

# LAMPLIGHTER

22 Av  
Eikev  
**1047**  
10 August  
5772/2012

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The true test of a Jew's Divine service is seen precisely when he encounters trials and difficulties. The trial serves to reveal his hidden abilities, and his service of G-d is strengthened by the experience.

The 40 years of wandering through the desert were a trial for the entire Jewish people, a preparation for their service in the Land of Israel. In general, there are two types of tests a person may face: the trial of wealth, and the trial of poverty. The Jews' trial in the desert consisted of both elements, and this was reflected in the phenomenon of the manna.

This week in the Torah portion of Eikev we read about the manna - a G-dly food, "bread from the heavens." In the desert, the Jewish people did not have to worry about where their next meal would be coming from; the manna fell predictably from the sky each day. It was entirely digestible, and had whatever taste a person wished. In addition, the manna was accompanied by gemstones and pearls. Thus the manna was symbolic of the epitome of wealth.

At the same time, however, the manna also embodied an element of poverty. Eating manna, the only sustenance the Jews were offered, was not satisfying like regular food. Moreover, the Jews received only enough manna for that particular day; there was never any extra. It is human nature that when a person's house is stocked with food, he becomes sated after eating very little; when there is nothing in his cupboard, he is never fully satisfied.

Thus we see that the manna was extremely contradictory. On one hand, it was the richest sustenance a person could ask for; on the other, it was poor and unfilling.

When a person looked at the manna he saw only manna, and not the other foods whose taste he was experiencing. This in itself caused a feeling of deprivation. And because the Jews only received enough manna for one day, they had to have faith that G-d would cause it to fall the next day, too. So although the manna was the epitome of abundance, from the Jews' standpoint it was a trial of poverty, as the coarseness of their physical bodies prevented them from fully appreciating its G-dly qualities.

In truth, the manna teaches us a lesson in how to overcome both types of tests we may encounter throughout life:

When a Jew is blessed with wealth, he shouldn't think that it is the result of his own efforts. Rather, he must always remember that it is G-d Who has granted him these riches. And if, G-d forbid, a person is faced with the test of poverty, he must likewise remember that "no evil descends from on High." His suffering is the consequence of his own misdeeds, and he must accept it with love. For G-d bestows only bounty and beneficence, despite the limitations of our physical eyes.

*(Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 4)*

## Our Daily Bread Meditations on earning a living

*By Tzvi Freeman*

Your place is the wilderness. The bread you eat falls from heaven. The basket you collect it in is your attitude.

Clutch your basket tight and your manna will have no place to rest. Open it up and look to the heavens and your basket will always be full.

You have today's meal before you on the table and sit and fret over what will be tomorrow -- and you claim you are "just being practical." This is not being practical -- this is confusion.

Every day you are nourished straight from His full, open and overflowing hand. Everything in between -- all your work and accounts and bills and receivables and clientele and prospects and investments -- all is but a cloud of interface between His giving hand and your soul, an interface of no real substance which He bends and flexes at whim.

If so, if He is feeding you today, and He has fed you and provided all you need and more all these days, what concerns could you have about tomorrow? Is there then something that could stand in His way? Could He possibly have run out of means to provide for you?

Take your focus off the measured channels by which you receive and place your eyes on the Infinite Source of Giving. The Source has no lack of channels.

The reason you have a business is to reconnect all these fragments back to their Creator. And the gauge of your success is your attitude.

If you see yourself as a victim of circumstance, of competitors, markets and trends, that your bread is in the hands of flesh and blood...

...then your world is still something separate from your G-d.

But if you have the confidence that He is always with you in whatever you do, and the only one who has the power to change your destiny is you yourself through your own acts of goodness...

...then your earth is tied to the heavens, and since in the heavens nothing is lacking, so too it shall be in your world.

The common conception of how the system works is faulty. They see a career as "making a living." A career doesn't make anything. What you receive is generated above, in a spiritual realm. Your business is to set up a channel to allow all that to flow into the material world.

Every business is the business of a tailor: to make clothes for the blessings that come your way.

You can't alter the size of your blessings by putting them in bigger clothes -- on the contrary, they might just be chased away. But neither should the clothes be too short. Because that is the whole purpose: that miracles and blessings should not come into the world stark naked, but be enfolded in the natural world. And we are the tailors.

# Slice of LIFE

In a New York home of an orthodox Jewish family, the phone rang one evening with bad news; their 90-plus year old mother, grandmother etc. who had been in a nursing home for the aged, had passed away quietly in her sleep.

Everyone wept, funeral arrangements were made, and early the next afternoon family and friends gathered from near and far to pay their last respects and bring their beloved relative and friend to her final resting place.

After the funeral as everyone was leaving the gravesite it was announced that the family would 'sit shiva' (observe the seven (shiva) days of mourning) in their home and everyone was invited to comfort them and participate in the prayers thrice daily.

The next few days were busy, the house was filled with visitors and those who were not able to come sent telegrams and called long distance. But on the afternoon of the third day one strange phone call stood out from all the others.

The phone rang, one of the children answered and the voice on the other end said, "Hello! Is this Avi? Is everything all right? Are mommy and daddy there? What do you mean who is it? Don't you recognize your grandma? This is Avi, right? Nu! So let me talk to your mom or dad. Why don't you come visit?"

Her son got on the phone and...hesitantly said "Mom, is this you?" "Of course it is!" She replied, "What's going on? Why doesn't anyone come to visit me for three days already? Is everything all right?"

Mom was still alive! He burst out crying and joyously turned to everyone else, who already heard the boy's conversation. "Grandma didn't die!" He said with a wild look of disbelief "She's on the phone.... She's alive!"

The joy was great! He told her they were on their way to visit her and in no time they were by her side explaining the whole thing. It had obviously been a terrible mistake.

But suddenly it dawned on them....they just had made a funeral and buried someone! Who was that someone? And who were her relatives?

They had been so overwhelmed with their own living grandmother that they hadn't thought about the dead one! So they called the manager of the nursing home and when he heard what had happened he got the secretaries working and in a short time they got to the bottom of it. Unfortunately things like this happen.

In the same building was another patient with the same name as their grandmother. Both were holocaust survivors, both were in their nineties and both were very similar in build. So somehow the management confused the identities, made a terrible mistake and informed the relatives of the living one instead of the deceased. The management apologized profusely, agreed to pay the price of the funeral, damages, missed work etc., begged them to understand and set to finding the relatives of the deceased woman.

After a short investigation they discovered that she had only one relative; a son who lived not far away and they all agreed that it would be best if the family of the living woman would deliver the bitter news. After all, they reasoned, probably the son would be angry and they could calm him down by assuring that she was given the utmost honour and respect, show them the gravesite etc.

But they were in for a surprise.

As soon as he picked up the phone and heard they were calling from the nursing home and would like to visit him he interrupted and said, "If you're calling to say my mom died no need to come. Just cremate her, throw away the ashes and send me the bill. Okay?"

They were shocked. They had never experienced such callousness! But when they asked if they could come speak to him, he agreed and a half hour later they were sitting in his home trying to explain to him that cremation is forbidden according to Jewish law and that the custom is there should be a proper Jewish burial, there is the raising of the dead etc.

But he wanted no part of it on principle. Not only was cremation cheapest, most efficient, and space and time saving - it was realistic! All this business about souls, G-d, Judaism and raising of the dead was all nonsense as far as he was concerned. People were like plants or animals that live and die... it's nature. "THAT is reality!" He said emphatically.

Finally they had no choice but to tell him the truth.

That, in fact, his mother died several days ago. But by mistake they were told it was their mother and so they not only gave her a Jewish burial but they already sat three days of 'Shiva' for her. They were about to add he doesn't have to worry about money ..... but he didn't give them a chance.

"What!?" He held his head in his hands and whispered "Buried? Mom got buried?"

He had this strange, stunned look on his face. They couldn't figure out what he was doing. He closed his eyes, his face contorted and suddenly he burst out weeping uncontrollably like a baby! From time to time he said, "Oy! Buried!"

After ten, fifteen minutes he calmed down, sat, asked for a glass of water, wiped his eyes, and explained.

"My mother was a holocaust survivor. All her family got killed by the Germans along with my father and all his family. But she got out with me. I was just a baby then but we moved to America and after all that happened to her... she still believed in G-d.

"At first everything was okay but as I got older, like fifteen sixteen, I didn't want to be different from everyone else so I dropped Judaism. She started bugging me about how we are different, I should marry only a Jewish girl and eat kosher food etc. but it just made me mad.

"We used to have big arguments until I got so fed up I told her that I'm not going to live a life like hers. As far as I'm concerned there is no such thing as G-d or afterlife or souls or Judaism and when I die I'm going to have my body cremated and that's what I'll do to hers also when she dies. I guess it was sort of cruel but I thought it was for her good, that she should start living in a real world and leave the 'superstitions'.

"Finally I told her I'll make a deal. She should pray to G-d; if she's right and G-d exists then He'll see to it that she gets a burial but if not then... cremation. I was a hundred percent sure, no doubt at all, what the outcome would be.

"Now I see I was wrong! All this time she was right! Do you understand what happened!?" G-d listened to her prayers! She was right! " And he began weeping anew.

On the spot he agreed to observe the seven days of mourning for her in the house of the previous 'mourners' and to begin learning about Judaism.

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ISSUE 1047

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

A few Chasidim were standing outside the room of the Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad-Lubavitch. They were discussing how Moshiach will reveal himself at the appointed time, and each Chasid expressed his own idea. While they were talking, the door to the Rebbe's room suddenly opened up and the Rebbe himself was standing there. The Chasidim moved back in shock. The Rebbe became serious, turned to them and said, "This is how Moshiach will come - suddenly!"



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

16Av, 5739 (1979)

I am in receipt of your letter of July 27, in which you write in regard to conversion in accordance with the halacha (Jewish law) which, of course, is the only valid conversion.

Needless to say, it is difficult to deal with such a matter through correspondence. The best thing would be if you could speak personally to a practicing Orthodox rabbi, for it is a very important and serious matter. If, for some reason, this is impossible to do without delay, you ought to write to one of the competent rabbinic authorities, such as the Union of Orthodox Rabbis (address below), in whose domain it is - not in mine. And since they treat such matters in confidence, you can write to them quite freely in every detail.

Though you write that you have spoken with an Orthodox rabbi, I see from your letter that you are still confused, and the sooner it - your status - is rectified, the better.

With blessing,  
M. Schneerson

P.S. I gather from your letter that you are aware of the general attitude of the Jewish religion not to encourage proselytizing, and, indeed, to discourage would-be converts. A gentile who wishes to embrace the Jewish faith is often reminded at the outset that gentiles, too, have a Divinely ordained purpose in life which is to promote the rules of justice and decency and the other basic Seven Divine Precepts, with all their ramifications, which have been given to all mankind (the descendants of Noah, hence the so-called Seven Noahide Laws), thereby attaining spiritual fulfilment.

You should, therefore, not be surprised that you have not been encouraged in your desire for conversion according to the halacha, which is the only kind of valid conversion. For, obviously, any other form of conversion has no validity whatsoever, since it would be a self-contradiction to adopt a new religion in a way which is contrary to that religion. And since halachic conversion requires a total commitment on the part of the proselyte to strictly adhere to all the laws - the do's and the don'ts - of the Jewish religion, which, in your present place and circumstances is well-nigh impossible to fulfil, there is an additional strong reason to discourage you from taking that step. For, with all your best intentions, you would not be able to conduct a full Torah-true life in your present place - the first condition of halachic conversion, lacking which there can be no conversion.

Since it is a very serious matter, I am reiterating here what has been indicated in the main body of the letter, namely, that before you take up residence in a city and neighbourhood where you can be certain of being able to carry out the said unequivocal commitment to conduct everyday life in accordance with the Jewish Code of Law (Shulchan Aruch), there is no point in talking about conversion. That is, unless, after discussing the matter with an Orthodox Rabbi, and despite his reasoning and discouragement, a basis may be found for pursuing the matter.

I trust you will accept the above in the proper spirit, since it is first of all my duty to clarify the true aspects of the situation, and it would also be in your best interests, as well as your family's, to follow the path of truth.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

For a certain period during the reign of King David, one hundred Jews died premature deaths every day. King David made every effort to discover the source of this epidemic, and through Divine inspiration, he came to understand that the solution was prayer. Therefore, he instituted a requirement that every Jew recite at least one hundred blessings each day. He based this on the verse (Deuteronomy, 10; 12) "And now oh Israel, but what ('Mah') does G-d ask of you, just to fear" etc. The Hebrew word 'Mah' when changed slightly can also be read 'Meah', which means one hundred. The deaths stopped immediately. (as cited in Tur 46 in the name of Rav Notranai Gaon).

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This past Wednesday (8 August) was the 20th of the Hebrew month of Av. This date is the yartzeit (anniversary of the passing) of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, the saintly father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.*

*In a letter that Reb Levi Yitzchak wrote to his son, he emphasized the concept of faith in every little "dot and crown" of our G-d-given Torah, whereby each detail complements and perfects the others:*

*"Do not imagine that the process of argument and debate as engaged in by the Sages of the Mishna and Talmud and those who followed... falls into the category of regular human intellectual pursuit. No, it is not that at all... Rather, each of the Sages perceived the Torah's wisdom as it exists Above, according to the source of his soul and his individual portion in Torah, whether in Jewish law or Aggadita.*

*"There is absolutely no doubt that everything in both the Oral and Written Torah, and in all the holy books written by the sages and tzadikim (righteous people), who studied Torah for its own sake... everything was said by G-d Himself, in that particular and exact wording."*

*Reb Levi Yitzchak's spoken words were not ephemeral sounds, his written words were not mere ink on paper. The understanding that every dot and crown of Torah are true and holy were his blood and bones. He lived with the realization of the importance of every aspect of Torah and had utter self-sacrifice for the compliance to Torah's every detail and nuance.*

*May we learn from his teachings and example and may his memory be a blessing for us.*

*J. I. Guterlich*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

What country is Vilkomir in?

Our story takes place in 1831 in the town of Vilkomir, shortly after Vilkomir was conquered by Polish forces led by a large group of Polish nobility. (At that time, Poland was suffering under Russian rule and saw its chance to break away when Russia became engaged in a bloody war with Turkey).

In order to throw fear into the hearts of the population, the Poles proceeded to round up all suspected traitors and sentence them to death by hanging. But to the horror of the Jewish community, many Jews were also arrested and convicted. Among them was the Rabbi of the community and ten of their most respected members.

The Jews were heartbroken and immediately set to doing everything in their power to avert the decree. They fasted, prayed, gave charity, increased doing good deeds as well as using their 'connections' and trying to bribe the nobles....but it seemed that nothing could help.

But suddenly there was a beam of hope. One of the sentenced Jews was Rabbi Yitzhak Abbes. He was a truly G-d fearing man with a heart of gold and a good head for business. Most of his fortune he made from his five star hotel, which he built and furnished himself and had often hosted many of the nobles that were now sentencing him to death.

These nobles had no idea who had been imprisoned and they were caught by surprise when they went to visit the prisoners for the first time and Rabbi Yitzhak stood from his cot and called them by name through the bars of his cell door. "Count Stanislasus, Duke Polanski etc. What have you done?! Are you not ashamed of yourselves?! I am Rabbi Yitzhak, the owner of the inn! You know me well. You ate and slept in my hotel. Many of you confided your most private secrets to me. Did I ever betray anyone? Did I ever lie to you? Do you really think I would betray you now? Are you not afraid to spill innocent blood?"

When the nobles heard this they began to tremble. Rabbi Yitzhak was right! They all knew and trusted him. Immediately they made a circle, talked it over and ordered that he be released.

But when his cell door was opened he refused to step out to freedom. Rather he announced, "No! I'm not leaving! Just as I am innocent so are my Jewish brothers. If you want to kill them, then kill me as well. But I swear to you that you are killing innocent men."

So again the nobles formed a circle, talked it over and decided to release all the Jews. Except one.

This one poor fellow they picked was a totally assimilated Jew that had denied his Judaism almost all his life. Besides being dressed in the style of the day, he was known as one who had scoffed at and belittled anything Jewish.

But to Rabbi Yitzhak this did not make any difference. "Kill me instead of him!" He yelled out. "You know that he is as innocent as I am. Either release all of us, him included, or if you want to kill one person.... kill me."

But the nobles just shook their heads no, released all the Jews except for the 'apostate' and took him out for hanging.

The town square was filled with bloodthirsty spectators expecting gruesome action. The Jew was led up to the scaffold, hands tied behind his back and the rope was fastened around his neck.

But suddenly a priest in the crowd had an idea. He ran up on the gallows and announced. "If this Jew changes his religion we shall let him live!" The crowd mumbled in dissatisfaction but the priest continued. "If he agrees to be one of us then all of his sins are forgiven and we must not kill him!"

The crowd mumbled. Everyone knew that this fellow had acted like a gentile all his life; it wouldn't really be much for him to 'change' his religion because he didn't have much to change. But finally they shook their heads solemnly and fell silent; they couldn't disagree with the priest. All eyes were on the Jew to give the word or just nod his head in agreement for them to remove the noose around his neck and let him go.

The Jew cleared his throat and spoke just loud enough for everyone to hear, "I was born a Jew and I'll die a Jew. I'm not going to deny being a Jew anymore." Then he yelled out at the top of his lungs "Shma Yisrael, HaShem Elokenu, HaShem Echaud!" and the hangman pulled the trapdoor open.

For years thereafter the Jewish community made a special prayer on that day to commemorate the self-sacrifice of that assimilated Jew.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

Then your heart will be lifted up (Deut. 8:14)

Humility is not enumerated among the Torah's 613 commandments; if being humble were considered a mitzva, many Jews would rush to observe it in the most beautiful manner possible, with the end result being pride in just how humble they are! (*The Baal Shem Tov*)

With seventy persons... as the stars of the heaven for multitude (Deut. 10:22)

This verse begins and ends with the Hebrew letter beit, alluding to Jacob's exhortation to his children that they remain attached and devoted to their households ("beit" means "house" in Hebrew) and not assimilate amongst the Egyptians; it is for this reason that the Jews are known as "Beit Yaakov - the House of Jacob." (*Baal Ha Turim*)

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 10 AUGUST 2012



BEGINS		ENDS
5:22	MELBOURNE	6:21
5:23	ADELAIDE	6:20
5:06	BRISBANE	6:00
6:24	DARWIN	7:14
5:04	GOLD COAST	5:58
5:28	PERTH	6:24
5:04	SYDNEY	6:01
5:10	CANBERRA	6:08
5:07	LAUNCESTON	6:09
5:25	AUCKLAND	6:23
5:16	WELLINGTON	6:18
5:03	HOBART	6:06
5:02	BYRON BAY	5:57

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS EIKEV  
23 AV • 11 AUGUST

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:22 PM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:00 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:47 AM
	THE MOLAD OF THE MONTH OF ELUL IS	
	AUGUST 17:	1:13 AND 7 CHALAKIM PM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:21 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS MON-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	MAARIV:	6:20 PM