

# LAMPLIGHTER

10 Shvat  
B'shalach  
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3 February  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Beshalach, we find the verse "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." When the Jews left Egypt in the Exodus, they fulfilled the oath they had made to Joseph and brought his casket to the Land of Israel for reburial. "G-d will surely remember you," Joseph had made them promise, "and you shall carry up my bones from here."

At first glance, the Torah's repeated use of the word "bones" (atzmot in Hebrew) in connection to a tzadik (righteous person) seems somewhat odd and even unnecessarily strident. Why doesn't the Torah refer more respectfully to Joseph's "remains" or his "coffin"? The answer, as will be explained, is that the Hebrew expression "atzmot" has special significance.

The word "atzmot" is an allusion to "atzmiyut," meaning "essence." In the same way that a person's bones constitute the strength of his physical body, the phrase "the bones of Joseph" refers to Joseph's unique and powerful character. When the Torah tells us that Moses carried the "bones" of Joseph, it means that he took the essence of Joseph with him into the desert.

This "essence of Joseph" is alluded to in his name, as his mother Rachel declared when he was born: "And she called his name Joseph, saying, G-d will add to me another son (ben acher)." The function of Joseph is to "add" Jewish children, and not just any children, but even those who have fallen to the level of "acher," meaning "other." This essence of Joseph can restore even the most estranged Jew into a child of the Holy One, blessed be He.

When the Children of Israel left Egypt they became a nation, acquiring the status of G-d's "children." The bond between a parent and child is indestructible; no matter how far the child may roam, he will always remain his father's child. When Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt, he utilized this special ability of Joseph to transform even an "other" into G-d's rightful "child."

We see this illustrated at the end of this week's portion, when the Torah describes how Amalek attacked the Jews at a place called Refidim. Amalek deliberately targeted those who were "weak" in faith and deed, and were "straggling behind" the rest of the Jewish camp. Nonetheless, Moses sent Joshua to fight Amalek, and even the weakest Jews were saved.

Indeed, we are promised that when Moshiach comes, not even one Jew will be left behind in exile. All Jews are G-d's "children," and together we will enter the Messianic era.

*(Adapted from Volume 26 of Likutei Sichot)*

## Constant Miracles

By Rabbi Ben A.

*"...And G-d caused the sea to go back with a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land and the waters split. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left"-Exodus 14:21-22.*

In this week's portion, we read of that most famous of miracles - the splitting of the Red Sea. Of all the supernatural events recorded in the Bible, this seems to be the one that has captured our collective consciousness as the most quintessential of all wonders. And yet, upon deeper consideration, we see that the marvel of the splitting of the sea is not nearly as remarkable as the miracle of the ongoing creation of the world at this moment.

Consider: In order to make the waters of the sea stand upright, it says that G-d blew a massive east wind which pushed the waters back all night. In other words, to make the waters stand, G-d imposed upon them a constant force. Now, the miracle of the splitting of the sea only took one pre-existing element - the sea - and changed its form into something else - a wall. But the creation of the universe from utter void and nothingness takes nothing and turns it into something. If merely changing one element into the form of another requires the constant exertion of force, then all the more so the existence of the universe which comes from nothing must be continuously brought into being by an uninterrupted and continuous power.

In other words, the world exists because G-d compels it to exist through the ceaseless exertion of His power. A mortal craftsman may construct a vessel and leave his finished work unattended without danger of it reverting to its previous uncrafted form. But when G-d makes nothing into something, this is a change which defies the very essence of nothing. Without constant force, that which exists would revert to its true state of nothingness.

Believing in a Higher Power is one thing; but believing in a Higher Power who is in control at every moment is another. For those in recovery, it is not enough that we simply believe in G-d, we must surrender to Him with complete trust. The knowledge that G-d is always in complete and constant control of His world is essential to maintaining the acceptance and serenity we need to stay sober. We don't believe in accidents. We believe that everything that is now is exactly as G-d wants it to be right now; that there is only now and that G-d is always creating right now. These are the facts that allow us to make peace with our lives and find the G-dliness that is ever-present in everything.

# Slice of LIFE

## AN ANGEL OF ONE THOUSAND

In the early 5700's (1940's), Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary of blessed memory, who was married to the eldest of the *Rebbe Rayatz's* (the 5<sup>th</sup> Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitschak Schneerson) three daughters, was sent by his father-in-law on a mission to Toronto along with Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky. They arrived to find the city completely paralysed by a blizzard. Deep snow had buried practically everything and storm winds blasted through the streets. Since no transportation of any sort was available, they were forced to take refuge in a nearby hotel.

A number of chassidim and admirers of Lubavitch found their way to the place where they were staying in order to pay their respects to their city's distinguished guests. Among them was a certain local rabbi, who related an amazing story.

"Not so long ago, one of the members of my *shul* fell seriously ill. When his family realized that one of his legs was paralysed, they quickly took him to the hospital.

"As soon as I found out about it I went right away to visit him. When I arrived at his floor, I encountered the members of the family who had stationed themselves in the room next to the patient's. They told me the frightening details of his condition: in addition to not being able to walk, he was also barely able to speak.

"Their mood was gloomy. The unpleasant situation of the head of the family would have been reason enough. In addition, his son was supposed to be getting married but had postponed his wedding because of the sudden tragic development.

"They warned me not to go in the room. However, the patient heard my voice while I was speaking to them and asked his nurse to call me in. I entered.

"As soon as he saw me, he managed to say: 'I heard that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is now in the United States.'

"'That's true,' I replied. He came in 5700 (1940)."

"Please!' he implored, gasping the words. 'Write to him on my behalf and ask him what I can do to save myself from this ghastly illness and regain my health.'

"Of course I agreed. As soon as I got home, I dispatched an urgent telegram. The Rebbe's answer arrived very quickly, also by express. He instructed me to tell the stricken man that a branch of Lubavitch's Tomchei Temimim Yeshiva was being established in Montreal and that he should donate \$1000 to it, for '*tzedakah* saves from death.' Specifically one thousand, because the angel of a hundred is incomparable to the angel of a thousand, as it says [Job 33:23], 'If a man will have an interceding angel-one of a thousand...' [see note below]. In this merit he will get well, and have full use of his legs, the Rebbe concluded.

"I hurried back to the hospital with the Rebbe's letter in hand. The relatives were all still there. When the patient's wife saw me, she said in surprise, 'What! Did you already get an answer from the Rebbe?'

"I told her what the Rebbe had said. Her brother, who had also come to visit, overheard. He remarked to her sarcastically, 'Ah! They've already started to try to squeeze money out of him. You know how these people are.'

"I didn't bother to respond. Instead, I went directly inside to the patient. I told him what I had written and that the Rebbe had answered right away. I then read to him the Rebbe's letter. When I finished, he turned to his son, who had been standing next to the bed the whole time. 'Son!' he said, as emphatically as he could manage; 'I want to live! Please take one thousand dollars and deliver it to Montreal, to whatever address that the Rabbi tells you.'

"The son, the one whose wedding was postponed, did exactly as his father requested, without hesitation. A few days later, a doctor in the hospital who was known to be a leading specialist for this particular problem, came to do an examination. The room was cleared for him, and he remained alone with the bedridden man for some time. When he came out, his face was contorted with fury. He went directly over to the relatives of the patient, who were still maintaining their faithful vigil.

"'Who gave you permission to bring in an outside doctor and for him to initiate

treatment?' he demanded. 'And without my knowledge, no less. This is outrageous!'

"The relatives looked at one another and then back at the doctor, thoroughly perplexed. 'Doctor, please, we don't know what you are talking about. We haven't consulted any other doctor, nor do we know what extra treatment you are talking about.'

"'If that's so,' responded the doctor in a calmer tone, but with lingering overtones of suspicion, 'then a miracle has occurred here. The patient's condition has changed radically. There are no longer any internal signs of the disease. I can't understand it. Still,' he said, shaking his head, 'if this present situation persists, we will discharge him very soon.'

"And that's what happened. Shortly thereafter he was released, and although he needed crutches to help him walk, it wasn't too long before he was able to discard them. His condition continued to improve rapidly until he was better completely.

"The rescheduled wedding was celebrated with unusual joy."

*[Translated and freely adapted by Yrachmiel Tilles from Shemuos v'Sipurim by Rafoel Nachman Cohen (vol.1, p.191-192), who heard it directly from Rabbi Kazarnovsky.]*

### NOTE:

In Avos (the ethics of our fathers) 4:11 it says, "With every mitzvah a person does, he acquires for himself an advocate-angel...." The full quote from Iyov (Job 33:23-24) is: "If [he has a merit, then] there will be for a man an interceding angel, one of a thousand, to declare his uprightness on his behalf; then He will be gracious to him, and say, 'Redeem him from going down to the grave; I have found atonement for him'"

### Biographical note

**Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (1880-10 Shvat 1950)** was the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, from 1920 to 1950. In 1940 he moved to the USA, established Chabad world-wide headquarters in Brooklyn and launched the global campaign to renew and spread Judaism in all languages and in every corner of the world, the campaign continued and expanded so remarkably successfully by his son-in-law and successor, **Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson**.

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ISSUE 1020

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Then sang Moses - "Az yashir Moshe" (Exodus 15:1) The Hebrew word "yashir" is composed of the letter "yud" (the numerical equivalent of which is ten) and the word "shir" (the root word meaning "sing"). This alludes to the ten songs sung by the Jewish people in praise of G-d: the song at the Sea of Reeds; the song at the well; the song "Give ear, O ye heavens"; the song of Joshua; the song of Deborah; the song of Chana; the song of King David; the song of King Solomon; the song of Hezekiah; and the song that will be sung in the Messianic era. (Baal HaTurim)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

This letter was addressed to R. Eliezer Silver, one of the leading Rabbis of the Orthodox movement in America at that time.

B"H, the New Year of the Trees, [15 Shvat,] 5708  
Greetings and blessings,

....To conclude with matters concerning the present day: 15 Shvat, the New Year of the Trees. According to *Rambam* (see *Mishneh Torah*, the beginning of *Hilchos Maaser Shen*), it appears that its origins are in Scriptural Law. *Rashi* -- in his commentary to [the *Halachos* of] Rabbeinu Yitzchak Alfasi -- with regard to the *Mishnah*, *Rosh HaShanah* 1:2, by contrast, [states that it is of Rabbinic origin].

[According to the first perspective,] from Scripture, we derive only that [the New Year of the Trees] follows the *Rosh HaShanah* for the years at large [i.e., the first of Tishrei, but not the particular day on which it is commemorated] (*Tosafos*, *Rosh HaShanah* 10a, entry *u'peiros*). It is, however, possible to explain that the establishment of this date is determined in [either of] two ways:

- As applies with regard to other measures [within Scriptural Law], it is a *halachah* communicated by Moshe at Sinai, as is the opinion of most *halachic* authorities.
- The Torah entrusted the establishment of the New Year of the Trees to the Sages. After their ordinance, it has [the power of] Scriptural Law. We see other examples of this principle, according to certain opinions, with regard to doing business with forbidden matters, afflicting oneself on Yom Kippur, performing work on *Chol HaMoed*, the prohibition of following gentile practices, and caring for a firstborn animal.

The difference between these two approaches is that according to the latter one, if there is a court that surpasses [the *Sanhedrin* (which made this definition)] in wisdom and in the number of its adherents, it has the authority to change the New Year of the Trees to another date.

Since the *Mishnah* equates all four *Roshei HaShanah*, it would appear that the first interpretation should be followed. Nevertheless, the debate in the *Talmud* concerning the date when this *Rosh HaShanah* is commemorated [appears to] depend on logic. For by saying: "Follow the majority of years," it appears that [the *Talmud*] is giving a rationale, not mentioning a distinguishing characteristic. This would appear to support the second rationale: that the Torah entrusted the determination of the New Year of the Trees -- i.e., when the fruit of the new year begins to bud -- to the Sages. For the natural order will adapt itself to the Torah, as our Sages comment in the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *Kesuvos* 1:2, on the verse: "To G-d who makes His determination [dependent] on me." I am coming only to raise an idea.

This concept can be expanded upon according to the non-literal approach of *Derush*: It is written: "A man is (-- sometimes, only --) a tree of the field." Our Sages, with the power of the Torah, can determine -- and motivate -- the time when his fruits (*mitzvos*) will bud and when there will be a new year (when he will renew his deeds). [This is possible,] provided it takes place after the *Rosh HaShanah* for a human, as he is human. This is not the place for further discussion of the issue.

With honour for your lofty esteem and with wishes for everlasting good in all matters,  
Rabbi Menachem Schneerson  
Chairman of the Executive Committee

## CUSTOMS CORNER

**Tu B'Shevat** ("the 15th of Shevat" - this year on the 8th of February) marks the beginning of a "New Year for Trees." This is the season in which the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle.

Legally, the "New Year for Trees" relates to the various tithes that must be separated from produce grown in the Holy Land. We mark the day by eating fruit, particularly from the "Seven Kinds" that are singled out by the Torah in its praise of the bounty of the Holy Land (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates). On this day we remember that "Man is a tree of the field" (Deuteronomy 20:19) and reflect on the lessons we can derive from our botanical analogue.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This Friday is celebrated in the Chabad calendar as the day that our esteemed Rebbe accepted leadership of the Chabad Lubavitch movement.*

*In his 1st Chasidic discourse (otherwise known as a 'maamar'- only a Rebbe has the capability of saying a 'maamar') which the Rebbe delivered on the night following the 1st anniversary of the passing day of his father in law [this 'maamar' is based on a 'maamar' the previous Rebbe had ordered to give out on the 10th of Shvat, which of course turned out to be - obviously not coincidental! - the day that he passed away] the Rebbe emphasized that in the beginning of creation G-d's presence resided in the world, but eventually descended - as a result of several sins - to the higher heavens, and then through the work of seven of Tsadikim of the seven generations from Abraham till Moses the divine presence finally settled in the world again [primarily in the temple]. The Rebbe went on to say that this is the mission and task of our - the 7th - generation [our generation is the 7th generation of Chabad Chasidim], to draw the divine presence in to the mini-temple that each Jew possesses inside of him, and this is accomplished through bending one's self away from bad (or for that matter anything that may not be for holly purposes), and eventually to actually transform one's self of his negative habits to a refined nature.*

*Indeed through drawing G-dlines in our personal lives this leads to the eventual coming of Moshiach where the world as a whole will be permeated with G-dlines, let this be speedily in our days.*

*J. I. Gurtman*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Shmuel was a religious, G-d-fearing Jew. He was a Torah scholar and was much admired and greatly respected by everyone.

There was a squire who owned the entire town where Shmuel lived. The squire heard of Shmuel's wisdom and honesty, and appointed him as his business manager.

The squire had complete trust in his Jewish manager. Shmuel was the only person to whom he gave the keys to his safe, knowing that Shmuel would never touch a thing that belonged to another person.

In the squire's court there was another person who worked as Shmuel's assistant, who was extremely jealous of his Jewish boss. He was looking for some way of making trouble for Shmuel, hoping to take his place.

Once the squire made a big party, inviting many guests. In middle of the party the squire asked Shmuel to bring from his safe the famous diamond he had inherited from his parents. The diamond was known to be one of the largest diamonds in the world, and it was priceless.

A few minutes later Shmuel entered, bearing a golden box decorated with many beautiful gems.

The guests moved forward to get close to the squire and to get the best possible view of this remarkable diamond, and then finally, he opened the box.

To the horror of all present, the box was empty! The squire was speechless.

Some of the guests began to shout, "Hang the Jew!"

Turning to his Jewish business manager, the squire said: "It is true that you have served me honestly and devotedly for many years, but it appears that you were not able to resist temptation this time, when you saw this unique gem. Because of your past loyal service, I promise you I will not punish you if you confess your guilt and give me back my precious diamond."

"Heaven forbid," called out Shmuel. "I would never steal anything, especially anything belonging to you, my kind and generous employer. I can see that under the present circumstances, you cannot believe otherwise. But please, I beg you, give me an opportunity to clear myself."

Shmuel asked the squire to keep all the guests in the hall, for the real thief was present there. Then he asked for permission to go home and bring something which would reveal the identity of the thief.

A short while later Shmuel returned, and, to everyone's astonishment,

he had a black rooster in his hand.

"Honored guests," called out Shmuel. "I have here a remarkable rooster. It will allow any honest person to stroke it, but no sooner would a thief do so than it would flap its wings and burst out in a cry of cock-a-doodle-doo! And, as the real thief is among us here today, I shall ask all present to come forward, one at a time, and stroke the rooster with their right hand. When the rooster starts to crow-you will know who the thief is."

Breathlessly and eagerly, the assembled participated in this strange procedure. But when the last of the guests had stroked the rooster and it still remained silent, all the guests began to shout:

"How dare the Jew make a laughingstock out of us with his crazy suggestion!"

"Patience, dear guests. Don't get excited. I haven't finished yet," said Shmuel calmly. "You will soon know who the real thief is."

Thereupon Shmuel asked the guests to lift up their right hands. They did so, and what the assembled saw were black hands except for one white hand. The white hand was that of Shmuel's assistant.

"There is the thief," called out Shmuel. "The rooster I brought is a rooster like any other. All I did was smear its back with soot. I knew that the real thief would be afraid to stroke the rooster, in case it would begin to crow. So he just pretended to stroke the rooster's back, but didn't really touch it. So you see, the hands of the innocent guests were black, while the hand of the thief remained white and clean, though in truth, it was the dirtiest in the entire hall."

"Bravo!" cried all the guests, and made a rush to grab the thief. The culprit had no choice but to confess that he had managed to get copies made of the keys to the squire's safe.

The thief received his just punishment, while Shmuel was reinstated in his important trusted position.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

And Moses said to Yehoshua [Joshua], choose for us men...and Moses and Aaron and Chur went up to the top of the hill (Ex. 17:9)

Why was it necessary to assemble an entire team consisting of Moses, Yehoshua, Aaron and Chur to lead the Jewish army against Amalek? At that time, the Jews were fighting amongst themselves and also rebelling against G-d. Indeed, the very name of the location where the attack occurred - Refidim - is related to the Hebrew word "pirud," meaning disunity. The first letters of the names Aaron, Chur, Yehoshua and Moses form the word "achim" - brothers. Moses' call to the Jewish people was that if they would act as brothers and live in harmony, united in the study of Torah and observance of its commandments, Amalek would never be able to penetrate the Jewish camp. (*Videbarta Bam*)

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 3 FEBRUARY 2012

BEGINS	ENDS
8:14 .....MELBOURNE .....	9:14
8:04 .....ADELAIDE .....	9:02
6:24 .....BRISBANE .....	7:18
7:01 .....DARWIN .....	7:52
6:23 .....GOLD COAST .....	7:18
7:00 .....PERTH .....	7:56
7:42 .....SYDNEY .....	8:39
7:53 .....CANBERRA .....	8:51
8:14 .....LAUNCESTON .....	9:16
8:14 .....AUCKLAND .....	9:13
8:23 .....WELLINGTON .....	9:26
8:16 .....HOBART .....	9:20
7:23 .....BYRON BAY .....	8:18

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS B'SHALACH  
11 SHVAT • 4 FEBRUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:14 PM
	MINCHA:	8:25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:55 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:05 AM
	MINCHA:	8:10 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:14 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	8:15 PM
	MAARIV:	9:05 PM

