

# LAMPLIGHTER

8 Av  
Devarim  
**1045**  
27 July  
5772/2012

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

"See, I have set the land before you," Moses relates in this week's Torah portion, Devarim. "Come and possess the land G-d swore unto your fathers."

Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator whose explanation on the text expresses its most literal meaning, explains that the Jewish people did not have to wage war in order to take possession of the land of Israel; had they not sent the spies, they would not have needed any weapons.

"There is no one to contest the matter," Rashi comments. Since G-d Himself promised the land to the Jews, no one in the whole world could have prevented this from happening.

Historically, however, we see that instead of a miraculous entry into the land, the Jewish people did indeed engage in battle with their enemies. Their lack of faith and insistence that Moses send spies to bring back a report, spoiled their opportunity to enter the land unopposed, and made it necessary for them to follow a natural procedure instead of a miraculous one. In other words, it was their own negative attitude and conduct which forced them to wage wars in order to assert their Divine right to the land.

This contains a moral for our own times and present condition:

The Torah tells us that the Final Redemption with Moshiach will be very much like our first redemption from Egypt, but will be accompanied by even more wonders and miracles. It follows that if the entry and settlement of the land of Israel was supposed to be accomplished in a supernatural manner the first time ("There is no one to contest the matter, and you need not wage war"), how much more so will it be miraculous in our own times, with the Messianic Redemption!

Again, just as before, the entire matter depends on us. We must show absolute faith in G-d and His promise that the entire land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people. We must not be afraid to inform the nations of the world - unequivocally - that the land of Israel is our eternal legacy.

As Rashi explains on the very first verse of the Torah, "The whole earth belongs to G-d; He created it and gave it to whom He saw fit. [The land of Israel] was given to [the nations] by His will, and by His will He took it from them and gave it to us!"

When we will demonstrate this true and absolute faith in G-d, we will immediately merit that "no one will contest this, and there will be no more wars nor the need for any weapons."

## Stages in Giving the Torah

By Tali Loewenthal

The fifth of the Five Books of Moses is Deuteronomy – *Devarim* in Hebrew.

In certain ways the Book of Deuteronomy differs from the other four books of the Torah. Every word of Torah is Divine, a communication from G-d to humanity. Nonetheless, within the Torah itself there are different ways in which this communication is expressed.

The first four books of the Torah are written in the third person, describing how G-d created the world and chose the descendants of Abraham to be a sacred nation, the Jewish people. How G-d took them out of slavery and gave them the Torah, and how they travelled through the desert for forty years, towards the Promised Land. These books have a spiritual, ethereal quality.

The Fifth Book, *Devarim*, is different. *Devarim* means "Words," and the book begins, "These are the words which Moses spoke to the Children of Israel." This book consists mainly of the talks given by Moses, preparing the Jews for the task ahead of them: to enter the Holy Land and live normal lives, guided by the Torah.

The Sages tell us that not one word of the Torah was Moses' own composition. All was transmitted by G-d, through Moses, as expressed in the phrase "the Divine Presence spoke from the throat of Moses." Thus while the Book of Deuteronomy is a record of the speeches given by Moses, it is also a Divine text, just like the rest of the Torah, in which every letter is significant.

Jewish teaching tells us that Torah existed before the creation of the world in the form of Divine fire. There had to be several stages in the transmission of this Divine fire to the men and women in the daily world. The first four books of the Torah constitute one stage, in a sense still beyond the world. The Book of Deuteronomy is a second stage, preparing the Jew to bring the teachings of the Torah into application in daily life.

Then comes the chain of the great teachers of the Torah after Moses: Joshua, the Elders, the Prophets and eventually the Sages of the Mishnah and Talmud, reaching onwards to our own time. These teachers and Sages represent the perpetual "Moses" in each generation. At every stage, the figure of "Moses" is crucial - whether the first Moses or the later great Jewish leaders. It is the Moses of the time who shows how the ethereal and exalted Torah should be applied in practical terms, not only for the Jewish people, but for all humanity.

The later part of the Book of Deuteronomy tells of the exile of the Jewish people, and of their ultimate Redemption. With the coming of the Messiah the world will be filled with knowledge of G-d, and all nations will keep the Seven Noahide Laws. At that stage, the process of revealing the Torah in the world will be complete.

# Slice of LIFE

In the (northern hemisphere) summer of 5770 Greece was not a good place to be. Riots filled the street as angry, violent mobs with grievances about the government destroyed property, set fires and battled the police. Bedlam reigned.

Vacationers shunned the place and trips, hotel reservations and plane tickets were cancelled. But for Rabbi Yoel Kaplan, the Chabad Representative in Sloniki, Greece, it was just another challenge.

Rabbi Kaplan thrived on the unusual. His home, like all the hundreds of Chabad Houses throughout the world, was open to the public 24/7 with the hope of helping Jews and Judaism ...and that required expecting the unexpected.

In the days of the rioting there was nothing to do. And even weeks after the rioting, signs of vandalism were everywhere and tension still filled the air but the Rabbi tried to resume his normal activities.

It was not easy. There were no tourists, certainly no Jewish tourists and after all the violence it seemed wise to just stay indoors for a few more weeks. But the Rabbi had a job to do... there must be some Jews out there and then there were some things that were pressing .... like going to the post office daily.

But even such a seemingly simple task was fraught with danger. The post office was located in a part of downtown that had been hit the hardest by violence. and was now a youth hangout.

There were days when in order to avoid trouble he took side roads to get there and used the back entrance even though this meant a serious detour and loss of time.

But one day he was running late and forgot. He headed straight for the post office but as he neared his goal he began to regret it. A group of ten or so youths, some of them with punk hairdos and other bizarre and frightening body ornaments were staring at him with hatred in their eyes. His full beard, black hat, long black coat and entire demeanour were very obviously Jewish and he was an easy target for their frustrations.

He should have turned back, taken an alternate route and avoided them but something told him to just keep walking. From afar he heard the curses they directed at him first in Greek then, because they knew he spoke English, in English; all of

them anti-Semitic.

He had experienced Greek anti-Semitism before. Usually he just ignored it but for some reason this time he glanced up, raised one hand and, as he got closer, said in as friendly a tone as possible "Hello, good morning!".

"Someone talking to you?!" the biggest of them replied sarcastically as the others got ready for some action.

The Rabbi trusted that just as Abraham, the first Jew, some 4,000 years earlier who was alone in his quest to bring meaning into a hostile world, but trusted G-d to protect him (therefore we pray to 'The Shield of Abraham') so this same 'G-d of Abraham' would protect him now.

He smiled and said, "Maybe you weren't talking to me... but you certainly are talking about my people."

"That's right Jew!" The young man replied with burning venom laced with exaggerated terms of hatred, "About your cursed nation of thieves, liars and cheaters we certainly were talking. And we'll keep talking until you are exterminated."

The smile did not depart from Rabbi Kaplan's face as he calmly replied, "You look like intelligent people. You have no reason to hate me or any other Jew. In fact, if you knew the truth I'm sure you wouldn't treat any of us badly."

This was too much for the 'leader'. He was livid with anger as he made a fist, held it before the Rabbi's face and said, "I'm a trained boxer. Unless you want to taste a few of these you'd better get away as fast and far as possible and don't come back!"

Rabbi Kaplan realized that things were about to get out of hand, so he calmly turned to the others, blessed them warmly with a good day and good news and continued on to the post office.

After he finished his business there and left the building something told him not to take a detour back home, rather to return the same way he came... through the crowd. After all, he was only here to do good; the same G-d of Abraham that protected him before would protect him now.

But this time when he passed the group something unexpected happened. They were quiet. He again blessed them with a good day and all of them answered "Same to you."

He continued walking and the 'boxer' that had threatened him previously approached him and stuck out his hand. "I want to apologize for what we said before. We thought about it and decided that you are

right. We really know nothing about the Jews. Must be that we were affected by the media or what people say."

The Rabbi shook his hand, smiled and said. "Apology accepted. The fact is you should never judge anyone before knowing them and for sure you shouldn't hate anyone just because of their opinions. Here" said Rabbi Kaplan as he took a calling card from his wallet and handed it to the 'boxer', "if you ever want to talk over a cup of coffee ... on me!"

If the Rabbi had doubts about talking to these people in the first place all of them melted away. Finally he would have a chance to dispel some of the hatred in the streets and maybe convince some of those fellows to live better lives.

A few days later he got a phone call. "Hey Rabbi, my name is Alexandros - remember me? I'm the fellow you gave your card to the other day. Were you serious about that cup of coffee? If so, I'm right outside your house."

Rabbi Kaplan was pleasantly surprised and in just moments he was introducing Alexandros to his wife and children. They sat down and the conversation began. His visitor had good questions and was a great listener. Eventually, at the third or fourth cup of coffee, the topic of 'Who is a Jew' came up and the Rabbi explained that only someone with a Jewish mother, or one who genuinely converts to Judaism, is considered a Jew. Alexandros became serious and began making interesting calculations.

He announced that his maternal grandmother had told him that she had once been ..... Jewish.

Indeed, she had been an observant Jewess. But in the war, after her husband and children were murdered by the invading Germans she ran and hid in the mountains for several years and a few years later left Judaism and married a gentile. He reasoned that if she left she was no longer a Jew. But the Rabbi set him straight.

His grandmother then gave birth to a baby girl who later grew up, married a religious Greek Orthodox man and become the mother of Alexandros!

Alex discovered that he himself was Jewish. He later took the Rabbi to visit his aged grandmother where she agreed to put a Mezuzah on her home. Alex then decided to put on Tefillin every day.

This occurred in the summer of 5770 and Alexandros has grown significantly in Judaism since then.

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

ISSUE 1045

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

A Jewish vision of redemption ultimately emanates from the source whence destruction receives its energy. Shabbat Chazon ("Vision") precedes Tisha B'Av so that the vision of a glorious future can combat and neutralize the destructive forces concentrated on this fateful day. A true visionary has the ability to see a good future through even a troubled present. This idea is embodied in the Sages' statement that Moshiach is born on Tisha B'Av. He is conceived in the collective super-consciousness of the Jewish People and his birth is the manifestation of the deep belief in the ultimate redemption of the world. This universal vision, imprinted within the very day of destruction, forms the essential core of the soul of Moshiach. (Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburg at inner.org)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

20th of Teves, 5717 [1957]

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to receive your letter... and to read in it that your position has improved, both materially and spiritually. As for the set-backs you mention, and especially your feeling of deficiency in your studies, it should be remembered that the Torah teaches us that the conquest of set-backs and the general settling down in life usually can be accomplished by stages.

You will recall that the Holy Land was also conquered by degrees, and as it was in the case of the physical conquest, so it is in the case of spiritual conquest. For just as it is said of the Holy Land that "the Eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year to the end of the year," so are the Eyes of G-d upon every one of us individually, watching over us constantly and helping us in our determination to accomplish our conquests. Therefore, one should not be discouraged by the slowness of the progress, or even by an occasional set-back. You will also remember what you must have learnt in Chassidus, how destructive it is to be discouraged or sad, etc. On the contrary, any set-back should only call forth a greater measure of effort and determination to overcome it.

With regard to the financial difficulties, debts, etc., I trust that the position will improve. I am enclosing herewith a cheque from the Special Fund of my Father-in-law, of saintly memory, which you should invest in your business, as this will be auspicious for success.

Enclosed also is an excerpt from a message which I think you will find interesting and useful.

Hoping to hear good news from you and with blessing,

15th of Tammuz, 5723 [1963]

Blessing and Greeting:

I was pleased to receive your letter with the enclosure. I am gratified to note that you found the children well and happy, and that all is well also in the educational work.

I was, of course, also pleased to note that after our conversation, you felt much encouraged in regard to your work for spreading Yiddishkeit. In regard to your writing that you had the feeling that you could conquer the world, may I add that this is not only a manner of speaking, but has a basis in fact, as indicated in the Gemara (Kiddushin 40b), and also the Rambam states something to that effect, as a matter of halachah [Jewish law], when he says that a person should always consider his positive and negative deeds as equalized, and so the whole world. If one does an additional mitzvah [commandment], he places himself, as well as the whole world, in the scale of zechus [merit], outweighing the negative side.

The above is true, of course, also in the matter of spreading Yiddishkeit, and not only for the purpose of out-balancing. For the activities in Chinuch [Jewish education], starting in a sincere and hearty way, create a chain reaction, and eventually the students themselves become sources of influence, whether as teachers or in other active capacities, with the same enthusiasm and inspiration.

I trust that you observed in a suitable way the auspicious days of 12-13th of Tammuz. These days marked the liberation of my father-in-law of saintly memory from Soviet imprisonment, where his life was in jeopardy as a result of his relentless and sustained battle for the preservation of the Jewish life and institutions even under that totalitarian and anti-religious regime. His selfless dedication, as well as miraculous triumph, is an inspiration to every one of us, and proves once again that where there is a will and determination in matters of Torah and mitzvos, no obstacles are insurmountable. May the inspiration of these days be with you throughout the year.

With blessing,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### **When Tisha B'Av (the ninth of the Hebrew month of Av) occurs on Shabbat, as in this year, why do we push the fast off until Sunday?**

A public display of mourning is not permissible on Shabbat. Tisha B'Av is the day on which we commemorate the destruction of the Holy Temples. Fasting and observing the customs of Tisha B'Av on Shabbat, then, would be public mourning which is not permissible.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*The Shabbat before Tisha B'Av is called "Shabbat Chazon - The Sabbath of Vision." According to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, every Jewish soul is afforded a "vision" or glimpse of the Third Holy Temple.*

*The Haftorah that is read following the Torah portion, the "Vision of Isaiah," is a prophecy about the Temple's destruction. Oddly enough, the word "vision" is used when discussing both the destruction and rebuilding of the Holy Temple.*

*About the destruction, our Sages declared, "A lion (Nebuchadnezzar) came in the month whose sign is a lion (Av) to destroy Ariel ('the lion of G-d' -the Holy Temple), so that a lion (G-d) will come in the month whose sign is a lion and build Ariel." Once again we find the same word - "lion"-referring to both the destruction and the rebuilding of the Temple. What can we learn from this?*

*In order to understand the connection between the two, let us examine the true nature of the destruction. We are expressly forbidden to raze a synagogue or place of worship. We are also prohibited from wantonly destroying an object of value. Why, then, did G-d allow His dwelling place on earth to be demolished?*

*The only instance in which it is permissible to tear down a synagogue is when one wishes to build an even more magnificent synagogue on the same site. It follows that the destruction of the Holy Temple also fell into this category. The Second Temple was destroyed only because G-d wanted to build the Third and most exalted Holy Temple - the one that would stand for eternity.*

*The inner purpose of the destruction, therefore, was solely to rebuild. That is why the Midrash relates that "the redeemer of Israel" was born at the moment the Temple was destroyed: from that moment on, the true objective of the destruction-the Redemption and the building of the Third Holy Temple-could begin to be realized.*

*It is for this reason that our Sages used similar words to refer to both the exile and the redemption. For just as the Temple's destruction was an integral part of its rebuilding, so, too, is the exile an integral part of the Final Redemption and the coming of Moshiach, may it happen speedily.*

*J. I. Guterlich*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## THREE TRUE BELIEVERS

The *Tzadik* Rabbi Yitzchak of Radvil, having heard of the greatness of Rabbi Avraham Hamalach ["the Angel" - son of the *Maggid of Mezritch*], decided to travel to see him. He arrived on *Erev Tisha B'av*. That night, as everyone sat on the floor of the *shul* reading Eicha ["Book of Lamentations"] and mourning the destruction of the first two Holy Temples, a bitter cry suddenly broke out. Rabbi Yitzchak turned and saw "the Angel" sitting with his head between his knees, weeping bitterly. Long after everyone had left, he continued watching Rabbi Avraham, who sat in the same position without moving. When the clock struck midnight, Rabbi Yitzchak retired for the night.

The following morning, Rabbi Yitzchak arrived early to *shul* and found Rabbi Avraham Hamalach still mourning, a puddle of tears surrounding him. From time to time, he would lift his holy head and ask in a pained voice, "He's still not here?"

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Other *tzadikim* living during the time of the *tzadik* Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum, the *Yismach Moshe*, said that he was a reincarnation of Yirmiyahu Hanovi [the prophet Jeremiah], who prophesied the destruction of the first Holy Temple. The *Yismach Moshe* would constantly cry about the exile, especially during the Three Weeks, and his longing for Moshiach was remarkable. Next to his bed, his finest Shabbat clothing lay prepared, and before sleeping he would warn his attendant to wake him the moment the *shofar* blast of Moshiach was heard. Whenever he heard some bustle in the street, he would run to determine whether Moshiach had arrived.

Once, a notice arrived to his home that on a coming date his beloved son-in-law would be arriving for a visit. This caused a stirring of great joy and everyone prepared for his arrival. The special day came, but the visitor was nowhere to be seen, and the family became restless, imagining possible reasons for his delay. The *Yismach Moshe* sat in his room engrossed in learning, while some family members stood outside waiting impatiently. Suddenly a carriage was seen in the distance. The Rebbe's attendant ran in to bring the *tzadik* the good news, "Rebbe, he has arrived!"

Hearing this, the Rebbe jumped from his place in excitement, put on his fine Shabbat garments, including *kapota* (long black frock-coat and *shtreimel* (elaborate, round fur hat) and ran outside toward the approaching carriage. Seeing none other than his son-in-law

descending from the carriage, he was unable to bear the pain and fell to the ground in a faint. When his family revived him, they heard him moaning to himself, "Oy! It's not him. He still has not yet arrived."

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The chief Rabbi (a century ago) of Jerusalem, Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, related that as a student learning in the *yeshiva* (of the Chatam Sofer) in Pressburg, he once overheard a woman ask her friend what she had prepared for supper.

"Squash," the other replied.

"And for tomorrow?" the woman questioned further.

"*Chas v'shalom* [Heaven forbid!] Don't speak like that! If Heaven forbid Moshiach does not come by tomorrow, then I will make lentils [a food often associated with mourning]."

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Biographical notes:

R. Avraham the Malach ("the Angel") [1739 - 12 Tishrei 1776] was the son of Rabbi Dov Ber, the *Maggid of Mezritch*. While still a young man he chose an ascetic and secluded lifestyle, and on his father's passing in 1772 declined to assume leadership of the chasidic movement. He wrote a work entitled *Chesed L'Avraham*, and died at the age of 37. His only son, Rabbi Shalom Shachna of Probisht, was the father of Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin.

Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum [1759-28 Tammuz 1841], known as the *Yismach Moshe* after the title of his book of Torah commentary, was famed both as a scholar and wonderworker. A disciple of the Seer of Lublin, he was instrumental in the spread of Chasidut in Hungary. His descendants founded the dynasties of Satmar and Sighet.

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

These are the words which Moses spoke to all of Israel (Deut. 1:1)

The Book of Deuteronomy begins with Moses chastising the Children of Israel for their transgressions in the wilderness. When harsh words were necessary, Moses did not refrain from using them. However, this was only when addressing "all of Israel"; when speaking with G-d, Moses consistently defended the Jewish people and acted as their advocate. This contains a lesson for all Jews, and in particular, Jewish leaders. (*Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 27 JULY 2012

BEGINS		ENDS
5:11	MELBOURNE	6:11
5:12	ADELAIDE	6:11
4:59	BRISBANE	5:54
6:21	DARWIN	7:13
4:56	GOLD COAST	5:52
5:19	PERTH	6:16
4:54	SYDNEY	5:52
4:59	CANBERRA	5:58
4:53	LAUNCESTON	5:56
5:14	AUCKLAND	6:13
5:03	WELLINGTON	6:06
4:49	HOBART	5:53
4:54	BYRON BAY	5:50



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS DEVARIM  
9 AV • 28 JULY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING: MINCHA: KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:11 PM 5:20 PM 5:50 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS: LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: MINCHA: FAST BEGINS: SHABBOS ENDS: MAARIV FOLLOWED MEGILAS EICHO:	10:00 AM 9:54 AM 4:30 PM 5:29 PM 6:11 PM 6:20 PM
FAST OF NINTH OF AV:	SHACHARIS: MINCHA: MAARIV END, FAST END:	9:15 AM 4:30 PM 5:58 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS MON-FRI: MINCHA: MAARIV:	9:15 AM 5:20 PM 6:10 PM