

LAMPLIGHTER

4 Sivan
Shavuot / Bamidbar
1036
25 May
5772/2012

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

As this week's Torah portion, Bamidbar (literally "in the desert") suggests, the Torah was given to the Jewish people in an uninhabited wilderness.

A desert is a vast expanse of land to which all people have the same claim. A desert is not considered private property in the same way as a house or a tract of habitable land which can be bought and owned by individuals.

Likewise, the Torah does not belong to any one Jew, but is the eternal inheritance and possession of all. Thus each and every Jew is able (and obligated) to study the Torah and apply it to his daily life.

The desert is a place of dust, earth and shifting sands. Vegetation cannot grow there and it is devoid of inhabitants.

We, too, must strive to be as humble as the dust, as the Torah is incompatible with haughtiness and pride. Indeed, our Sages stated, "Who is he who upholds the Torah? One who makes himself as the desert."

In the desert, the most important necessities for sustaining life - water, food and clothes - are absent. There is no rainfall, and no edible plants or fruit-bearing trees. Obviously, there is no place to buy or make clothing either.

Throughout the 40 years of the Jewish people's sojourn through the desert they relied on the merit of tzadikim, righteous people, for these necessities. In the merit of Moses, G-d caused the manna to fall. In the merit of Miriam the Prophetess, Moses' sister, a well provided the Jews with drinking water. In the merit of Aaron the High Priest, Moses' brother, G-d protected the Jews from harm with the Clouds of Glory. These clouds also laundered their clothes, which grew along with them and always fit perfectly.

We learn from this that when it comes to learning Torah, all other concerns fall by the wayside. Our job is to study Torah and observe its Mitzvot, while relying on G-d to provide us with our needs.

Lastly, the desert is a place of great danger. Wild animals roam about freely, and snakes and scorpions lurk under rocks and in crevices. Yet it was precisely there that G-d chose to reveal His holy Torah.

Until Moshiach comes and ushers in the Final Redemption (may it happen immediately), the Jew is likewise in a dangerous environment - exile. The "snake," the evil inclination, is constantly trying to entrap him and cause him to sin. Thus it is precisely during the exile that the Jew must strive to connect himself to the Torah, and to perform its commandments to the best of his ability.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

The G-d Particle

The term "the G-d Particle" was coined several years ago by Leon Lederman, a Nobel Prize winning physicist. It's a catchy name, one easier for journalists to write about than other exotic names for sub-atomic particles.

So, what is "the G-d Particle" and does a whimsical name in quantum cosmology really have anything to do with G-d?

The "G-d Particle" has a proper physicist name: the Higgs Boson. Peter Higgs was a Scottish physicist who proposed the particle's existence more than 40 years ago.

But to understand what a Higgs boson is, and why it was called the "G-d Particle," we first have to understand about sub-atomic particles - at least a little.

Atoms, as most people learn in high school, are made up of sub-atomic particles: proton, neutron and electron.

But these sub-atomic particles are themselves made up of other sub-sub-atomic particles of which there are two main types: fermions and bosons.

All the particles have been observed, in nature or the lab - except the Higgs boson. And the Higgs boson is important because it, theoretically, gives everything else mass. It "creates" sub-sub-atomic substance. Makes the quarks and neutrinos real, so to speak.

And the universe is suffused with a field of them. Higgs bosons everywhere.

Hence the name.

All this theorizing leads scientists to some interesting conclusions: Despite the complexity of the universe, there's a fundamental simplicity to creation. Also, the cosmos emerged from "almost nothing." Big things - like stars and people - came from the sub-sub atomic stuff, densely packed. According to the big-bang theory, the universe once had no dimensions, no time, no laws of physics.

This sounds a lot like Genesis, doesn't it? "In the beginning, G-d created...the world (universe) was null and void."

Judaism also posits the absolute oneness, simplicity, and unity of G-d: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our G-d, the Lord is One." G-d is infinite and indivisible.

G-d "operates" through invisible forces - "angels," emanations, etc.

OK. So the language of modern physics and cosmology sounds like the language of Torah and Chasidism. And therefore?

Obviously an honest scientist won't claim to have discovered G-d in a Higgs boson. And a perceptive Torah scholar - actually, every Jew - knows that G-d, being infinite, transcends our perceptions, descriptions and, well, everything about us. That's why we have mitzvot (commandments) - as a way to connect with the holy, the otherwise totally separate.

But we can learn three things from this confluence of science and Torah: they are not essentially in conflict; questions about the world we live in do not contradict, impede or negate the obligation, value or spiritual force of a mitzva - just the opposite, science reinforces the importance of mitzvot; and finally, we are truly on the verge of Redemption.

The Zohar tells us that in the time before Moshiach, the "fountains of the deep will break open" - scientific knowledge will increase - and "the windows of heaven will open" - mystical knowledge, Chasidut, will be revealed. And the former - the fountains - depend on the latter - the windows of heaven.

Slice of LIFE

From the Brink of Despair

By Avraham Berkowitz

In September of 2002, I flew from Moscow to NY to participate in the memorial ceremonies on the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks, as a representative of the Russian Jewish community. Before I left, Rabbi Lazar asked me to visit one Russian Jew named Gary and his father Boris in the hospital - Boris had been suffering from lung cancer for several years now - Rabbi Lazar also handed me a pair of tefilin and requested that I give it as a gift to Gary with prayerful wishes for his father's full recovery.

When I arrived in N.Y. I was informed of the sad news that Boris had already passed on. The funeral was scheduled for the next day, September 11. As I am a kohen and do not attend funerals, I told Gary that I would visit him on my first opportunity when the family would be sitting shivah.

The next morning I arrived at FECS Headquarters. Among the many people I was introduced to was Dr. Jonas Waizer, a kind man who is the chief operating officer of FECS. Dr. Waizer gave me his business card and said to me, "If you know someone who may need assistance here in NY, please give me a call."

After the function ended I arranged to meet with Dan Weiss, a common friend I have with Gary, to go with him from Manhattan to the Brighton Beach neighbourhood in Brooklyn where Boris lived, where Gary is now sitting shivah. Due to heavy traffic, we did not arrive in Brighton Beach until close to midnight.

Only with divine interference was it that we eventually found Gary, his family and friends were all sitting behind a restaurant in a dim light on the boardwalk... They were surprised to see us. "How did you find us? Our father's apartment is eleven blocks away from here!"

For the next three hours we sat and talked, listening to stories and anecdotes from Boris's life. Before I left, I handed Gary the tefillin that Rabbi Lazar had sent, and he pledged to honour his father's memory by wearing them every day. He saw this unlikely midnight meeting that brought him such comfort and solace as a sign from Above for him to come closer to his faith.

When Dan Wiess and I got back into the car to return to Manhattan, it was 3:00 AM, we began to talk about 9-11 and its effect on the world. Dan tells me about a friend of his by the name of Sasha, a Jewish Russian

immigrant, a most talented violinist who played in some of the greatest music halls in NY. Unfortunately, his career came to an end.

His story began one day in the mid-90s. He found a spot in a subway tunnel beneath the Twin Towers, and began to play there every day from 6:30 until 9:00 a.m., as tens of thousands of people walked by. Many appreciated the beauty of his music and dropped quarters or dollars into his bucket. He would sometimes collect close to a thousand dollars a day.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, Sasha was there playing as usual. When the planes slammed into the WTC, Sasha was among the thousands of people who fled for their lives.

Every day, Sasha would connect with hundreds of people who worked in the WTC, if only for a few seconds. When the towers came crashing down, so did Sasha's life. He could not bear the pain caused by the images of the hundreds of faces who had walked by him each day, faces he had seen that morning, many of whom had perished in the attacks.

Dan tells me that in recent days, as images of the attacks appeared on television again and again with the approach of the anniversary, Sasha had become even more depressed, to the point that he was suicidal. He sits in front of the television all day watching the clips of the attack.

"Have you ever tried to turn to FECS?" I asked. Dan told me that FECS only helps families of victims, or employees in the Twin Towers who had psychological problems. Sasha was making a living in the building, but he was not officially employed there.

I told Dan about my encounter that morning with the COO of FECS, and about his generous offer. From the car, at 3 a.m., Dan called Sasha and encouraged him not to do anything drastic and that help would be on the way in the morning.

Early the next morning I called Dr. Waizer. He said he would immediately organize a team of specialists to go to Sasha's apartment.

Within a few hours, the specialists and doctors began their emergency intervention and began giving Sasha the care, medication and support he needed to get him back on his feet - emotionally, mentally and financially. Within a few weeks he was on the road to a full recovery.

The next year in early January, Gary was visiting Moscow and I invited him to my Shabbat table. In front of a table full of guests I recounted the entire story of my trip to NY and how the midnight shivah call led to the saving of Sasha's life.

Gary then asked to speak. "The entire story that Rabbi Berkowitz told is true," he said "But

I want to add a part that he does not know.

"On Monday, September 9, the day before my father passed away, Dan called me and told me the whole story about Sasha's desperate situation. Since I majored in psychology and speak Russian, Dan asked me to meet with Sasha and try to encourage him to get professional help.

"I told my father that I was leaving his bedside for a short while to try to save a man's life. I went to Sasha's apartment and knocked on his door, but he refused my entry. I spoke to him through the door for a few minutes until I convinced him to let me in.

"I saw his face and the dark rings around his eyes, and I realized how bad the situation was. I sat down and spoke to him about getting professional help, but he adamantly refused. I then told him about our immigration from Russia in the early 70s. When we arrived in the USA we were greeted in the airport by the Okonov family, founders of Friends of Refugees of Eastern Europe, an organization that dedicatedly served tens of thousands of Russian immigrants.

"We received an apartment in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, headquarters of the Lubavitch chassidim, and home of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. We became very close to the Lubavitchers and we were particularly endeared to the Rebbe himself. The Rebbe privately met with our family and, speaking in fluent Russian, helped us acclimate to our new life. "The Rebbe was a Russian Jew," I told Sasha, and he particularly cared for those of us who struggle in the new world. Even today, after his passing, I visit his resting place in Queens whenever I want to feel close to him and ask for his continued blessings from On High.

"Sasha, please come with me and we will visit the resting place of this holy person. I am sure when we stand there you will find new strength to overcome your difficult depression."

"Sasha agreed, and I drove him to the Montefiore Cemetery in Queens. It was late at night when we arrived at the Rebbe's resting place, and we were the only ones inside the room. I felt as though I was standing in the Rebbe's presence again. I quietly said in Russian, 'Rebbe, help Sasha! Sasha is in desperate need and refuses professional help, he wants to give up on his life. Rebbe help him...'"

Gary finished his story, his eyes filled with tears. "I knew," he continued, "that going to the Rebbe's resting place could lead to helping Sasha - that is why I brought him. I just never imagined that I'd see the connection so clearly and so swiftly."

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 0468 379 128
Email: shimon.dubinsky@gmail.com

The Lamplighter contains words from sacred writings. Please do not deface or discard.

ISSUE 1036

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The coming of Moshiach must be prepared for specifically in the time of exile - a time during which there is "hesech hadaat" (one's reason set aside) from the Redemption, a time during which an enlightened appreciation of the imminent Redemption is set aside. When one lights up the darkest of all places - a situation in which there is hesech hadaat and the very antithesis of the light of Moshiach - the son of David will come. *(The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Shabbat Parshat Mattot-Masei, 5713 [1953])*



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

In the Days of Sefirah, 5734 (1974)

The official opening of the New Wing of ... in these days of Sefira is truly in keeping with the Mitzvah [commandment] of Counting the Days of the Omer, as reflected in the traditional text - which calls for cardinal numbers ("two days," "three days," etc.) rather than ordinal numbers ("second day," "third day"), as might have been expected.

The idea behind this form of counting is that in all matters of holiness, the results and benefits are cumulative, thus establishing a stronger base for further and greater advancement.

Similarly, the New Wing - a most welcome extension of pre-existing facilities - goes beyond its added value, for it enhances the entire complex of the Centre,

By way of illustration, the weight that two persons can lift together is greater than the sum total of the individual capacities.

In the area of Torah education, the addition of such a facility as the New Wing is a significant contribution not only materially but also spiritually.

For, when the student sees that his school is expanded and flourishing, it strengthens his pride in it and stimulates him to greater achievement in his studies, whether his classroom is in the New Wing or in the older building.

And speaking of Torah education and the building in which it is based, there is a symbolic connection between the essential aspects of both.

For, to be sure, the external aspects of a building are important, and due consideration should be given to make the premises comfortable and attractive even at a glance. Yet it is self-evident that ultimately the most vital part of the building is its foundation, though people hardly even speak about it.

And, insofar as the foundation is concerned, the essential thing is that it should be made of the most durable material, which has been tested and is known to be resistant to the elements of change and erosion. It is of no concern what a by-passer or neighbour might think about the foundation's appearance.

This is especially true of Torah education:

To be sure, the external aspects of the premises are important and praiseworthy.

Indeed, in regard to all Mitzvot our Sages enunciated the principle of beauty, as witness the commentary on the words of the Torah, "This is my G-d, and I will beautify Him" - "can a man beautify G-d? But I will make myself beautiful to Him through the Mitzvot... a beautiful Sukkah, beautiful Tzitzit, beautiful Tefillin..."

But one must not lose sight of the fact that the most important thing about Torah education is the quality of the Torah education itself - to permeate the child with the kind of Torah education that will be his unshakable foundation upon which to build a truly beautiful edifice of adulthood, family life, and future generations.

It is surely in this Torah education that the Lubavitch Community Centre takes greatest pride, and deserves the utmost cooperation, both materially and spiritually.

Lag B'Omer, 5721 (1961)

I received your letter of the 8th of Iyar, and I was pleased to read in it your efforts to strengthen Judaism among the youth.

You write that you have been invited to lecture to a youth group, and ask for some suggestions in this connection.

You surely know my general principle, that the accent should be placed on action, in accordance with the teaching of our Sages, "The essential thing is the deed."

This applies to every activity, including lectures, which must bring some practical benefit to the participants in their daily lives in the actual fulfillment of the Mitzvot.

Thus, while the actual background of the audience is not known, the emphasis should be placed on the need for religious practice and experience in everyday life, and not to limit it to special occasions or special days, such as the High Holy days, Shabbos and Yom Tov. For the greater part of life has to do with the everyday, and it is the purpose of Jewish life to bring sanctity even to the weekdays; in the everyday contact with the secular environment.

As we are now in the days of Sefirah, connecting the Festival of Passover - the season of our liberation, with the Festival of Shavuot - the season of our receiving the Torah, we are especially reminded that true freedom can be accomplished only through the Torah and Mitzvot, and on the principle of Naaseh [doing] before Nishmah [understanding], again emphasizing that practice must come before theory.

May G-d grant you success in your activities to strengthen and disseminate true Judaism to the utmost of your ability and this will surely be the channel and vessel to receive G-d's blessings also in your personal needs.

CUSTOMS CORNER

Children in Shul

The Lubavitcher Rebbe urged that all children -- including infants -- should be brought to the synagogue on the 1st day of Shavuot to hear the reading of the Ten Commandments in re-enactment of the Giving of the Torah at Sinai. Our sages relate that when G-d came to give the Torah to the people of Israel, He asked for a guarantee that they will not forsake it. "The heaven and the earth shall be our guarantors," said the Jews, but G-d replied that "they will not last forever." "Our fathers will guarantee it," said the people, but G-d said that "they are busy." It was only when we promised that "our children will guarantee it" that G-d agreed, "These are excellent guarantors."

Dairy Foods

It is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. Traditional Shavuot dairy foods include cheesecake and blintzes

A WORD

from the Director

As the holiday of Shavuot arrives, we are reminded of the beautiful Midrash which teaches that the Jewish children of every generation are the reason why G-d gave us the gift of the Torah:

When G-d asked what assurance the Jewish people were offering that the Torah would be studied, loved and cherished, the Jewish people offered our Patriarchs as security. But this was not accepted. We then offered the Torah scholars as the guarantors. This, too, was not acceptable. It was only when we offered our children as guarantors that G-d approved our proposal and gave us the Torah.

On the anniversary of an event, the "spiritual energy" that was infused by G-d into that event is at its strongest. This is the reason why, for example, we should do our utmost to celebrate our birthdays properly each year. This is true, too, concerning every Jewish holiday. Which means that on Shavuot - the celebration of the Giving of the Torah - the spiritual energy that was invested into that day over 3,000 years ago is at its strongest.

What is the special spiritual energy of Shavuot and how can we benefit from it? It was on Shavuot that our ancestors proclaimed, "We will do and then we will learn." So this is the time when we recommit ourselves to the actual performance of mitzvot - even if we haven't yet learned or don't yet understand their reasons.

Shavuot is also the time when the spiritual energy of our children, being the guarantors for the Torah, is at its strongest. This is the time when we must renew our commitment to providing our children with a proper Jewish upbringing and education as well as facilitating the proper Jewish education of all Jewish children, wherever they may be.

We can begin doing both of the above by going to the synagogue this Shavuot to hear the reading of the Ten Commandments and by bringing along with us Jewish children of all ages - children in age, children at heart, or children in Jewish knowledge. Be there, and be a part of a 3,000-year-old unbroken chain of Jewish commitment and pride.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

ASURGICAL PROCEDURE

In 1854, Rabbi Yehoshua Rokeach, the Belzer Rebbe, suffered from a succession of mysterious ailments. Although he was in much pain, he maintained a cheerful countenance on the outside.

His chassidim, however, were greatly worried and the next time the Rebbe's condition worsened, they decided to bring him to Vienna. There, in the finest medical facility in Europe, they took him to be examined by top specialists. The doctors announced their diagnosis: an immediate and risky operation was urgently necessary.

The Belzer made his preparations. He immersed in the mikveh; he wrote his will; he recited with great emotion the words of the Final Confession. Only then, in an exalted spirit of awe and love of G-d, did he allow himself to be placed on the operating table.

The surgical team awaited the chief surgeon's signal to the anaesthetist to begin his procedure.

Suddenly, the Rebbe called out to one of the surgeons. After confirming his first name, he said: "Moses? You're a Jew, aren't you?" The doctor quietly nodded his head.

Moses, whose given name was actually Moshe Yitzchak, was from a small town called Linden. There he had grown up in a traditional Jewish home. but the boy's heart was drawn in a completely different direction. As his head filled with visions of more cosmopolitan, attracting vistas, he grew further and further from the values of his nurturing home. As soon as he was of age, he left Linden and his distraught parents, and headed for the great metropolis of Vienna.

The first step he took in his new life was to change his name to Moses. Next, he enrolled in a secular school and in a relatively short period of time he caught up to and surpassed his age-mates.

Armed with his decree, he was accepted to the medical school of the university, and there too he was highly successful. Soon after, he became established as a first-class physician and surgeon.

Although Moses' nod of affirmation of his Jewish identity was small and unobtrusive, it was noticed by everyone in the room. There was absolute silence when the Rebbe continued: "Moses, do you believe that G-d Al-mighty created the world and conducts it?" After a short hesitation the perplexed Moses answered, "Yes, Rabbi, I do."

"And what about Moshiach the righteous one who any moment will come and redeem our people from the exile? Do you believe that, Moses?"

This time Moses was silent longer. He selected his words carefully. "Uh, I believe that there will come a certain time when there will be a redemption, but I don't believe that it will come about through a Messiah, a single person, who will rule over the whole world and everyone will be in awe and fear of him. Such a thing is not within the realm of rational possibility; so I can't accept it."

The Belzer lifted his head and turned to face Moses directly. He opened wide his powerful eyes, two bright shining orbs radiating kindness and goodness, but also power and authority.

The Rebbe's penetrating gaze fastened on Moses. He felt it burning into him. He tried to avert his own eyes but was unable. It was as if they were magnetically attached to those of the Rebbe.

Moses' face turned deathly pale, then blush bright as a beet. His whole body was trembling and his hands had begun to shake. Everyone in the room realized that Moses must be undergoing some sort of spiritual or emotional trauma.

The tension was palpable. Moses was panting and breathing with difficulty. He tried his best to calm himself and relax, but found himself unable to. The simple fact that someone had asserted control over him with just a glance kept him in internal turmoil.

Finally, the Rebbe averted his eyes from Moses. The surgeon felt his composure return. Then the Rebbe looked at him again, and studied his face, but this time his gaze was caressing. "Nu, Moses, now do you believe that an individual is capable of arousing fear in all those around him with just a glance of the eyes?"

Moses nodded in silent admission.

"Well, Moses, that is exactly how it will be when Moshiach arrives. G-d's chosen one will rule over the entire world, and everyone will abandon their evil ways and turn towards G-d."

The drama over, the operation was able to take place. Afterwards, it was pronounced a great success, and thousands of chassidim breathed sighs of relief.

Fifteen days later the Belzer was discharged. He boarded the train to return to Belz from Vienna. To the deep sorrow of his followers, however, he never arrived, but went to his eternal reward during the course of the journey. Among those that merited to be in the small group of disciples present at the moment that the Rebbe passed on was his devoted chassid, Moshe Yitzchak of Linden.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Two Shavuot - Two Promises

The word Shavuot, along with meaning "weeks," for it is the holiday that comes after counting the omer for seven weeks, also means oaths. On this holiday two promises were made. First, G-d promised that He would not exchange the Jewish people for any other. Second, we promised that we would not exchange G-d for another. (*Book of Our Heritage*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

SHABBAT / SHAVUOT
5-7 SIVAN • 26-28 MAY

FRIDAY NIGHT • 4 SIVAN • 25 MAY:
CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:54 PM
MINCHA: 5:05 PM
KABBOLAS SHABBOS: 5:35 PM

SHABBOS MORNING • PARSHAT BAMIDBAR • 5 SIVAN • 26 MAY
LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: 9:50 AM
SHACHARIS: 10:00 AM
MINCHA: 4:50 AM
LIGHT CANDLES AFTER: 5:54 PM
MAARIV: 6:00 PM

SUNDAY MORNING • 6 SIVAN • 27 MAY • 1ST DAY SHAVUOT:
SHACHARIS: 10:00 AM
READING OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: 11:00 AM (APPROX)
MINCHA: 4:50 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:54 PM
MAARIV: 6:00 PM

MONDAY MORNING • 7 SIVAN • 28 MAY • 2ND DAY SHAVUOT:
SHACHARIS: 10:00 AM
IZKOR: 11:25 (APPROX)
MINCHA: 4:50 PM
SHAVUOT ENDS: 5:53 PM

WEEKDAYS:
SHACHARIS SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM
MINCHA: 5:00 PM
MAARIV: 5:45 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 26, 27 & 28 MAY 2012

| BEGINS | | ENDS | |
|--------|------|------|-----------------|
| 25th | 26th | 27th | 28th |
| 4:54 | 5:54 | 5:54 | MELBOURNE 5:53 |
| 4:57 | 5:55 | 5:55 | ADELAIDE 5:54 |
| 4:45 | 5:40 | 5:39 | BRISBANE 5:39 |
| 6:10 | 7:01 | 7:01 | DARWIN 7:01 |
| 4:42 | 5:37 | 5:37 | GOLD COAST 5:37 |
| 5:04 | 6:01 | 6:01 | PERTH 6:00 |
| 4:39 | 5:36 | 5:36 | SYDNEY 5:36 |
| 4:44 | 5:42 | 5:42 | CANBERRA 5:41 |
| 4:36 | 5:38 | 5:38 | LAUNCESTON 5:37 |
| 4:58 | 5:57 | 5:56 | AUCKLAND 5:56 |
| 4:46 | 5:48 | 5:48 | WELLINGTON 5:47 |
| 4:31 | 5:35 | 5:34 | HOBART 5:34 |
| 4:40 | 5:35 | 5:35 | BYRON BAY 5:35 |



For the 25th one must light before the given time. For the 26th one must light after the given time. Also on the 26th & 27th one must light from a pre-existing flame only.