

# LAMPLIGHTER

1 Av  
Matot-Massei  
**1044**  
20 July  
5772/2012

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week we read two Torah portions, Matot and Masei. In the first Torah portion, Matot, the Torah begins with the concept of vows, relating how a person will take a vow forbidding himself from indulging in a particular material activity or partaking of a food or beverage. Why would a person take such a vow? Because he feels he needs a safeguard; he senses that his involvement in a given activity is becoming too difficult to control, so he establishes a system of checks and balances that force him to restrain himself. By declaring a particular food or activity forbidden, he assures that he will not indulge in it.

But why is that necessary? If he doesn't want to indulge, why doesn't he simply exercise control? Why does he need the external restraints of a vow?

Anyone who has ever developed a negative habit knows the answers to these questions. Ask an alcoholic if he can have just one drink, or ask a person who has given up smoking if he can have just one cigarette. They'll tell you that it's virtually impossible. Once you start, it's almost impossible to stop. The only way to avoid sliding down the slippery slope is to stay far away. Theoretically, a person can always have control over his behaviour, but practically, safeguards help.

There is however, a way to avoid the entire issue. Why does a person become obsessed with a particular activity to the extent that he cannot control himself? Because he feels a need for happiness and satisfaction that he hopes that particular activity will provide. He continues performing that activity in the hope of receiving that satisfaction until he has developed the habit. Once he has developed the habit, it is hard to overcome it. But if he never develops an obsession, he will not lose his self-control.

But doing that requires having an alternate source of satisfaction. Indeed, our Torah tradition provides us with such a resource. When a person derives satisfaction and pleasure from his spiritual activities, he will not feel lacking, nor will he need something to give him a "high." When his spiritual activity fills him with energy and vitality, that will become his focus and then he will be able to regard material things with a mature perspective. He will not reject the material, but neither will he be over-excited about it. He will be able to view it with the proper perspective and use it for G-d's purposes, and not his own indulgence.

In that vein, our Sages point to the verse "Know G-d in all your ways" and explain that this concept is central to the Torah's guidance. "Know[ing] G-d in all your ways" implies that a person will not be spending all his time in the synagogue or house of study. Instead, he will be involved in "your ways," in ordinary activities in our material world. Nevertheless, his intent will not be to indulge his own pleasures, but to serve G-d.

Everything in this world can be used for the service of G-d. Indeed, that is the reason for its creation as the Mishna teaches: "Everything which G-d created in this world, He created solely for His glory." Hence, there is no activity from which we must refrain and abstain entirely. Yet we should be sure that our involvement in these activities is for the sake of His glory and not our indulgence. In that way, we will be able to derive pleasure that is both meaningful and satisfying.

From *Keeping In Touch* by Rabbi Eli Touger

## I Found a Leader!

By Levi Avtzon

You don't have to have a politically wired brain to interpret the signals when a politician is up for election. Ideals and principles invariably get scrapped in favour of more important goals: popularity and electability. "Um, after thinking about it, I have changed my mind regarding this issue . . ."

Tell me about it.

A president who is up for re-election is usually different than a lame-duck president. The first is a person whose principles are enslaved to his ambitions; the second is often one whose ambition is directed by his principles.

Unless, of course, he is worried about his legacy, in which case his rock-solid principles are blown up by dynamite.

Thank G=d, however, there are the few leaders who enter the universe of leadership only for the sake of the people-not in the interest of creating a "legacy," nor for the all-important goal of "I love seeing my picture in magazines."

Moses was the paradigm of this line of leadership.

Towards the end of the Book of Numbers we read:

*G-d said to Moses, "Take revenge on behalf of the children of Israel against the Midianites, after which you shall be gathered to your people [a euphemism which means to pass away]."*

In other words, G-d commanded Moses to wage battle against the Midianites, after which he would pass away. Quite simple. But when it came time for Moses to forward the commandment to the Jewish people, the instruction went through some editing:

*And Moses spoke to the people, saying: "Arm from yourselves men for an army, to go against Midian and to carry out G-d's vengeance on Midian . . ."*

Hey, what happened to part two? Why didn't Moses tell the Jews the whole story-how, after the war, his time would be up?

The biblical commentator Kli Yakar shares a fascinating explanation:

Had Moses told the Jews the whole story, the Jews would not have gone out to battle, knowing that as long as the battle isn't fought, their leader would not die. They would fight destiny.

Moses knew this, so he omitted the second half of G-d's instruction.

Now, had Moses passed on the instruction verbatim, could he have been faulted? Perhaps the Jews would not have gone to war. But he wouldn't have done anything wrong; he was just passing on the orders-and he would stay alive (to further his "legacy")!

But Moses knew that G-d wanted the war to be fought ASAP. So he willingly put into motion the process that would inevitably lead to his demise, for the sake of satisfying his Creator's wishes.

It wasn't about retaining the seat. It was about doing the right thing.

Thank you, Moses. It's nice to know that there is another side to leadership.

# Slice of LIFE

Our story occurred some 30 years ago with a Chabad Chassid called Rabbi Dovber Levi who was an expert in 'Kashrut'. There are many very complicated laws and conditions that must be fulfilled for food to be permissible (Kosher) for Jews to eat and Rabbi Levi's job was to inspect various plants throughout the world to assure the food they produced met these conditions and could be certified as 'Kosher'.

As a Chabad Chassid, before each trip he would write to the Rebbe for blessing and advice. Usually he would receive almost the same response each time; wishes for a safe and successful journey and several dollars to be given to charity when he reached his destination.

But this time, it happened to be a flight to the Philippines, in addition to the above, the Rebbe added a check for one hundred and eighty dollars and orders to locate the Jewish community there, speak before them and give them the check.

After he arrived in the Philippines and finished his job of checking out the food (which turned out to be non-kosher) he, instead of just getting the first flight out as was his custom, began searching and asking around for directions to the synagogue of the orthodox Jewish congregation.

It took a bit of time but when he finally found it, travelled there and entered, he was surprised; it was filled but the men and women were sitting together in one big room for the prayers!

Although this may not seem important to the average reader, and it wasn't at all to them, it is, in fact, forbidden in Judaism for several reasons. The foremost of which is that prayer requires full concentration on spiritual matters and removal from

worldly ones, which is practically impossible in mixed seating.

His original plan was to fulfil the Rebbe's directive by saying a few nice words but now, with a goal and a topic he asked for permission to speak and the crowd, sensing that he had something important to say, fell silent as he took his place before them. He spoke of the importance of making a division (me'chi'tza), explained what it is, told stories, jokes, examples and finally produced the Rebbe's check as participation in its building.

To his amazement the crowd was enthusiastic! They accepted the check and promised to build a 'Mechitza' according to whatever standards he dictated.

But that wasn't all.

As he was completing explaining to them all the technical details of the Mechitza suddenly the door of the synagogue burst open and a young man came running in while putting on a Yarmulke as he yelled, "Is Rabbi Levi here!? Is Rabbi Levi here?!"

When he saw the Rabbi he ran up to him, shook his hand, sighed a sigh of relief and said.

"Hello! Shalom! My name is Y...., I'm from New York, not far from where you live. That's why I want to talk to you." He caught his breath and continued. "I came to learn medicine here a few years ago after I didn't get accepted to any University in the U.S.A. Anyway, I did pretty well, that is I'm doing well here and, well, I met a really nice girl here in Medical School and, well, she's very intelligent and we get along great. Phew! Let me catch my breath. Well, we decided we want to, err, that is, we're getting married. I plan to take her to New York and we'll get married and set up a clinic there.

"I don't want to just call my parents and tell them such an important thing long distance. And, well, you are a Rabbi and know how to talk. So what I'm asking is that when you get back to New York, please do me a favour and visit my parents and tell them you were

here and that I'm doing well and I'm going to get married and the girl happens to be non-Jewish."

Rabbi Levi almost fell down in shock. If it wasn't for the Rebbe he would have been long gone from the Philippines and would have never met this young man. He had to convince him to call off the wedding. But it wasn't so easy. So he used every argument he could think of, with no results; Y... was determined to get married and NOTHING would change him.

So with no alternative Rabbi Levi promised to relay the sad news to the fellow's parents and left.

But when he got to New York and told Y....'s parents they didn't take it well. They both broke out in hysterical weeping and after a few minutes his father actually passed out cold on the carpet for a few minutes.

"Please" his mother begged "Please, we know you spoke to our son but we beg you, please try again."

Rabbi Levi got the young man's number. He lifted the phone, called him in the Philippines, explained what happened when his parents heard the news and spoke as he had never spoken before.

"That was only when they HEARD you're marrying a gentile." He said passionately. "Think what will be when they actually see her! Not only that but I understand they gave you all their life's savings for you to learn medicine. Is this how you repay them?"

The next morning at 7 a.m. Y... called his parents and told them that he called off the wedding.

Several months later Rabbi Levi received a letter in the mail from the president of the Philippine Synagogue containing pictures of, not only the new mechitza they had built but also the new Mikva that they were beginning to build and a note from the young doctor that he was now part of the congregation and was looking for a Jewish girl to marry.

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

ISSUE 1044

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Prophet Isaiah prophesized: "I shall bring your seed from the east, and gather you in from the west; I shall say to the north, 'Give forth!' and to the south, 'Keep not back!' " (Isaiah 43:5-6). The north signifies the source of evil in the universe, as in Jeremiah (1:14) "From out of the north shall the evil break forth." Yet when Moshiach comes, even the "north" will be transfigured, and will cooperate in the redemption and ingathering of the exiled Jewish people. (*Likutei Sichot, Vol. IV, p. 1065*)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## A WORD

*from the Director*

Freely translated

21 Marcheshvan, 5711 (1951)

It gave me pleasure to hear that you have begun to involve yourself in the subject of Family Purity, which as a result of our many transgressions has been so neglected and abandoned; moreover as a result of misplaced embarrassment there are pious, G-d fearing Jews who are ashamed to talk about this.

How true are the words of my father-in-law that the evil inclination is called "the smart one," because it clothes itself in garments that suit each individual respectively, to make him lose his sensibilities.

As he said in the name of his father, the Rebbe Rashab: "The evil inclination is called the animal soul, not because it is necessarily a senseless animal, but because oft times it is a fox, the most shrewd of animals, and one needs great wisdom to understand its tricks. And sometimes it clothes itself in the guise of a righteous, upright, humble person of sterling character. In each individual the animal soul is in accordance with his specific essence."

Thus we see clearly in the case at hand, being that the characteristic of shame is one of the three characteristics of the Jewish people who are compassionate, bashful and kind.

The evil inclination makes use of this trait to hold back vital talk that affects the happiness of husband and wife and their children thereafter until the end of time....

7 Marcheshvan, 5721 (1961)

In answer to your letter in which you write of the relationship between husband and wife, etc., and fitting with the ruling of our Sages about making peace between husband and wife which is from those things that a person reaps the fruits in this world, and the principle remains for the world to come, it is understood that all effort is worthwhile.

It is also understood that in matters such as this it is not possible to set rules because it depends on the personality traits of the husband and the wife, as well as the condition of the environment in which they find themselves.

However, it is certain that every person has the possibility to exert influence in this matter, with proper thought and consideration for the appropriate method that suits this particular person....

It should not be at all difficult to discuss this with heartfelt feelings, since the subject applies to them directly and to the future generations of their children.

The common factor that is beneficial to all cases such as this is along the lines of what is brought down in Avos d'Reb Noson, chapter 12, about the conduct of Aaron, lover of peace...

If the occupation of the above mentioned couple permits, it is sensible to say that a trip for several weeks of vacation, spent together in a manner of a second "honeymoon" would rectify the entire situation.

28 Menachem Av, 5711 (1951)

.... As I have told you several times, and I repeat again, that you must put the greatest possible efforts into the matter of peace in your home - between you and your wife - as my saintly father-in-law has agreed to your marriage...

The saying of our Sages that "A woman's tears are readily found" is well known. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you to be the forbearer, particularly in worldly matters.

If our Sages have expounded on the great virtue of peace in the home at all times, how much more so is it on the eve of Shabbat - and we, including all of Israel, are now past midday on Shabbat ever - the end of the Diaspora is close at hand as is the coming of our righteous Moshiach.

It is understood that the greatest concealment (of G-dliness) prevails in relationship to (lack of) peace in the home. It is known how great peace is, and the ways of the entire Torah are ways and pathways of tranquillity and peace; particularly during this last exile which came about as a result of lack of peace.

With the approach of the end of the Exile, the resistance of the forces opposed to holiness increase so as to hold back peace in the world at large and specifically between husband and wife here below who reflect their spiritual counterparts Above.

However, "the load is according to the camel," and certainly the ability to withstand the challenge is given to you.

*There are two approaches to the present period of the three weeks between the Seventeenth of Tammuz and Tisha B'Av, the period which commemorates the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Holy Temple.*

*One approach is to dwell on the awesomeness of those tragedies and the difficulties suffered by our people in the exile which followed.*

*The other approach, while not minimizing the extent of our nation's loss, puts the emphasis on the purpose of the exile. Heaven forbid to say that destruction and exile are ends in and of themselves. Rather, within the ashes of the Temple's destruction was kindled the spark of the Future Redemption.*

*In an ultimate sense, this was the purpose of the exile - to prepare the Jewish people and the world at large for the higher and deeper level of fulfilment to be reached in that era.*

*There is no question that the second approach is the one more followed in the present age.*

*Our Sages declared, "All the appointed times for Moshiach's coming have passed; the matter is only dependent on teshuva (repentance)."*

*When speaking of the readiness of our generation, the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe used the allegory of a garment that is complete in all respects - "and all that is needed now is to polish the buttons."*

*Surely, the over 60 years of vibrant Torah activity since that statement was made, have been sufficient to accomplish that purpose.*

*We are standing on the threshold of the Redemption. Moshiach's coming is no longer a dream of a distant future, but an imminent reality which will very shortly become fully manifest.*

*Through living with the concept of Moshiach, we will hasten his coming and bring about the era in which these three weeks will be transformed from mourning into the celebration of the Redemption. May this take place in the immediate future.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

### CUSTOMS CORNER

**How does the mourning for the destruction of the Holy Temple intensify when the month of Av begins?**

During the Nine Days between the beginning of the Jewish month of Av and the 9th of Av mourning intensifies. We abstain from eating meat and drinking wine except on Shabbat and for a Seudat Mitzva (meal associated with a mitzva such as a brit, or upon completing the study of a section of the Torah or Talmud). Lawsuits should be postponed, pleasure trips should be avoided.

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## THE SHAMEFUL CELEBRATION

It takes a notable celebration indeed to override the prohibition against eating meat and drinking wine during the Nine Days (that begin the Jewish month of Av). For this period, at the end of the annual Three Weeks of Mourning which begin with the fast of the seventeenth of Tammuz, culminates in the fast of the Ninth of Av, the anniversary of the destruction of both Temples. A notable celebration of this order under certain circumstances might be the festive meal that follows a circumcision or marks the conclusion of the study of an entire Talmudic tractate.

It was the custom of Rabbi Yissachar Ber of Radoshitz to complete the study of a tractate in the *Gemara* and to celebrate the occasion with a *seudat mitzvah* complete with meat and wine every year on the fifth of Av - for this date is the anniversary of the passing of that giant among kabbalists, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, *the Arizal*. And every year, in the midst of the gloom of the Nine Days, the *Sava Kaddisha* ("Holy Grandfather") of Radoshitz would recount the same story to all the chassidim and students who had gathered for this festive meal. Here is the story.

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In a faraway town there lived a man who used to sleep so much that he was nicknamed "the Sleeper." The month of Elul arrived in all its awe. Seeing the Days of Judgment within reach, every Jew alive trembled, and roused himself in repentance. But this fellow slept. It was already Rosh Hashanah; his wife rose early to join the congregation in prayer - but he slept on. When the morning service was underway she went home to nurse her baby. While there she tried to wake up her husband, but he neither budged nor stirred.

Several times throughout the morning she interrupted her prayers and stole away from the synagogue. Nothing helped. But when the congregation began the reading of the Torah, and time was running out before the high point of the days service, she ran home crying, and shouted at the top of her voice: "They're about to blow the *shofar*!"

He jumped out of bed in a flurry, grabbed some tattered garments strewn with feathers and threw it over his shoulders, bolted all the way to *shul*, and burst inside, puffing and panting, with slumber on his eyelids. The staid worshippers gaped at the comic spectacle. Some - and not only the children - even snickered. The poor fellow felt so disgraced and humiliated that his burning shame flew up and appeared before the Heavenly Court. The verdict was pronounced forthwith: having been seared and cleansed by his shame, this humble Jew was now to have all his sins forgiven.

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"So too with us," concluded the *Sava Kaddisha*. "Here we are, in the depths of this period of mourning over the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, sitting down to a festive meal. Why, this is such a shameful thing that on its account the Merciful one should forgive the sins of the entire House of Israel!"

And with this plea from the heart, the *tzadik* wept so profusely that his tears fell into the wine goblet over which, in preparation for the Grace after Meals, he was about to recite the Psalm which laments the Exile: "By the waters of Babylon we sat, yea, we wept, when we remember Zion...."



Biographic notes:

**Rabbi Yissachar Dov** [1765-18 Sivan 1843], the "*Sabba Kadisha*" (holy grandfather) of Radoshitz, was a disciple of the Seer of Lublin and of the Holy Yid of Peshischa. Famed as a miracle maker, he lived in poverty as a simple tutor.

**Rabbi Yitzchak Luria** (1534-5 Av 1572), Known as "the holy Ari," revolutionized the study of Kabbalah and its integration into mainstream Judaism during the two years he spent in Zefat before his death at 38. Much of Chasidic thought is based on the Ari's kabbalah teachings, as recorded by his main disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital.

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

**And you shall not render unclean the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the L-rd dwell in the midst of the children of Israel (Num. 35:34)**

Not only does G-d's Divine Presence accompany the Jewish people throughout the exile, but G-d Himself, as it were, goes into exile with them, sharing the suffering of the Children of Israel. Because of G-d's great love for His children, He does not abandon them even when they are exiled because of misdeeds. When Moshiach comes, the Divine Presence, no less than the Jews, will also be redeemed from exile. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

**To execute the vengeance of G-d on Midian (Num. 31:3)**

Rashi explains that one who takes a stance against the Jews is actually standing against G-d. Midian tried to fight the Jews by causing them to sin, enticing them with their beautiful daughters and their idols. The sins of illicit relations and idolatry were against the will of G-d; therefore, when war was waged against Midian, G-d was taking His revenge on them. We also see the great love G-d had for the Children of Israel, for even when they sinned and died in the subsequent plague, G-d took His revenge because Midian had wronged them. (*Likutei Sichot*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 20 JULY 2012



BEGINS	ENDS
5:05 .....MELBOURNE .....	6:06
5:07 .....ADELAIDE .....	6:06
4:55 .....BRISBANE .....	5:51
6:20 .....DARWIN .....	7:11
4:53 .....GOLD COAST .....	5:48
5:15 .....PERTH .....	6:12
4:49 .....SYDNEY .....	5:48
4:55 .....CANBERRA .....	5:54
4:47 .....LAUNCESTON .....	5:51
5:08 .....AUCKLAND .....	6:08
4:57 .....WELLINGTON .....	6:00
4:42 .....HOBART .....	5:47
4:51 .....BYRON BAY .....	5:46

## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

**PARSHAS MATOT-MASSEI  
2 AV • 21 JULY**

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:05 PM
	MINCHA:	5:15 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:45 PM
<b>SHABBOS MORNING:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:57 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:06 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS MON-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:15 PM
	MAARIV:	6:05 PM