What??? No buses running. And then we heard...

Who can possibly contain inside their soul, the magnitude of the loss of forty-five neshamos?!!

And so we weep whenever it comes to mind, and it does come, in waves...

Those who are veterans of life and have experienced all of the losses of those closest....Mother, Father, Husband, and a child as I have, know that the ones left behind sometimes feel the loss of these dear ones on a level so deep, that they sometimes can't even cry— but even so, the waves of grief pound the heart, encompassing the whole chest, sometimes unrelentingly, with the strength of a tsunami. It's such a chesed of Hashem, that as in the last throes of birth, there is a break between the pain waves. So too, in the loss of a loved one.

But, even if a person is filled with emuna, it doesn't mean they still won't suffer. In the tragedy in Meron, so many women lost husbands and children! No matter how strong these people appeared during the shivah, there will be many days and nights ahead, that will be excruciatingly hard.

There is always the choice to play the "blame game". Our Rabbanim have clearly spoken out against choosing this negative mindset. Some people have pointed out that, awesomely enough, those whom you would most expect to be angry at the circumstances and the ones held accountable—in other words, those who have been sitting shiva— didn't seem to "go there". Instead, time and time again, we hear that these families went straight to the emes, the Truth. "This is from Hashem".

Many years ago, when I was in Atlanta, Georgia, I attended a "Compassionate Friends Group" for those of us who had lost children. I was astounded there was a man there who had held his venomous anger for nine years! If I remember right it seems he had lost a lovely teenage girl, years before, and it was all "The doctor's fault" & "the hospital's fault."

Even if this was correct, look at the loss of a richer life that this man could have had. By leaving hatred and anger behind, he could have lived, smiled, thrown himself into acts of kindness for others that would have lifted him up and out of his sorrow and given him a feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction.

As Rebbetzin Yemina Mizrahi said, "We have to accept responsibility." And that is the astounding response of the greatness of our people. Everyone seems to be asking, "How can I change? What better thing can I do, can we do?"

One of my grandsons, when he was at Meron that fateful night of Lag Ba'Omer, was just heading in the direction where the tragedy was soon to happen, when, the bochur- boy- who was with him, stopped to daven Maariv. This may have just saved them, because by the time he finished praying Maariv, everything had already been turned into a shocking chaos.

Then this bochur-Binyamin- rose as a lion, a leader in Am Yisroel. As ambulances would arrive, and Hatzolah paramedics would run wheeling out another stretcher racing to load the critically injured patient inside, Binyomin continually was screaming words of Tehillim and shouting "A refuah shelema!" as another stretcher rolled by and the crowd shouted, "Amen!!!"

Time after time, throughout the night, this young bochur screamed these words from Tehillim to be said in times of distress:

"From the depths I called You, Hashem. My Lord, hear my voice!"...(Chapter 130).

Then, "Refua Shalama!"

And, "AMEN!!!"

...Another chapter: "I raise my eyes...whence will come my help?"... (Chapter 121)

"Refua Shalama!"

"AMEN!!!"

..."How long, Hashem, will You endlessly forget me?" (Chapter 13)

"Refua Shalama!"

"AMEN"!!!

Before any decree, we are taught that Hashem takes into careful consideration how everyone in the radius of the pending situation will be affected. The little boy whom I saw a few weeks earlier pulling his pallet of wood down the sidewalk to make a bonfire— he and thousands of other Jewish children were able to dance around their fires, early in the night singing “Lekavod HaTanna Elokai, Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai”— before Hashem picked His most precious flowers, taking them to Shomayim.

As Jews, we are often called upon to quickly change our hats and hearts. One day we celebrated a simcha—a chasunah—and that night, Am Yisrael suffered a great tragedy. Then, the next day, we celebrated the Shabbos Sheva Brachos for the new chasson and kallah... As I sat at the head table looking out at a hall filled with most of my descendants, someone whispered to me, “How does it feel?” I answered, “Its greater than any dream, to sit and see my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and hear my sons and grandsons filling the Shabbos simcha with their zemiros. I am so overwhelmed with gratefulness!”

Next day, trudging up the steep hill in Meron with my fellow subdued hikers, it was now two days after Am Yisrael’s disastrous loss. There was no music, nor dancing; no one was handing out food as is usually the norm on Lag Ba’Omer. Instead, the atmosphere reflected the essence of the stark reality of the Jewish people down through the ages, as we have been knocked down one day, the next day we arise silently to climb again.

As we entered the Kever of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai to daven, it was crowded, but not packed. I expected it to be a highly emotional experience, but it wasn’t. Who am I to draw conclusions about why this was so? Only my heart knew of its own bitterness—but it seemed as if we were all part of the numbed Heart of Am Yisroel—and just as sheep don’t know the why’s and wherefores of where they are being led, but still go forward—so do we.

A few days later...

Finally, the day I had davened for arrived—my surgery. If I had had any anxiety or fears, they were quickly laid to rest. The surgical staff consisted of a mixed group of Jews and gentiles. Throughout my three-hour surgery, they were totally focused on me. Initially, everyone wished me “Good luck”, and I was happy to note that none of the staff appeared to be involved with any distracting devices, but were completely focused on their critical job. I was so gratified to have been given the choice to stay awake. Wow, what precious moments to spend davening, instead of losing moments lying in an unconscious state.

It has taken me many years to realize that prayer is not just requests, but also, gratitude; and that thanking Hashem is one of the ultimate connections with our Creator. So to that end, I began thanking Hashem for all of the people in my life—beginning with my parents, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, and friends. It took me almost the whole three hours! There have been so many people whom Hashem has sent to me, to take me down the journey of my life.

I was so filled with gratitude, that I couldn’t think of one bad thing anyone had ever done to me. I never had such an experience. So clearly could I see, how every person in my life was perfectly placed there by the Master Designer of my life. I cry very easily at this stage in life—and so, here I was in surgery, crying tears of gratitude to Hashem. The doctor who was tasked with the role of anesthesiologist, not only monitored my vitals, but also made it his job to come over and wipe the hot tears that cascaded off my cheeks.

Throughout this whole experience (which was, Baruch Hashem, a first for me) I have never felt so loved, nurtured and supported. All my hardships seemed to dissipate, as my sisters-in-law, daughters, and granddaughters took turns staying with me around the clock in the hospital.

Finally, homecoming! It was as if the grandkids hadn’t seen me in many years, and I was a celebrity flying in from another country. The front room was filled with children, the poppers pulled and popped as soon as I walked in the door, and balloons! They came towards me, pushing gifts, special drinks, dried fruit and sweet notes. The thoughtful mothers gave them a few moments and then shooed them away so I could lie down. And it hasn’t stopped. Flowers wired from afar, emails and numerous phone calls, I was feted with robes and fresh new bedding. Today someone sent a repairman to make some repairs; a granddaughter is here for the week, my mother in law has called almost every day. I have never been the recipient of such a Bikur Cholim encounter before—what a nurturing Jewish chesed experience! And now hopefully, I will have a future opportunity to know how to give back.

It is said that, "The path of the ger parallels the path of the Jewish people." Astounding!

When we think of the heights down through the ages of the Jewish people. Coming out of Mitzrayim and receiving the Torah they were at the top of the world! At the time of the Beis Hamikdash and the reign of Shlomo HaMelech Kings & queens came from afar to hear of his wisdom and see the glories of his kingdom! Yes, the Jewish people have also been the most hated and persecuted of all peoples but we have come and joined in spite of the hardships and yes we also have our downers and times of tests, but our simcha and comfort has to be that just as the Jew will again be the envy of all the earth and Hashem will make them the "Head & not the Tail" (D.28:13) That this, because we have joined up with them at this time and this hour will also become our greatest exultation!

I have sometimes seen a goy on a donkey, passing through our town with two huge baskets of strawy weeds. He got up at 4:30 worked hours in his fields and his take home pay for the day— straw. One wonders what his eternal reward and that of others like him who work so hard but...

It has to be one of a Ger Tzedeks greatest privileges to rise up like a lion each day and have the merit to proclaim that in spite of all the billions of the earth. "Boruch ato Hashem Elohaynu Melech ho-olom, shelo osani goy (sheasani giores)" ( Thank You Hashem that You did not make me a gentile)!!!

At Shavuos as we read the book of Ruth, we will again be inspired to follow in her path she who could have focused on her losses, two husbands, her princess palace prestige but she chose to be excitedly grateful that she had cast her lot with the Jewish people! *Wherever she was, whatever she was doing. Ruth was forever singing G-d's praises. In the kitchen, in the field, in the marketplace, Ruth walked with G-d and talked with Him; she saw His loving hands caressing each of His creations. It was she who taught her children and grandchildren to recognize G-d's guiding hand in every event and to express her appreciation in endless waves of song. Her stream of praises to G-d flowed continuously from her heart through her lips, flowing on through the generations until they reached and penetrated the heart of young David. (Tehillim Treasury— Rabbi A.C. Feuer ArtScroll Mesorah)*

Looking into the days ahead, Hashem is giving us another Shabbos, a Yom Tov of Shavuos, and—on a personal note, we have another simcha, be'ezrat Hashem, another chasuna of a Granddaughter coming up in two weeks! Baruch Hashem for these little respite spots in the midst of the darkening clouds.

A few days ago one of my little granddaughter's came in to see me as I was lying on the couch resting. She showed me she had just lost her two upper teeth (aren't they cute at this stage— I think about six is when this happens). Then she got serious, "Bubby, did you know they were throwing down bombs in Yerushalayim and Bnei Brak last night?" She paused, took a deep breath, and then informed me. "Its supposed to be "hod" (hard) before Moshiach comes." (Israeli children can't say "r's")

I nodded, agreeing. Corona, Meron, and now we are at war...

How much we want to save and shelter our children from these times, we just can only just continue to cry out. As in Mitzrayim, we could take many hardships— but when it comes to our tender ones, we cried out, He heard our outcry, and He redeemed us! The grieving hearts of those who recently lost sons and husbands in Meron and now, mothers of soldiers in battle—not to mention those who helplessly stand by watching a child whose soul is in "critical condition" from its spiritual battle—May all of these continue to use their tears to tunnel under Hashem's throne, begging for mercy for Am Yisroel.

What other nation, has sacred writings, transmitted thousands of years ago, which describe what we are currently going through right now, as if it were in today's news! Writings predicting everything going on now in our times, in our land, with our people and— our eventual triumph over our enemies!

It is said we stand on the shoulders of past generations. Much greater giants preceded us, but even though we may be "lesser souls", our mission is that of utmost importance—that of bringing Moshiach. In a few days we will reach the mountain top of Matan Torah, Shavuos. And you the women of Am Yisroel will continue your Holy tasks— arising faithfully, between the *mitzvos* of making *shiva* calls and hosting *sheva brachos*, saying *Tehillim* and washing dishes. Onward toward another mountain, the Mountain of Hashem, at a time when we will join the ecstatic dancing circles of those greeting Moshiach in Yerusalayim! May it be soon! *Tzviel Davis*

# Highly Recommended Speakers & Shirum!

Learning resources for Jewish women at many levels. These are ones I am personally familiar with at some level.

**Rebbetzin Esther Wein**, granddaughter of Rav **Shimon Schwab** (no charge) weekly shiurim on the 13 *ikkarim*, ("Book of Principles") David Hamelech, and other topics contact Tania Hammer <[taniahammer@gmail.com](mailto:taniahammer@gmail.com)> to sign up <https://www.torahanytime.com/#/speaker?!=131>

**Devorah Yaffa Singer**, G-d Direct Torah (many shiurim available at no charge) collection of many teachers, shiurim, resources <http://g-ddirectorah.com/>

**Rav Yaakov Zalman Labinsky** (some available at no charge) Using the 39 melachot to connect to Hashem <https://www.kavconnect.com/39melachos>

**Jewish workshops** Many one-time and ongoing workshops <https://www.jewishworkshops.org/>

**Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz** (no charge) collection of shiurim <https://akivatatz.com/>

**Rebbetzin Tamar Taback** (some available at no charge) transformational Torah for women [thenexus.org](http://thenexus.org)

Esther Orit Riter based on the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov <https://dailydoseofemuna.com/>

**Chaya Hinda Allen** Jewish positive thinking <https://www.chayahinda.com/>

**Leah Aharoni** (no charge) Tanya shiurim Sundays, 7.45 PM Israel, 12:45 PM EST, Permanent ZOOM link - [www.bit.do/Tanyawithleah](http://www.bit.do/Tanyawithleah)

Rivka Levron

## Mourners Comfort the Comforters

What could one do after reading about the special souls who left this world on *Lag B'Omer* in *Meron*? I needed to feel part of it, somehow. So I went to be *menachem avel* several of the families sitting shiva. Here in Betar Ilit alone, we lost four - three fathers and a 16 year old boy.

After leaving each home, I felt so comforted, so much in awe at these *kedoshim* who were the *korbanot* for all of us.

How could those mothers smile when their beautiful sons will never come home again? Probably they cry into their pillows at night from the pain. But so much strength!

So much *emunah* and *bitachon* in our Father, Hashem, accepting that He gives and He takes. If I don't have answers, neither do I have questions. From the courage of these incredibly strong families, one understands that something much deeper is going on that we cannot grasp.

At each home, I felt that I was participating together with the mourners and the many other visitors in the sorrow of Am Israel.

And I ask, what is my part? What can I improve so that these precious *neshamot* will not have died in vain?

May Hashem help me to be more patient with everyone around me.

And may all of our tears soon be turned to rejoicing.

# "Homecoming"!

## A Special Forum for Gerim & Ba'alei Teshuva

Group Administrators  
Nissan and Rivka Levron  
Beitar Illit, Israel

To join the group, please email us:  
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1  
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7

### Interacting with family members that are grappling with finding and/or accepting the truth...

"Just keep providing your love, patience and quiet confidence and he will have a soft pillow to jump into when he makes his decision. With your occasional intellectually stimulating questions he will be reminded to search the dark corners with some "light." His response is secondary at best. No need to revise or refute what he says"

**Reb Nota Feinstein**

*'That*

*"The Torah discusses our duties towards the convert on thirty-six occasions (Bava Mitziah 59b). This is unrivaled by any other commandment, whether it be love for Hashem circumcision, dietary laws, lying, theft or Shabbath observance."*

*The Call of The Torah -  
Mishpatim*

## Righteous Gentiles



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"Any human being who faithfully  
observes these laws earns a proper  
place in heaven."

Jewish Teaching from aish.com

We would like to add these ladies to our mailing list. If you have any contact information please let us know.



**Dvora Asher**



**A Toronto woman, mother-in-law of Baruch Milo.**



**A woman who started her journey in Atlanta, but lives maybe in or around Ringgold, Georgia, related to the Honig family.**



*Please send in your submissions fully edited.*

*All submissions are to be in line with the highest of Torah standards.*

**Soul Sisters Singing  
threeteasat@gmail.com**