

LAMPLIGHTER

30 Tishrei
Rosh Chodesh
1006
28 October
5772/2011

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The first two portions of the Torah, Bereishit (Genesis) and Noach (Noah), share an essential connection, as both pertain to the creation and existence of the world. Bereishit, last week's reading, describes the actual creation, while in Noach, this week's reading, G-d promises that He will sustain the world and never bring another flood.

Symbolically, these two portions represent two different levels of the perfection of creation.

Bereishit represents the world's perfection as it is created by G-d, without man's input or interaction. Noach represents a level of perfection that can only be attained by man's efforts, i.e., the service of teshuva, returning to G-d in repentance.

From the perspective of the first level, there is no possibility for disobeying G-d's will. If man were to disobey G-d, he would automatically lose his right to exist. This is indeed what occurred at the end of last week's portion, when "G-d saw that the evil of man was great... and G-d said, 'I will destroy the man whom I have created.'"

This week, however, we see that man has been given the power to refine himself, and to reach an even higher level of perfection than before his sin. This ability is alluded to by the rainbow, symbolic of G-d's covenant with Noach and G-d's great joy when His children bring the world to even higher levels of perfection through their own actions.

This concept is also reflected in the Names of G-d that are used to describe the act of creation and in regard to Noach.

According to the Torah, the world was created by G-d using the Name "Elokim"; likewise, "Elokim" is used an additional 32 times in reference to creation. The Name used in reference to Noach, however, is the ineffable name of G-d that cannot be pronounced.

Elokim, the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for "nature," represents a level of holiness that is limited, whereas G-d's ineffable name represents a level above all limitations.

We learn from this that the world, as it was created and without man's contribution, has the potential for only a limited revelation of G-dliness; it is solely through the service of man that the higher, infinite and unlimited revelation of G-dliness is achieved.

This idea is further expressed by the months in which these Torah portions are read.

Bereishit is read in Tishrei, the month of holidays; moreover, at least some of the days corresponding to the week in which Bereishit is read are themselves holidays.

Noach, however, is read in the month of Cheshvan, all of whose weekdays are ordinary days. For as symbolized by Noach, man's essential task in this world is to elevate even the most mundane aspects of life and reveal the unlimited potential for G-dliness contained therein.

Adapted from Sefer HaSichot of the Rebbe, 5752, Vol. I

This week's parsha (the weekly Torah reading) opens with a description of the hero of the parsha:

"...Noah, a righteous man, perfect was he in his generations; Noah walked with G d"

The sages of the Talmud wonder about the phrase "in his generations." What is the Torah telling us by adding these seemingly superfluous words? Rashi, in his commentary on the verse, sums up their discussion as follows:

Among the sages, there are those who interpret this as praise of Noah: If he was righteous in his generation, certainly he would have been even more righteous had he lived in a generation of righteous people.

Others interpret it negatively: In relation to his wicked generation he was righteous, but had he been in Abraham's generation he would not have amounted to anything.

But it is the sages of the Talmud who instruct us to "judge every man to the side of merit," and go so far as to declare that "the Torah is loath to speak negatively even of a non-kosher animal." If the clause "in his generations" can be understood both ways, why propose a negative interpretation?

Because there are two important lessons which this interpretation imparts to us. On the one hand, it teaches us that Noah's achievements are not just for the perfectly righteous. Also a flawed individual can successfully resist a negative environment, and even build the entire world anew--as did Noah.

On the other hand, it also teaches us how Noah should not be emulated. Perhaps Noah should not be faulted for failing to save his generation, or for the other shortcomings apparent in the Torah's account, limited as he was by the circumstances of "his generations"; but should this be our attitude when we are constrained by our circumstances? This is the lesson of the Sages' "negative interpretation" of Noah: that we should never satisfy ourselves with the excuse that "this is the world in which we live," but persist in our efforts to redeem it.

So in the final analysis, it is the negative interpretation that is the true credit to Noah. Had we only been presented with the positive perspective on Noah, leading us to suffice with his kind of righteousness, this would actually amplify his failings. But when the Torah's criticism of Noah becomes a source of positive instruction to us, Noah's failings are redeemed as a source of virtue.

Slice of LIFE

A Hug from Heaven

By Daniel Gordis

It's been almost a year since St.-Sgt. Dvir Emanuelof became the first casualty of Operation Cast Lead, losing his life to Hamas mortar fire just as he entered Gaza early in the offensive. But sitting with his mother, Dalia, in her living room last week, I was struck not by loss, but by life. And not by grief, but by fervent belief. And by a more recent story about Dvir that simply needs to be told.

This past summer, Dalia and some friends planned to go to Hutzot Hayotzer, the artists' colony constructed each summer outside Jerusalem's Old City walls. But Dalia's young daughter objected; she wanted to go a week later, so she could hear Meir Banai in concert.

Dalia consented. And so, a week later, she found herself in the bleachers, waiting with her daughter for the performance to begin. Suddenly, Dalia felt someone touch her shoulder. When she turned around, she saw a little boy, handsome, with blond hair and blue eyes. A kindergarten teacher by profession, Dalia was immediately drawn to the boy, and as they began to speak, she asked him if he'd like to sit next to her.

By now, though, the boy's father had seen what was unfolding, and called over to him, "Eshel, why don't you come back and sit next to me and Dvir?" Stunned, Dalia turned around and saw the father holding a baby. "What did you say his name is?" she asked the father.

"Dvir," responded Benny.

"How old is he?" Dalia asked.

"Six months," was the reply.

"Forgive my asking," she continued, "was he born after Cast Lead, or before?"

"After."

Whereupon Dalia continued, "Please forgive my pressing, but can I

ask why you named him Dvir?"

"Because," Benny explained to her, "the first soldier killed in Cast Lead was named Dvir. His story touched us, and we decided to name our son after him."

Almost unable to speak, Dalia paused, and said, "I'm that Dvir's mother."

Shiri, the baby's mother, had overheard the conversation, and wasn't certain that she believed her ears. "That can't be."

"It's true."

"What's your last name?"

"Emanuelof."

"Where do you live?"

"Givat Ze'ev."

"It is you," Shiri said. "We meant to invite you to the brit milah, the circumcision, but we couldn't."

"It doesn't matter," Dalia assured her, "You see, I came anyway."

And then, Dalia told me, Shiri said something to her that she'll never forget - "Dvir is sending you a hug, through us."

At that point in our conversation, Shiri told me her story. She'd been pregnant, she said, in her 33rd or 34th week, and during an ultrasound test, a potentially serious problem with the baby was discovered. After consultations with medical experts, she was told that there was nothing to do. The baby would have to be born, and then the doctors would see what they could do. A day or two later, she was at home, alone, anxious and worried. She lit Chanukah candles, and turned on the news. The story was about Dvir Emanuelof, the first soldier killed in the operation. She saw, she said, the extraordinarily handsome young man, with his now famous smile, and she felt as though she were looking at an angel.

A short while later, Benny came home, and Shiri said to him, "Come sit next to me." When he'd seated himself down next to her, Shiri said to Benny, "A soldier was killed today."

"I heard," he said.

"What do you say we name our baby after him?" Shiri asked.

"Okay," was Benny's reply.

They told no one about the name, and had planned to call Dalia once the baby was born, to invite her to the brit milah. But when Dvir was born, Shiri and Benny were busy with medical appointments, and it wasn't even clear when they would be able to have the brit. By the time the doctor gave them the okay to have the brit, it was no longer respectful to invite Dalia on such short notice, Shiri told me. So they didn't call her. Not then, and not the day after. Life took its course and they told no one about the origin of Dvir's name, for they hadn't yet asked Dalia's permission.

So no one knew, until that moment when a little blond-haired, blue-eyed boy - whom Dalia now calls "the messenger" - decided to tap Dalia on the shoulder. "Someone's looking out for us up there," Shiri said quietly, wiping a tear from her eye, "and this no doubt brings Him joy."

It was now quiet in Dalia's living room, the three of us pondering this extraordinary sequence of events, wondering what to make of it. I was struck by the extraordinary bond between these two women, one religious and one traditional but not religious in the classic sense, one who's now lost a husband and a son and one who's busy raising two sons.

Unconnected in any way just a year ago, their lives are now inextricably interwoven. And I said to them both, almost whispering, "This is an Israeli story, par excellence."

As if they'd rehearsed the response, they responded in virtual unison, "No, it's a Jewish story."

They're right, of course. It is the quintessential Jewish story. It is a story of unspoken and inexplicable bonds. It is a story of shared destinies.

These are not easy times. These are days when we really could use a miracle or two. So perhaps it really is no accident that now, when we need it most, Dvir is sending us all a hug from heaven above.

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

Editor: Shimon Dubinsky

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA
Phone 03 9530 3022
Email: lamplighter_weekly@hotmail.com

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ISSUE 1006

MOSHIACH MATTERS

All of the animals that Noah brought into the ark lived together peacefully. This is because G-d revealed a special holiness in the ark, similar to the Days of Moshiach. The prophet Isaiah describes the Days of Moshiach: "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the young goat together with the calf, the young lion and the ox; and a little child will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together; the lion will eat straw like an ox. The nursing child will play on the snake's hole, the weaned child will stretch his hand over the viper's den."



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

The Rebbe Writes

7 Cheshvan, 5737/1976

We have concluded the month of Tishrei, which is designated in our sacred texts as a "comprehensive month" for the entire year, and which is filled with a variety of festive days and experiences embracing all areas of a Jew's spiritual life throughout the whole year.

The month begins with awe and submission to the Heavenly Reign, the main point of Rosh HaShanah: teshuvah (repentance), the essence of the Ten Days of Return, and Yom Kippur; the performance of mitzvos [commandments] with diligence and joy, culminating with the highest expression of joy with the Torah - the essential aspects of Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah.

It is time to recall the custom that was prevalent in many communities to announce at the termination of Simchas Torah: "And Jacob went on his way."

The point of this custom was to call attention to the fact that, inasmuch as the time has come to return to the routine of the daily life ("his way"), it behoves a Jew to know that he is Jacob, a Jew, and that he has his own way, a way that originates in Simchas Torah and is guided by the joy of Torah and mitzvos.

This means that whatever a Jew undertakes, even his ordinary day-to-day affairs, must always be conducted in the spirit of "All your actions should be for the sake of Heaven" and "Know Him (and serve Him) in all your ways."

The month of Tishrei is a "comprehensive month" also in the sense that in this month the Jew acquires "goods" for the whole year. Immediately afterwards one must begin to "unpack" and draw from one's stock according to the needs of each day in all details. One cannot consider himself free from further obligation on the basis of the accomplishments of the comprehensive month.

Similarly, there are also "comprehensive mitzvos," although each and all mitzvos have to be fulfilled with the fullest measure of diligence and excellence. A comprehensive mitzvah should be performed with still greater excellence and still greater diligence, for its performance is of greater concern to all Jews and the Jewish people as a whole.

One of the main comprehensive mitzvos is the mitzvah of ahavas Yisroel (love of a fellow Jew).

Of this mitzvah it has been said that it is a "great principle of the Torah," and the "basis of the entire Torah." The basis of this mitzvah is the fact that all Jews constitute one entity, like one body, so much so that every Jew sees every other Jew as "his own flesh and blood." Herein is also the explanation why the fulfillment of a mitzvah by every individual Jew affects the whole Jewish people; how much more so the fulfillment of comprehensive mitzvos....

May G-d grant that all the good wishes that Jews wished one another for the new year should be fulfilled, that it be a good and sweet year in every respect, with the realization of the above-mentioned pattern of Jewish conduct:

"AND JACOB" - an appellation that includes all Jews, not only those who have already attained the higher status of "Israel" and "Jeshurun";

"WENT" - in accordance with the true concept of motion, namely, moving away from the previous state to a higher state (for however satisfactory a state is, one should always strive to advance to an ever higher state in all matters of holiness);

"ON HIS WAY" - that "his way," even in non-obligatory matters, becomes a G-dly way, as stated immediately after: "And G-d's angels met him" - in keeping with every Jew's purpose in life to be an "angel" messenger - of G-d, to make for Him an "abode" in this earthly world.

May all the above be done with joy, derived from Simchas Torah, and Jacob "will sing (and praise) the G-d of Jacob," and merit the speedy fulfillment of the continuation of the verse, "The glory and strength of the tzaddik will be uplifted," the coming of our righteous Moshiach.

CUSTOMS CORNER

SANCTIFICATION OF THE MOON

Once a month, as the moon waxes in the sky, we recite a special blessing called Kiddush Levanah, "the sanctification of the moon," praising the Creator for His wondrous work we call astronomy.

Kiddush Levanah is recited after nightfall, usually on Saturday night. The blessing is concluded with songs and dancing, because our nation is likened to the moon-as it waxes and wanes, so have we throughout history. When we bless the moon, we renew our trust that very soon, the light of G-d's presence will fill all the earth and our people will be redeemed from exile.

Though Kiddush Levanah can be recited as early as three days after the moon's rebirth, the kabbalah tells us it is best to wait a full week, till the seventh of the month. Once 15 days have passed, the moon begins to wane once more and the season for saying the blessing has passed.

A WORD

from the Director

The holidays are past; the days of introspection for the previous year have come and gone. This week, Parshat Noach, is therefore an appropriate time to make a good account of the coming year.

As we continue to improve on the past and try to plan for the future, we need to keep one thing in mind: Although an individual may realize that he has things and areas that need improvement, as a whole the Jewish people have accomplished what needs to be accomplished.

As the Lubavitcher Rebbe taught, "We must be conscious that all the service necessary has been completed and we are 'ready to receive Moshiach.' Therefore, even if there is a particular dimension of our own personal service which is lacking... this does not diminish the fact that as a whole, our service is complete and we are ready for the Redemption.

"On the contrary," the Rebbe explained, "the fact that, as a whole, we are prepared for the Redemption, makes it easier for us to complete all the individual elements of our service and to do so with happiness."

The Rebbe went on to use an analogy to further explain this concept.

When a person is healthy as a whole, if he has a small ailment in one of his limbs it can easily be cured. Similarly, since as a whole, the Jewish nation is healthy, i.e., our service has been completed, teshuva [repentance] which is described as "healing," can cure all the particular difficulties of both individuals and the Jewish people.

Whether or not on an individual basis there are small ailments that need to be cured, as a whole, the Jewish people are healthy and our service in this long and bitter exile has been completed.

Let us not, Heaven forbid, give G-d excuses as to why we are still in exile. As the Rebbe told someone at Sunday dollars who suggested that there are conditions that still need to be met before Moshiach can come, "Why are you making conditions? Moshiach is long overdue!"

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Knowledge
By Tuvia Bolton

The story is told about a young man, a budding Talmudic genius, who heard that great and wondrous things were being revealed in Mezeritch by the "Maggid," Rabbi DovBer, successor to the founder of Chassidism, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov. Chassidim were not very popular in those days (circa 1770), and were even suspected of heresy by the Jewish establishment; but this young man found in Mezeritch what his soul thirsted for, and became a disciple of the Maggid.

When he returned home after his first year, he was greeted by his irate father-in-law. "What have you been doing for the last year? What have you accomplished wasting your time with those wild men?"

"I learned that G-d creates the world," answered the young man.

"That's what you learned?!" yelled his father-in-law. "That is what you learned in Mezeritch?! Why, even our washer-woman knows that, and she never studied a page of Talmud in her life... Zelda! Come here!"

The washer-woman appeared from the next room, drying her hands, saying, "Yes sir, what do you want, sir?"

"Tell us, please, Zelda," he was trying to be as calm as possible, "Who created the world?"

"Why...the Almighty, sir!"

"You see!" He turned to his son-in-law and shouted with rage, "Even she says so!"

"She says it," said the Chassid. "But I know it."

"To the Point of Self-Sacrifice"

Told by the Lubavitcher Rebbe

It was during Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's younger years, when the czars still ruled the Russian empire. A new decree against the Jewish community was in the works, aimed at forcing changes in the structure of the rabbinate and Jewish education. Rabbi Sholom DovBer (the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe) dispatched his son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, to the Russian capital of Petersburg to prevent the decree from being enacted. When Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak asked how long he was to stay in Petersburg, his father replied, "To the point of self-sacrifice."

Upon his arrival in Petersburg, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak learned that the decree had already reached the desk of Stolypin, the interior minister of Russia and arguably the most powerful man in the Russian empire. The Czar's intelligence (or lack thereof) made him a virtual rubber stamp for whichever minister the prevailing political climate favoured; at the that particular time, His Highness was led by the nose by Interior Minister Stolypin, a heartless tyrant and rabid anti-Semite who was personally responsible for many of the devastating pogroms which were "arranged" for the Jews of Russia in those years.

Living in Petersburg was an elderly scholar, a former teacher and mentor of the interior minister. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak succeeded in befriending this man, who was greatly impressed by the scope and depth of the young chassid's knowledge. For many an evening the two would sit and talk in the old man's study.

One day, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak told his new friend the purpose of his stay in Petersburg, and pleaded with him to assist him in reaching the interior minister. The old scholar replied: "To speak with him would be useless. The man has a cruel and malicious heart, and I have already severed all contact with this vile creature many years ago. But there is one thing I can do for you. Because of my status as Stolypin's mentor, I have been granted a permanent entry pass into the offices of the interior ministry. I need not explain to you the consequences, for both of us, if you are found out. But I have come to respect you and what you stand for, and I have decided to help you."

When Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak presented the pass at the interior ministry, the guard on duty was stupefied: few were the cabinet-level ministers granted such a privilege, and here stands a young chassid, complete with beard, side-locks, chassidic garb and Yiddish accent, at a time when to even reside in Petersburg was forbidden to Jews. But the pass was in order, so he waved him through.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak entered the building and proceeded to look for Stolypin's office. Those whom he asked for directions could only stare at the strange apparition confidently striding the corridors of the interior ministry. Soon he located the minister's office at the far end of a commanding hallway on the fourth floor of the building.

As Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak walked toward the office, the door opened and Stolypin himself walked out and closed the door behind him. Therebbe's son and the interior minister passed within a few feet of each other. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak made straight for the office, opened the door, and walked in.

After a quick search, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak located the documents pertaining to the decree in Stolypin's desk. On the desk sat two ink stamps, bearing the words "APPROVED" or "REJECTED" above the minister's signature and seal. Quickly, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak stamped the proposed decree "REJECTED" and inserted the papers into a pile of vetoed documents which sat in a tray on the desk. He then left the room, closed the door behind him, and walked out of the building.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

G-d said to Noah, "Enter into the ark."

Every detail in the Torah contains eternal lessons that we can utilize even in our times. The Hebrew word for "ark, also means "word." G-d is commanding every one of us to "enter" the words of Torah, to read each word with feeling and understanding. (*Baal Shem Tov*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 28 OCTOBER 2011



BEGINS		ENDS
7:31	MELBOURNE	8:32
7:22	ADELAIDE	8:21
5:45	BRISBANE	6:40
6:28	DARWIN	7:18
5:44	GOLD COAST	6:39
6:19	PERTH	7:16
7:00	SYDNEY	7:59
7:11	CANBERRA	8:10
7:29	LAUNCESTON	8:32
7:31	AUCKLAND	8:31
7:38	WELLINGTON	8:41
7:30	HOBART	8:35
6:44	BYRON BAY	7:39

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS NOACH
1 CHESHVAN • 29 OCTOBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING: MINCHA: KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7:31 PM 7:40 PM 8:10 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS: LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: MINCHA: SHABBOS ENDS:	10:00 AM 9:40 AM 7:30 PM 8:32 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI: MINCHA: MAARIV:	10:00 AM 7:40 PM 8:30 PM