

LAMPLIGHTER

15 Adar
Ki Tisa
[Shushan Purim]
1025
9 March
5772/2012

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion is Vayakhel and Pekudei combined, in Parshat Pekudei the Torah relates how Moses made a personal account of all the silver and copper that was donated to build the Sanctuary. The purpose of this inventory was to remove any doubt that the donations were not being utilized for their intended purpose.

The Midrash, however, relates that Moses came up short when tallying the amount of silver: 1775 shekalim of silver were unaccounted for. At that moment, a heavenly voice rang out and proclaimed, "The 1775 [shekalim of silver] were used to make the hooks of the pillars." In this way G-d declared Moses to be beyond all suspicion, as it states, "Not so My servant Moses; in My entire house he is [the most] faithful."

A question is asked: If G-d's sole intent was to attest to Moses' honesty, why was it necessary for him to make an account in the first place? Why couldn't a "heavenly voice" have proclaimed Moses' faithfulness without his having to actually go through the process of counting?

We learn from this that there was a deeper intent behind Moses' taking inventory, a purpose that went beyond merely tabulating the amounts of precious metals that were donated or to remove suspicion.

Rather, Moses played an integral role in the function of the Sanctuary itself, as will be explained.

Although the Sanctuary was erected with the contributions of individuals, at the same time, it was a product of the Jewish people as a whole. This transformation - from a collection of donations made by disparate individuals into an entirely new, collective entity - was brought about by Moses, the leader of the generation.

When an individual Jew makes a contribution, his state of mind is an important factor. Some people make a donation willingly and with all their heart, while others are more hesitant. Moses, however, the Jewish "king," whose "heart is the heart of the congregation of Israel," was able to combine and unite the singular contributions and turn them into a collective whole.

One of the reasons the Sanctuary is called "the Sanctuary of testimony" is that the Divine Presence resting within it attested to G-d's having forgiven the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf.

Moses, the only Jew who remained absolutely untainted by the sin, was thus the only person who could effect this transformation and cause G-d's Presence to dwell in the physical world.

(Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe Vol. 26)

Gathering Together

By Tali Loewenthal

The Parshah this week begins with an immense gathering of the entire Jewish people. The opening words tell us that Moses assembled everyone together. It must have been a remarkable sight: the huge crowd, Moses himself addressing them, and Mount Sinai in the background.

There were several reasons for this gathering. One was because the Jewish people had just lived through very stormy and unsettling events. About three months previously a large proportion of the nation had served the Golden Calf, causing Moses to break the Tablets of the Law. Some people had been executed, and others died when they drank water in which the dust of the ground-up idol had been mixed.

Then followed a long period during which Moses, alone on Mount Sinai, pleaded with G-d on behalf of the nation. Finally, Moses received the second set of Tablets as a sign that the people had been forgiven by G-d. On the tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei, the day which was later to be Yom Kippur, Moses descended the mountain carrying these second Tablets of the Law. His face shone brightly with a spiritual radiance which was so intense that he had to wear a veil.

On the next day came the vast gathering described in our Torah reading. Moses spoke to the people about building the Sanctuary and also about keeping Shabbat. No doubt this had the effect of reassuring everyone, and of refocusing attention on the Divine task in which they were involved: to build a dwelling for the Divine Presence.

The Sages point out that this gathering in which the people heard about Shabbat hints at the fact that later on in history we would gather together on Shabbat. We gather in the Synagogue or the Study House, hearing teachings from the rabbi. We also gather at the Friday Night table. This family "assembly" has also in some ways the same function as that remarkable gathering of long ago described in the Parshah. After all the ups and downs of the week, we come together to refocus, to remember who we are and where we are going.

Slice of LIFE

THE RIGHT ADDRESS

Yigal and his wife Nechamah, both of whom had grown up on a kibbutz, decided to leave Israel and try life in the United States. There, they settled in Minnesota, where, for several years, they and their two children, Eitan and Michal, enjoyed ordinary, satisfying lives. But then, a bizarre problem overshadowed their peaceful existence.

Nechamah was seized by hallucinations. They would last for an hour or two at a time, during which her behaviour would be unpredictable and wild. Afterwards, it would be as if nothing unusual had happened. She had no idea what was going on with her. When the attacks came, she felt as if some mysterious, alien entity was pushing her to do strange things, and that she was powerless to stop it.

The couple visited many doctors, but not one could diagnose the cause of the problem. Their situation deteriorated daily. The children could no longer stay at home; it was dangerous for them to be left alone with their mother when she was under the "spell" of one of her attacks. Nechamah was constantly tense, never knowing when the next attack would come, and having no idea what to do about them. It was a difficult time for Yigal as well. In addition to his other responsibilities, he now had to care for the children too.

In desperation, Nechamah turned to a local Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Mannis Friedman, the well-known teacher and speaker. She begged him to help her. "I am not a doctor," he replied to her, "nor do I possess magical powers. However, I can give you some good advice.

"I am a chassid of the Rebbe of Lubavitch," he explained. "The Rebbe lives in New York. Perhaps he can save you from this terrible affliction."

Nechamah and Yigal wrote a tearful, imploring letter to the Rebbe. A response arrived quickly. The Rebbe advised that the whole family should begin to observe the laws of kashrut. If they would, they could be assured that the hallucinations would cease.

For Nechamah, the Rebbe's words were like a lifeboat. She began to study the laws with great enthusiasm. "On the kibbutz, I never heard about kashrut," she told Rabbi Friedman's wife, Chanah, who encouraged Nechamah and accompanied her to shop at local stores where kosher food was available. Soon Nechamah started to put into practice her newfound knowledge. Within a short time, she adjusted the family menu and was buying only

products with kashrut certification.

Yigal was not at all pleased by this turn of events. Since his wife was ill and the doctors were unable to help her, he accepted that they had to try every reasonable possibility. But this kosher stuff- who knew where it all would lead to? Nechama might even decide to become religious!

One day, seeking respite from the pressures at home, Yigal went out with a group of friends. As they were sitting and talking, one of them related what he had heard about an elderly gentile woman who supposedly was able to predict the future. It was said that she had performed all sorts of wonders and miracles. Yigal became excited. Perhaps this was the solution to his wife's problems. While his friends debated whether or not these stories were true, Yigal already decided that he would seek to enlist this unusual woman's aid. After all, what did he have to lose.

The next day, Yigal went to see her. He described to her in detail about his wife's affliction and her hallucinations. The old lady looked at him. "You're a Jew, aren't you?" she asked.

Surprised by the question, Yigal nodded his head.

"I thought so. But then, why are you here?" she continued in a firm tone. "You should be getting in touch with the great rabbi of the Jews who lives in New York. He is totally dedicated to his people. And he is much more powerful than I."

Yigal was stunned. "What's going on here?" he thought, looking around and blinking to make sure he wasn't dreaming. Why should this gentile woman, who admitted she had powers, be trying to direct him to the Lubavitcher Rebbe? He felt very confused.

"Well," he finally replied, "we already wrote to him. All he said was that we should observe the Jewish dietary laws and that would help."

"Then what's the problem?" the woman asked. "Do the Jewish diet, like he said. Why do you come to me?"

Yigal wanted to explain: "You don't understand. The laws of kashrut are very complex - special food, problems with dishes and pots, no restaurants, and anyway.... The words stuck in his mouth. Their lives were being destroyed by his wife's mysterious ailment. How could he be so petty?"

Today, thank G-d, the family lives once again in healthy tranquillity. The horrors of those days are barely remembered. Only the picture of the Rebbe in the living room quietly reminds them of the strange episode which altered their lives. Many are the messengers of G-d!

THE STRENGTH OF SPIRIT

[In the summer of 1956, after returning from the Soviet Union, Rabbi Adelman made a visit to the Lubavitcher Rabbi after visiting Communist Russia with a delegation of American Jewish dignitaries. He wrote as follows in the B.M.H. Bulletin, September 20, 1960:]

"The purpose of my visit to the Rebbe was more than idle curiosity. Somehow, as a result of what we had seen in Russia, I felt that I could find the answer to a most perplexing problem-how to captivate the hearts and hands of our people for God and His Torah-how to cause commitment to His Truth.

It would be trite to repeat the oft-heard story of spiritual decay in this hell-on-earth, yet it was in the midst of this modern Egypt that my colleagues and I discovered the only meaningful resistance among our people. For, to our amazement, we found scattered groups of Lubavitcher Chassidim that had somehow managed, not only to survive, but to continue to find strength and to transmit it to their children.

Upon my return to America, I hastened to 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, expecting to find an imposing building as would befit this gigantic challenge to Russian Communism.

I suppose that I was a little disappointed to find, instead, a ramshackle old building, badly in need of paint and repair, the lusty voices of young men hard at a folio of Talmud-and a soft spoken and gentle middle aged rabbi, who seemed hardly to be a match for the Khrushchev I had met in Moscow.

But that was until I started to speak to Rabbi Schneerson and looked into his eyes.

Slowly, it began to dawn on me why we had met Lubavitcher Chassidim in Russia, even after they had been cut off from their source of strength for over thirty years --the former Lubavitcher Rabbi had been expelled in the mid-twenties-, but more importantly, I began to see the answer to many questions that had been giving me no peace. For here I saw strength of a different kind-the strength of spirit.

The answer was obvious. To overcome material gigantisms, one does not have to meet it on its own level. Synagogues need not be turned into a kind of religious night club or replica of Las Vegas to draw on the hearts of its people.

The simple answer to material gigantisms is in being spiritually gigantic. No more-no less.

The power of truth is overwhelming-and its obvious asset is that it is Truth.

This is the great discovery that is beginning to turn American Jews back to the synagogue. We are beginning to realize, in the words of the Lubavitcher Rabbi: "Before the truth, all most prostrate themselves."

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ISSUE 1026

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Our Sages said that although the First and Second Holy Temples were destroyed, they were never totally taken from the Jewish people but are only being held for a future date as a pledge. According to Jewish law, the guardian of a pledge is obligated to return it to its owner in perfect condition when the proper time comes. The Third Holy Temple will therefore possess all of the same qualities and characteristics as the First and Second Temples that were held as a pledge until Moshiach's coming. *(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)*



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

B"H, 6 Adar, 5709

Greetings and blessings,

In consideration of your earnest involvement and ongoing help and cooperation for the sake of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, and, in particular, in these critical times, it gives us great satisfaction to send you a present in the name of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch - the enclosed picture of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe *Shlita* - as an expression of our deep appreciation and thanks to you, dear friend.

You are no doubt aware of our Sages' statement (*Sotah* 37b) that seeing the image of a holy man gives one the power to proceed in the path of the Torah and its *mitzvos*. I wish you that the portrait of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe *Shlita*, will give you renewed energy to perform much good in general and, in particular, in the combined efforts in the multi-dimensional missions of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, in which my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe *Shlita*, you, and myself share a heartfelt involvement. May we all merit to see much satisfaction from these holy efforts.

With heartfelt greetings and with best wishes to you and your family,
Rabbi Menachem Schneerson
 Chairman of the Executive Committee

This letter was addressed to R. Yaakov Katz, one of the initial supporters of Lubavitch activities in America.

B"H, 7 Adar, 5709

Greetings and blessings,

As per your telephone conversation, enclosed is a check for \$5,000 as a loan. At the conclusion of your conversation yesterday, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe *Shlita*, expressed the wish that you become a "*graf*," which serves as an acronym for the Yiddish words meaning "good, rich, and *frum* (religious)." (In Russian Yiddish, *grafis* is a title of distinction which more or less corresponds to "earl" in English.) Since I was not sure if you grasped these words, I am writing them [to you]. You will no doubt try to be a medium for that blessing.

Please confirm receipt of this letter,
 Concluding with wishes for everlasting good in all matters,
Rabbi Menachem Schneerson

Perhaps it is possible to explain the order of the blessing given by [my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe *Shlita*]:

Good [refers] to the Divine service of *tzedakah*. This is a preface and preparatory step for blessing.

Rich [recalls] our Sages' comment (*Taanis* 9a) on the phrase: "You shall certainly tithe"; "Tithe so that you become wealthy." [This refers] both to wealth in a simple, material sense and also, the inner dimension [of wealth, as is implied:] there is no one who is rich except one who possesses knowledge, as our Sages comment (*Nedarim* 41a): "If one possesses this quality (knowledge), he possesses everything." This is a preparation for the blessing [to be]:

Frum. Because of one's wealth of knowledge, one meditates in a desirable manner and comes to the love and fear of G-d, as explained in *Tanya* at length. Then he wishes and desires to follow the ways of G-d, as explained by our Sages (*Rambam*, [*Mishneh Torah*,] *Hilchos Deos* 1:5-6): "'And you shall walk in His ways.' [Our Sages] teach the interpretation of this *mitzvah*: Just as He is called 'Compassionate,' so, too, you should be compassionate." Through [the possession of] wealth, according to its simple meaning, one can carry out his desire and wish for the above.

CUSTOMS CORNER

Even though the Shema and its blessings are an obligation for itself and the Amida an obligation for itself, one must none the less place the two near each other, he should not make any interruption between the two even to answer Amen after the blessing of Ga'al Yisrael (the blessing recited right-before the Amida), neither with any verse which some have the custom to say before the Amida, e.g. "Ki Shaim Hashem Ekra" (for the Name of G-d I will call) and the so. Except for the verse Hashem S'fasay Tiftach (my Master, my lips you shall open), for that is an obligation instituted by the sages, and it is not considered as an interruption, for since the sages set it in the Amida, this then becomes as part of the Amida, it becomes as one long prayer.

There are those who say however, that it is permitted to answer Amen after Ga'al Yisrael, and indeed this is the custom.

A WORD

from the Director

This week we read the third of the four special Torah portions, Parshat Para.

Parshat Para describes the offering of the red heifer (the *para aduma*) and begins, "This is the decree of the Torah." These words indicate that the significance of the red heifer relates to the Torah and its *mitzvot* in its entirety.

The *mitzva* of the red heifer reveals two tendencies in a person's G-dly service: a yearning to cling to G-d, known as "*ratzo*" and the willingness to return to this world to carry out G-d's will, known as "*shov*." These two qualities are fundamental thrusts of Torah and *mitzvot*.

The burning of the red heifer with fire represents the thrust of ascending upward - *ratzo*. Fire is characterized by activity and a constant upward movement. The use of "living water in a vessel" which was combined with the ashes of the red heifer refers to the service of *shov*, for water naturally descends from above to below. Furthermore, when found on a flat surface, water remains in its place, reflecting the quality of tranquillity.

Ratzo and *shov* are fundamental thrusts in Torah, not merely because of the unity they can bring about within the world, but because these two tendencies reflect positive qualities which must be emulated in our service of G-d. A Jew must possess the quality of *ratzo*. He must not be content with remaining at his present level, but must always seek to advance further. He must always be "running to fulfil a *mitzva*." Even though he has reached a high level, he must always seek to attain higher heights.

In contrast, *ratzo* alone is insufficient and it is necessary to internalize all the new levels he reaches, making sure that they become a part of his nature. This is reflected in an approach of tranquility and settledness (*shov*). It does not, however imply complacency. Rather, the internalization of one level produces the desire to reach higher peaks. After reaching those new peaks, one must work to internalize them, which, in turn produces a desire to reach even higher peaks.

May we all grow in both areas of growth and tranquillity, *ratzo* and *shov* until we reach the highest height of all and actually greet Moshiach.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED

Once...

Rabbi Yissachar Ber of Rodoshitz was a great Tzadik that lived in Poland some one hundred years ago.

One of the biggest problems for the Jews in Rodoshitz was burial.

It wasn't that there was no available land in Rodoshitz, there was plenty of it. The problem was that the local Baron hated Jews passionately. In fact, the few times he had been approached about the cemetery, the Jews suffered for months thereafter.

As the Jewish population there grew the situation became more and more unbearable until finally the town elders decided they would ask for the Rebbe's help.

They poured out their hearts and waited in silence for the Rebbe's reply.

The Rebbe thought for a while and said. "Go again, offer him more money and if he refuses tell him in my name that if the Jews can't be buried there then someone else will."

They left the Tzadik's home and courageously headed straight for the Baron's castle. They miraculously got in and even managed to get the Rebbe's mysterious message to him before he started screaming and cursing and had them evicted.

Two weeks later was the Baron's birthday and he decided to give his family a tour of his lands followed by a picnic.

Needless to say, the local farmers turned out and waved to the carriage. Everything was going perfectly..... Until the Baron decided he would show his family one particular hard barren plot of land that the Jews on numerous occasions had begged the baron to let them use as a cemetery as it was worthless for the baron anyway.

It was bumpy and rough going but that just added to the fun. But suddenly the carriage slowed to a halt and all that could be heard was the driver shouting, cursing and whipping the horses.

"What is the problem?!" Yelled the Baron through the window.

"We're stuck in some mud and the horses aren't getting us out. They're up to their knees in whatever it is. I can't figure it out." The driver replied.

Meanwhile the Baron opened his door and descended from the wagon figuring he would just take his family out. But as soon as he did, his feet also began to sink. It was only with the greatest effort that he managed to pull themselves from the muck and get back onto the carriage.

They shouted for help and in no time farmers had gathered around and began yelling advice. The puddle seemed to grow, pushing them further and further from the carriage. A few of them ran home and brought ropes to throw as life-lines but by the time they got back the water had spread out so that the ropes simply didn't reach the carriage.

After half an hour the wheels of the carriage were half sunk and going steadily down. The Baron's wife and children were screaming in panic while the Baron was looking up trying to figure how to get his family onto its roof.

Finally someone in the crowd suggested that they call the Rabbi.

When the Baron heard that he immediately shouted "NO!!". But his weeping family gave him a change of heart. "Err. That is ... YES! YES! Certainly! Good idea!!

It took almost a half an hour and when they finally returned with the Rebbe, the Baron and his family were sitting on the roof of the carriage while only few feet of the carriage were jutting above the water.

"Are you willing to sell the cemetery land?" The Rebbe yelled to him.

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

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Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

founder of Efrat, Israel

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"Yes, Yes!!" The Baron shouted back. Take it for free! Just get us out of here!!"
"No!" Answered the Rebbe. "I want to buy it and I want you to write up the deed."

"Good, Good!" The Baron yelled as he produced a pen and a large scrap of paper from one of his pockets, wrote what the Rebbe told him to, signed it, and threw it to the Rebbe.

As soon as the Rebbe read it, he yelled to the driver to get back in his seat and urge the horses to move.

It seemed ridiculous but the driver had no other choice and sure enough...it worked!! The carriage actually began to move and in moments they had pulled the carriage, now completely black with mud, to freedom!

The Baron then approached the Rebbe, curtly bowed and said quietly 'I will always be grateful to you for this. Please come to see me at my castle at your convenience and I will have all the necessary papers drawn up. You are welcome in my home'

Two days later the Rebbe visited the Baron, paid him the money and received an official deed of sale. The Baron then shook the Rebbe's hand and said,

"I have begun to think differently about your people. I see why the Bible calls you special and chosen and holy. I mean, you could have let me and my family die, which is what I would have done to you in such a case... but you didn't. I see I have a lot to learn from you. I have decided to change my attitude and help your people who I have so wronged. If you ever need anything please ask me'

CANDLE LIGHTING: 16 MARCH 2012

BEGINS		ENDS
7:20	MELBOURNE	8:16
7:15	ADELAIDE	8:09
5:46	BRISBANE	6:37
6:42	DARWIN	7:31
5:44	GOLD COAST	6:36
6:15	PERTH	7:08
6:54	SYDNEY	7:48
7:03	CANBERRA	7:57
7:12	LAUNCESTON	8:10
7:21	AUCKLAND	8:16
7:22	WELLINGTON	8:19
7:12	HOBART	8:10
6:44	BYRON BAY	7:36



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMEN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS VAYAKHEL-PIKUDEI
23 ADAR • 17 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:20 PM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:00 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:24 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF NISAN:	
	THURSDAY MARCH 22 2011	9:33, 2 CHALAKIM PM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:16 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	MAARIV:	8:10 PM