**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Vayakhel - Pekudei 5775**

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**Food for Thought**

**Ah Mamme’s Emunah**

**By R’ Yitzchok Hisiger**

Reb Leib and Mrs. Yocheved Fishman had survived the trials and travails of World War II. Persecuted but not broken, they married in a DP camp in Berlin in 1948. Seeking to rebuild their lives on a new continent, they first stopped in Detroit before making their way to the tri-state area in the early 1950s.

More than anything else, the Fishmans wished to establish a family, raising children with the values and hashkafos that they had brought from the alter heim. It was thus devastating to Mrs. Fishman when, in 1953, she learned that she had contracted uterine cancer. She went to numerous doctors, but they were all unanimous in their diagnosis:

She had the machlah and her uterus would have to be removed, thus preventing her from having children. “If you don’t remove it,” the doctors said, “you will die.” She asked if she would be able to have a child before the procedure is performed. “If you do,” she was told, “you will die in childbirth. Your body won’t be able to handle it. You must undergo this procedure for your very life.”

Mrs. Fishman would hear none of it. She refused to undergo the procedure, saying that she didn’t survive the war not to be able to perpetuate her lineage and family. “Ich hub nisht durch gemacht der milchamah nisht tzu hobben kinder,” she said.

Instead, wherever she and her husband went, they asked every rebbe, rov and tzaddik they encountered for eitzos and brachos. The rabbonim all gave heartfelt brachos, but their p’sak, across the board, was that with her life in danger, it was incumbent upon her to follow the doctors’ orders and undergo the procedure. After all, it was pikuach nefesh.

“Zei hobben mir nisht farshtanen. They don’t understand me,” she would say. “Ich hub nisht durch gemacht der milchamah nisht tzu hobben kinder. I didn’t survive not to have children.”

And so, Mrs. Fishman and her husband, without the luxury of owning a car, took buses and trains from doctor to doctor, never giving up hope for a yeshuah. Their days were occupied with seeking an answer, somewhere, some way.

Once, after a tiring day spent riding public transit and consulting with doctors in Manhattan, Reb Leib noticed that the hour was late and he had to daven Minchah. He entered a small local shul, where he found a minyan. Following Minchah, he remained in the bais medrash, where the unassuming and humble rov delivered a Mishnayos shiur before a minyan for Maariv was held.

After davening, Reb Leib exited and met his wife, who was waiting for him outside. Mrs. Fishman asked her husband if he had asked the rov of the bais medrash for a brachah for her, as they customarily did wherever they went. He said that he did not. “He’s a small rov,” said Reb Leib. “They barely had a minyan!”

“No matter!” insisted Mrs. Fishman. “We went to all the rebbes. We went to the rabbonim we know. I want a brachah from every rov who can give one.” Mrs. Fishman proceeded to go together with her husband into the bais medrash, where they met the rov and described their predicament. The rov listened with great sensitivity to their tale of woe. He told the Fishmans not to worry, instructing them not to have the procedure done. Then he added, “And you will be zocheh to bonim talmidei chachomim (children who are talmidei chachomim).”

Mrs. Fishman was greatly uplifted by the rov’s brachah.

“Der rov hut mir farshtanen. This rov understood me,” she remarked.

Approximately ten months later, the Fishmans celebrated the birth of their bechor, Berish. Their joy was indescribable. The birth was not a simple one, and Mrs. Fishman’s precarious health required close supervision, but she persevered.

Shortly after the baby’s birth, one of the surgeons whom the Fishmans had consulted saw them pushing a baby carriage. With all seriousness, he remarked, “Nice. So you adopted a child?” He couldn’t believe that they had merited a child of their own. Medically, it seemed like an impossibility.

The Fishmans told him that no, they had not adopted a child.

“So you are babysitting for a nephew?” he persisted.

No, they responded. This beautiful little baby was their own, a gift from heaven.

The surgeon was flabbergasted. “Well,” he said in a defeated tone, “you were fortunate to have a miracle baby. Now have the surgery, as your illness is still wreaking havoc on your body.”

To his vexation, Mrs. Fishman shook her head.

“No,” she said. “The rov who gave us a brachah said that we would have ‘bonim,’ meaning children, in the plural. If that’s what he said, there’s no way I can have a doctor remove a part of my body that will prevent me from having another child.”

Approximately four years later, she did indeed merit a second child, who was named Dovid. That second miracle child is Rav Dovid Fishman, today rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Kesser Torah of Monsey. For years, Reb Leib and Yocheved Fishman kept this story under wraps, not sharing it even with their own children. Shortly before Rav Dovid Fishman’s marriage, his mother related this remarkable tale.

A crucial detail had been omitted, however. Who, Rav Fishman asked his mother, had been this rov who had granted them the brachah of “bonim talmidei chachomim”? Who was this tzaddik who had advised them and encouraged them so many years earlier in that small Manhattan shul?

Mrs. Fishman admitted that she didn’t remember. “He was ah kleiner rov,” she remarked. Reb Leib described where they had been and where the bais medrash of this particular rov had been located.

Before long, it emerged that the “kleiner rov” who had given his havtachah that the Fishmans would have “bonim” was none other than Rav Moshe Feinstein zt”l. It was the great posek and gadol hador, Rav Moshe, who had imparted his brachah to these two war survivors and in whose merit they were zocheh to two beautiful children.

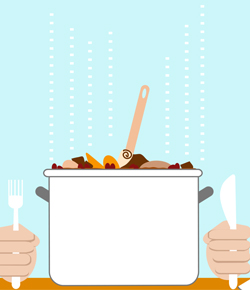
Rav Moshe’s miraculous brachah and guidance leave one open-mouthed. But just as moving, if not more so, is the emunas chachomim of Mrs. Fishman, an ishah tzidkanis who wouldn’t undergo the surgery - which most people probably would have had performed, especially after having one child - because the tzaddik had told her that she would have multiple children.

There’s nothing as strong and nonnegotiable as ah mamme’s emunah.

*Reprinted from the February 27, 2015 edition of the Yated Ne’eman.*

**Why the Rabbi Ate the Whole Pot of *Cholent* Himself**

**By** [**Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin**](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/1085/jewish/Rabbi-Shlomo-Yosef-Zevin.htm)

Reb Avigdor Halberstam, the brother of Reb Chaim of Zanz, was once the honored Shabbos guest of one of the prominent citizens of some township. The custom in those parts was that the householder would pass the whole pot of *cholent*to his distinguished guest, who would be asked—by way of compliment, as if he were the host—to apportion the steaming stew into the plates of the members of the family.

As the *cholent* was passed to him, Reb Avigdor caught a whiff of it, tasted it, then tasted it again, and again—until bit by bit he finished it all, leaving nothing for the others at the table. Then he asked: “Is there perhaps a little more*cholent*?” And this, too, he finished, down to the last spoonful

The host and his family were dumbfounded—but it was known that *tzaddikim*see a spiritual mission in eating, revealing the sparks of sanctity that are hidden in the things of This World. And who would be so bold as to pretend to guess at the hidden things that *tzaddikim* relish…?

But some of his disciples were present, and in all the time they had known him they had never observed him serving his Maker in *this*manner. So they gathered up courage and after some time asked him to enlighten them as to the hidden things that he had relished in that *cholent*.

“I am sure I can trust you with the explanation,” he said. “By mistake, the maid in that household flavored the *cholent*with kerosene instead of vinegar. I could smell it and taste it. I gathered that if our host and hostess would find out, the defenseless girl would never hear the end of it, and possibly lose her job as well—and she’s a penniless orphan, poor thing. So I ate up the *cholent*, and let them think of me whatever they please. Why should an orphaned waif have to suffer abuse?”

*Reprinted from last week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine. Reproduced from A Treasury of Chassidic Tales by Rabbi S. Y. Zevin, with permission of the copyright holders, ArtScroll /Mesorah Publications, Ltd.*

**Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos**

**The Girl Who Didn’t**

**Want to Sell on Shabbos**

Rav Yitzcak Zev Soloveitchik tells a story of a girl that grew up secular and decided to become religious. However, her parents were against this lifestyle change and wanted her to act as they did, so she quietly and secretly kept the Torah as best as she could.

Her parents owned a housewares store and one Friday, they told their daughter that they had to go out of town for a day and wanted her to open the store on Saturday. Not wanting to cause conflict, she didn't say anything and her parents left.

Right before Shabbos, she went to the store and prepared whatever she could so that she could avoid desecrating Shabbos. She turned on the lights and set up the store for the next day before Shabbos arrived. On Shabbos, she walked to the store and sat there with her siddur, davening that no one would come in so that she could keep Shabbos.

For most of the day her prayers worked, and there were no customers. She didn’t know how she would explain the empty register to her parents, as they surely wouldn't believe that no one came in all day. Then, sometime before the end of Shabbos, a man came in, looked around, and found a five dollar item that he liked. He asked her the price, but she, not wanting to conduct business on Shabbos, told him it was five hundred dollars so that he would leave.

The man was incredulous and said, “How can this cheap item be five hundred dollars?” She said to him, “If you don't want to buy it, you don't have to.” However, the man really wanted it and tried to get her to lower the price, but she wouldn't budge. He left and returned a few times, trying to negotiate the price, but the girl stood strong.

She said, “If you wait a little, my parents will soon be back and you can deal with them”, but the man wouldn't give up. She kept trying to push him off, and the man kept negotiating, until finally, the man agreed to her price. Meanwhile, the girl noticed that Shabbos had ended.

She said, “I can sell it to you now, but only at the five dollar price. The reason I asked for such an exorbitant amount was because I didn't want to sell it on Shabbos. Now that Shabbos is over, I can sell it to you at the regular price.”

The man however said, “I can't do that. Once I said I would pay a price, I have to pay it”, and he put five hundred dollars on the counter, took his item and left. The girl praised and thanked Hashem! She didn't have to desecrate the Shabbos, and she made a tremendous profit!

When she told her parents what happened, they understood that by her keeping Shabbos, she actually made more money than they would earn in a month. They too saw the beauty of Shabbos and that they wouldn’t lose out, and decided to start keeping Shabbos also!

*Reprinted from a recent edition of “Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**It Once Happened**

**Because of the Mitzva of Honoring One’s Father**

As a child, the great Torah scholar, Reb Avraham of Sochatchov, was the pupil of his great father, Reb Zev Nachum of Biala. One day his father asked him a particularly difficult question about the Talmudic text they were studying.

The child, who was endowed with a brilliant mind, saw the solution to the question at once and didn't lose a moment in proving the answer.

His father, a scholar of note, rejected his son's answer, which seemed to have popped out of the child's mouth before he had a chance to properly reflect on its profundity.

Reb Zev Nachum gave the boy a light tap on his cheek and said, "You will have to overcome your habit of answering so quickly before you have thought through the question."

Many years went by and one day Reb Avraham, now an established scholar of great repute was summoned to his father's sick bed. Reb Zev Nachum reminded his son about that incident which had occurred so many years ago and said, "You know, after that happened I again looked into the commentaries on that particular passage. In my study, I discovered that the interpretation which you gave was perfectly correct. I had wanted to apologize to you at the time, but I was afraid lest you become too conceited about your intellect, and I restrained myself. I have thought about it all these years."

Reb Avraham smiled at his father. "I, too, have thought about that incident many times over the years, and I, too, wanted to speak to you about it. I knew at the time that my analysis of the problem was correct and that I was punished unjustly. I forgave you immediately, but because of the mitzva of honoring one's father, I restrained myself from uttering a word about it."

Late one winter night a group of scholarly visitors arrived at the home of Reb Simcha Bunem of Pshischah. At the time, he was a small child of five years old. They had come to pay their respects to his father, the Rabbi of Viedislav.

While they were enjoying their meal, the rabbi called his little son. "Come, my boy. I would like you to go and prepare for us an interesting and unusual interpretation of the laws of hospitality.

The child took to his heels and quickly disappeared. After a short time had passed, the boy reappeared.

"Well, my son, what surprise have you prepared for us?" The child already had the reputation of a prodigy, and the distinguished guests were anxiously awaiting his new Torah delights. Simcha Bunem respectfully requested that they all follow him.

They all rose and followed the rabbi. Their surprise was evident when they entered the next room and saw a truly original interpretation of the laws in question. There, neatly arranged, was a bed, complete with clean linens and a fluffed up pillow for each guest!

Reb Meir was a successful businessman and a chasid of Rebbe Mordechai of Lechovitch. His partner and friend was Reb Gershon, who was not a chasid. Reb Meir never gave up inviting his partner to accompany him to his Rebbe's court, and Reb Gershon never weakened in his refusal to come.

One time, however, business necessitated that they both be in the town of Lechovitch at the same time, and Reb Gershon finally gave way and accompanied Reb Meir to the Rebbe.

When they arrived, the Rebbe was seated at his table. Reb Gershon, contrary to his expectation, was fascinated by what he saw and emerged greatly excited.

"What is it that has excited you so much?" Reb Meir asked. His partner replied, "I saw that the Rebbe eats in such holiness that his very eating resembles the service of the High Priest in the Holy Temple." The chasid was very hurt and disappointed by his friend's reply and he brought his complaint to the Rebbe.

"Rebbe, why should it be that on his first visit, Reb Gerhson, who has refused to even come to see you for many years, has the privilege of perceiving you in a way in which I, who always come, am not able to see?"

The Rebbe replied, "He is not a chasid, and he must see with his eyes. You, however, are a chasid, and you have to believe."

*Reprinted from last week’s edition of “L’Chaim Weekly,” a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Brooklyn, NY.*

**What Could Have Been**

**By Rabbi Berel Wein**

One of the great dangers in life, both national and personal, is looking backwards and dwelling upon what could have been, had we but chosen to behave and choose otherwise. There is much to be said for knowing history and appreciating the past. Yet the past, glorious and correct as we may wish to it in our memory, is simply no longer here and many times it is no longer relevant to the issues and challenges that we currently face.

I have studied Jewish history, as well as world and American history for most of my life. The one lesson that I think that I have learned from all of these decades of study and reading is that there is much to be learned from the past but that the past is never the present.

The Jewish people have hallowed the concept of tradition and past custom, and in many sectors of the Jewish world the past is more important than the present. The Talmud even goes so far as to say that in certain instances custom can override halacha.

Perhaps, as with no other people, the Jewish past holds us in its grip and in many respects prevents us from dealing successfully with the current problems and challenges that face us. Not only do we treasure our past, but we willingly recreate it and falsify it to meet current political correctness and beliefs.

Additionally we fantasize it in order to avoid dealing differently with the current troublesome present. The complete fictionalizing in much of the Jewish Orthodox world today, of nineteenth and twentieth century Eastern European Jewish life, has had dire consequences for us today.

We deal in what could have been rather then in what actually was. Part of the problem lies in our inability to admit that mistakes might have been made in the past. In our devotion to Torah and its scholars and leaders, we have built a wall of infallibility and a false portrayal of unanimity of our leaders about the issues and events of the past two centuries.

The traditional Jewish community that comprised most of eastern and central Europe began to dissolve and fracture in the 1800s. The false prophets of Marxism and of the Left seduced much of the Jewish youth of the time. Zionism arose as an antidote to Marxism and ironically as a movement that assimilated much of the ideas of the left into its nation building ideology.

There were many great rabbinic leaders who endorsed and joined the Zionist idea or at least the idea of the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. On the other hand, there were many rabbinic leaders who opposed Zionism in all of its forms and counseled strongly against leaving the “old home” of Eastern and Central Europe. The opposition to emigration was not only applied to moving to the Land of Israel but perhaps even more vehemently to leaving for America.

No one saw the Holocaust on the horizon and the resulting annihilation of European Jewry at that time but there is no question that our Jewish world would have looked quite different today had mass emigration of Jews from Europe occurred, leaving either to the Land of Israel or to North America. I am of course writing from perfect hindsight. But I do so because of the fact that the past has been so falsified and deified, that it has become a detriment instead of an asset to us in our current struggles for survival and growth.

One thing the past should have taught us is that politics and religious beliefs do not and perhaps should never mix or become identical. I cannot believe in my heart of hearts that voting for one political party over another is a fundamental matter of Jewish faith. The political battles of the religious and secular sections of the Jewish people, and perhaps even more so the bitter political battles between various factions of the religious community itself that we witness today, are little more than the continuity of those struggles that took place over the past two centuries in Europe.

And the irony is that none of the combatants in today’s struggles seem to realize the déjà vu involved in their current political and ideological disputes. One would think that the Jewish left would have been cured of Marxism by the experience of the Soviet Union.

One could also think that the events of the Holocaust and of the enormous success of the state of Israel would cause many in the religious world to rethink their view of the state and its place in Jewish life.

However, since many of us are always more concerned with what could have been than in what really was, this is pretty much a forlorn hope. Nevertheless, we should be wise and truthful about our past, practical about our present, and optimistic about our future.

*Reprinted from last week’s email of “Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.”*

**L’Maaseh… A Tale to Remember**

**In the Merit of Honoring One’s Mother**

The Yid HaKadosh of Peshis’cha had a rule in his shiur, that no one could leave until all the questions were answered. As the shiur neared the end, the Yid asked a very powerful and difficult question which no one could answer, and he closed his eyes to think.

One of the students had not yet eaten anything that day, and was feeling weak from hunger. He thought that since he lives nearby he would slip out of the classroom, run home and quickly eat something, then sneak back into class before his Rebbe knew that he was missing— and that was what he did.

As he finished his snack and dashed to the door to head back to yeshivah, his mother asked for his help with something. At first he hesitated because he had to return to shiur, but then he realized that just as Hashem commanded that he learn Torah, He also commanded that he honor his mother. The boy quickly helped his mother, and then rushed back to yeshivah.

Just as he opened the door, the Rebbe opened his eyes, saw the boy entering, and demanded to know where he had gone and what he did! The boy was caught! He quietly explained that he hadn’t eaten all day and because he was feeling weak, he ran home to eat something quickly. Just when he was about to leave, his mother asked for his help, which delayed him further.

The Yid HaKadosh smiled and said, “Because you did the mitzvah of Kibud Av V’Eim with difficulty, the Sage Abaye came and escorted you back to yeshivah! Abaye loves when anyone does the mitzvah of Honoring Parents, because he was an orphan and never had the opportunity to do it himself. When Abaye came in with you,” explained the Yid, “He also explained the answer to the question that I was struggling with!” (Sipurei Chassidim, p.438)

Reprinted from the Parshas Yisro edition of “Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.

**Sparks of Greatness**

**Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk**

Reb Elimelech was one of the greatest talmidim of the Mezritcher Maggid, and after his Rebbe’s histalkus, he became responsible for the dissemination of Chassidus in Poland. He was a brother of the famous Reb Zusha of Anipoly, and together they were known as “the holy brothers”.

He wrote the famous sefer Noam Elimelech” and was known to be one of the” greatest Chasidic Rebbes of his time, with thousands of people flocking to see him and learn from his ways. Many of his disciples became Rebbes in their own right, his primary successor being the Chozeh of Lublin.

He passed away in Lizhensk on the 21st of .(תקמ"ז) Adar 1787 The Baal HaTanya once met with a Rov who was an opponent of Chassidus who asked him, “I have a sefer ‘Noam Elimelech’ which as I have discovered, has been written by a chossid, a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch and I have put it under a bench. What can you tell me something about its author?”

The Baal HaTanya replied, “Even if you would put ,the tzaddik of Lizhensk himself under your bench he would be silent and not say a word. Such was his “humility” (בית רבי ע‘ סג)

It is known that the brothers Reb Elimelech and Reb Zusha took upon themselves to go into golus (self-inflicted exile) for a long period of time. They wandered by foot from village to village, dressed in simple rags with no one knowing who they were.

During the course of their travels, whenever they would come to the town of Ludmir, they would stay by Reb Aharon, a great but poor man. Years later, when Reb Elimelech and Reb Zushe had already become famous, they traveled again to Ludmir. This time, they travel by wagon and .accompanied by an entourage of chassidim.

On their way, one of the wealthy townsmen traveled out to greet them and invite them to stay in his home. The bothers told him to return to Ludmir .and they would make their way there on their own. When they arrived, they went as usual to the home of the poor Reb Aharon.

The rich man came running and complained, “Why did you not accept my offer?” They replied, “We are the same people who used to come here, and we do not want to change our place of stay. The only difference is that now we have come with a horse and buggy and therefore, you want us to stay with you. You know what, take the horse and buggy; let them stay with you…”

*Reprinted from last week’s edition (#23) of “Sparks of Light,” a publication of The Baal Shem Tov Library in Flatbush for Parshas Ki Sisa.*

**Is the Vulcan Salute**

**A Jewish Symbol?**

**By** [**Yehuda Shurpin**](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/15169/jewish/Yehuda-Shurpin.htm)

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| Detail from the Enschede synagogue in Holland (credit: Kleuske) |
| Detail from the Enschede synagogue in Holland (credit: Kleuske) |

**Question:**

I recently discovered that the famous Vulcan salute is actually a Jewish symbol. Is that true? If so, what does it mean?

**Response:**

Yes, the Vulcan salute is an authentic imitation of the manner by which *Cohanim* spread their hands in most congregations when blessing the congregation to this day.

*Cohanim* are those people that today comprise about four to five percent of the Jewish population,[1](javascript:doFootnote('1a2878949');) all of whom trace their paternal lineage back to Aaron, brother of Moses, who was also the first High Priest. The *Cohanim* performed the offerings in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple in Jerusalem. They are still afforded certain honors, and they still bless the congregation with exactly the same words with which Aaron blessed us over 3,300 years ago when we finally got the first Tabernacle up and standing.

We have a dedicated section on the priestly blessing [here](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/894569/jewish/The-Priestly-Blessing.htm), but to make it short:

When the Cohanim bless the people, they stand at the front of the synagogue, face the congregation, cover their faces with their tallit (prayer shawl), and spread out their hands. They say the words of the blessing, one word at a time, following word by word the prompts of the cantor. In most congregations, they do this along with a melody, which differs according to the custom of the congregation.

The reason the Cohanim raise and spread out their hands is because that’s just what Aaron did when he blessed us: “And Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people and blessed them…”[2](javascript:doFootnote('2a2878949');)

**Spreading the Fingers**

But why do they spread their fingers? The Midrash explains that the [Shechinah](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/2473/jewish/Shechinah-feminine-aspect-of-the-Divine.htm)—the divine presence, peers through the fingers of the Cohanim during the priestly blessing, in keeping with the verse, “…behold, He is standing behind our wall, looking from the windows, peering between the cracks.”[3](javascript:doFootnote('3a2878949');)

In Hebrew, those last words are מציץ מן החרכים– *meitzit min ha-charakim*. That last word,*ha-charakim,* can also be read as “five cracks in the wall.” That provides us the clue to the common form by which the Cohanim hold out their hands—it’s in order to have a total of five separations between the fingers: One space below and between the thumbs, another two spaces between the thumb and first finger of each hand, and another two between the second and third finger of each hand.[4](javascript:doFootnote('4a2878949');)

Do that correctly, and you have the original version of what became popularized three thousand years later as the Vulcan salute (just with both hands).

Just one caveat: If you are not a Cohen and are attempting the authentic two-handed salute, don’t say the priestly blessing while doing it.[5](javascript:doFootnote('5a2878949');) The Torah’s instruction to Cohanim is exclusive. Bless everyone you want, but using those words with your hands raised and fingers spread as though you are a Cohen is reserved exclusively for Cohanim at the appropriate time.[6](javascript:doFootnote('6a2878949');) Indeed, the Zoharwarns that one who does so brings judgement and curses upon himself.[7](javascript:doFootnote('7a2878949');)

**Peeking**

[Actor] Leonard Nimoy stated that he got the idea for this [Vulcan]salute [that he employed on the popular 1960’s television show “Star Trek”] because, as a small boy, he peeked when he was told not to [by his father], and saw the fingers of the Cohanim. The Talmud states that the Cohanim should not look at the people and the people should not look at the Cohanim at the time of the blessing, so that their minds will not be distracted. As the Zohar Chadash states, “Woe unto him who would seek favor from his Master while his heart is far off.”[8](javascript:doFootnote('8a2878949');)

But here is a passage from the Zohar that provides a deeper reason:[9](javascript:doFootnote('9a2878949');)

…Rabbi Yosi said that when the Cohen raises his hands to bless the congregation, the people must not look at him, since theShechinah rests on his hands.

Rabbi Yitzchak asked, “If they cannot see the Shechinah, what harm is there for them? After all, it is written: "For no man shall see Me and live.”[10](javascript:doFootnote('10a2878949');) Our Sages explained this to mean that no living man can see G‑d.”

Rabbi Yosi answered Rabbi Yitzhak, “It is because the Divine Name is alluded to in the fingers of their hands, and a person should have awe. Although they cannot see the Shechinah, they should not look at the hands of the priests, so the people should not be impudent towards the Shechinah.”

How is the Divine Name alluded to in the ten fingers? Because our ten fingers correspond to the ten sefirot, which are the ten divine modalities by which G‑d is known in this world, corresponding to ten divine names.

**The Zohar continues:**

We learned that when the priest raises his hands in blessing, the people must be in awe and fear, and know that at that time a time of goodwill prevails throughout the worlds, the upper and lower beings are blessed and there is no judgment among them all.

That is the time when the most ancient and concealed is revealed in the small faces, and peace prevails in all.

Quite befitting, as the last words of the priestly blessing are “and give you peace.” May the most concealed become revealed, and peace prevail in all our world.

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| **FOOTNOTES** | |
| [1.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef1a2878949) | See David B Goldstein, *Jacob’s Legacy,*Yale University Press, 2008, page 27. |
| [2.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef2a2878949) | [Leviticus 9:22](http://www.chabad.org/9910#v22). |
| [3.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef3a2878949) | [Song of Songs 2:9](http://www.chabad.org/16446#v9). Midrash Rabba ibid. |
| [4.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef4a2878949) | See Tur, Orech Chaim, 128. Additionally, the Shibolai Haleket (siman 23) explains that the Cohanim spread out their fingers to show their fear of the divine presence. |
| [5.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef5a2878949) | Talmud, Ketuvot 24b (see Rashi). Shulchan Aruch 128:1. |
| [6.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef6a2878949) | Bayit Chadash on Tur, ibid (specifically with hands raised and fingers spread). |
| [7.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef7a2878949) | Zohar III 145a. |
| [8.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef8a2878949) | Zohar Chadash 40c. |
| [9.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef9a2878949) | Zohar Bamidbar 147a. |
| [10.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2878949/jewish/Is-the-Vulcan-Salute-a-Jewish-Symbol.htm" \l "footnoteRef10a2878949) | [Exodus 33:20](http://www.chabad.org/9894#v20). |

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