

# LAMPLIGHTER

29 Av  
(Re'eh)  
**1048**  
17 August  
5772/2012

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The commandment to give tzedaka (charity) appears twice in this week's Torah reading, Re'ei. Significantly, each time the Torah mentions this commandment, the verb it uses is "doubled."

The first commandment is "You shall surely open your hand to your brother," which is written in Hebrew, "Open, you shall open your hand to your brother." The second commandment is "You shall surely give him," written "Give, you shall give him."

Our Sages deduced from this double phraseology that the obligation to give tzedaka is not limited to one occasion. Rather, a Jew must give again and again, throughout his life. On the words "You shall surely open your hand" Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator, notes, "even several times." On the words "You shall surely give him" he comments, "even 100 times."

In fact, the two verses refer to two different aspects of the mitzva (commandment) of tzedaka. The first verse is directed to the giver. The Torah appeals to him, "You shall not harden your heart or shut your hand from your needy brother... You shall surely open your hand." The person giving the tzedaka must work on overcoming his Evil Inclination.

The second verse, however, concerns the act of giving itself. The emphasis here is on the poor man's needs, and the obligation to provide him with whatever is necessary.

This helps explain why, in one instance, Rashi comments "even several times," while in the other he observes "even 100 times":

A specific number can only be suggested for an act that is measurable. It is meaningless to assign a number to how many times a person must attempt to overcome his Evil Inclination, as it is an ongoing, life-long struggle. In this case, "even several times" is specific enough. By contrast, "even 100 times" implies that the poor man's needs are varied and many.

On a deeper level, there are two ways a person can fulfill the mitzva of tzedaka. The first involves battling the temptations of the Evil Inclination. The second consists of just doing it, pure and simple.

However, there is an advantage in the first method, as the struggle against the Evil Inclination serves to arouse the soul's vast and unlimited powers. Choosing to do good, in spite of one's natural inclinations, reveals the G-dly soul's infinite strength and capacities.

By giving tzedaka, particularly during the coming month of Elul, when it is customary to give more than usual, every Jew will merit to be inscribed in the Book of the Righteous, leading to the Final Redemption, as "Israel will only be redeemed through tzedaka."

(Adapted from *Likutei Sichot*, Vol 34)

## G-d on the Campaign Trail

By Yanki Tauber

A US president has four years between elections, a congressman needs to renew his mandate every two years, while dictators stay in office for as long as they can keep their generals happy (or terrified). But G-d is up for re-election every year.

Every Rosh Hashanah, we crown G-d king. According to the Kabbalists, without this annual coronation (effected by our resolve to submit to the divine sovereignty, our recitation of the "verses of kingship" included in the special prayers of the day, and our sounding of the shofar), G-d's "kingship" would not be renewed, and the whole of creation - which derives from the divine desire to be king - would cease to exist.

(We don't usually think of kings requiring election to their office, but that's because the word "king" is a rather imprecise translation of the Hebrew word *melech*. A *melech*, by definition, is a sovereign whose kingship derives from a people's freely chosen desire to submit to his rule. A king who reigns by force or exploitation is not a *melech* but merely a *moshel* or "ruler".)

How does G-d prepare for His annual re-election? Does He just sit up there in His "palace" trusting in our good sense to proclaim Him king once again? Does He go after the vote, mingling with the masses, pressing the flesh, kissing babies? Here's how Chassidic master Rebbe Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1812), describes the month of Elul - the month that precedes the divine coronation on Rosh Hashanah:

*It is like a king who, before he enters the city, the people of the city go out to greet him in the field. There, everyone who so desires is permitted to meet him; he receives them all with a cheerful countenance and shows a smiling face to them all. And when he goes to the city, they follow him there. Later, however, after he enters his royal palace, none can enter into his presence except by appointment, and only special people and select individuals. So, too, by analogy, the month of Elul is when we meet G-d in the field...*

While this description bears some resemblance to a politician running for office in a modern democracy, there are, of course, some significant differences. Such as the fact that a campaign promise by G-d is far more likely to be fulfilled than one that is made by your typical office-seeker.

We have entered the month of Elul. The king is in the field; if you need something from Him, now's the time to ask.

# Slice of LIFE

In the early nineteen fifties the Crown Heights district of Brooklyn New York was a colourful but poor Jewish neighbourhood. Today it is known as the centre of the Chabad Chassidim but then it was populated with Jews of all types, with an abundance of Synagogues ,small and large and a very small presence of Chabad Chassidim.

The presiding Rabbi in one of those small Synagogues was one Rabbi Youngreiz who lived in near poverty. The forty or so members of the Shul (Synagogue) barely paid him enough to support himself and family and from that salary he had to worry about the upkeep of the Shul as well.

For a while he managed somehow to pay the woman housekeeper-caretaker but as his family (and expenses) grew and it became increasingly difficult to meet the deadlines she simply quit.

The Rabbi certainly could not do the cleaning; he didn't have the time, he wasn't good at it and it would mean forfeiting any respect his congregation had for him ... and eventually losing his job.

So the task naturally fell to his wife. The janitor lady used to clean their house as well as the Shul so now it would be reversed; she would clean the Shul as well as her house.

She accepted the job with great difficulty. First, she was occupied almost full time with raising her growing family and cleaning her own house. Second, maintaining a large public Synagogue is much more difficult than cleaning a home. And finally; she was not a strong woman and such a full, tedious day was simply above her abilities.

Perhaps the worst part was that it seemed there was no solution in sight. She spoke to the members of the Shul about raising her husband's wage but they just refused. And on the other hand she couldn't stop.

If no one took care of the Synagogue all the members would leave, but she didn't have the stamina to last another week. She was beginning to lose her mind until someone suggested the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He lived just a few blocks away and he had a reputation of helping people; he might be able to help.

She had no problems with asking holy people for blessings; the Torah and Talmud are replete with such stories and after the Baal Shem Tov began the Chassidic movement some 300 years ago many of his pupils were known to be miracle workers. The problem was that this Lubavitcher Rebbe was in his early fifties while all the other Jewish leaders at the time were over seventy, and also some said he was inexperienced; he had assumed the leadership of the Chabad (Lubavitch) movement just a few years earlier with the passing of his father-in-law the previous Rebbe.

But rumour had it that he was a truly unique and wondrous person; totally fluent in every book in Judaism and totally acquainted with every aspect of the world.

So the next day she walked to the Chabad Headquarters, made an appointment to see the Rebbe and in just a few hours was standing before his office door.

As soon as she entered the Rebbe's room and saw his face she burst out in uncontrollable weeping. They were more like tears of joy and relief than anything else. She had never experienced anything like it.

She calmed down, dried her eyes and told the Rebbe her sad story about no money or help. She was expecting that the Rebbe would give her the name of someone, perhaps one of his Chassidim or some rich person who could help her to find help or money but the Rebbe surprised her completely. He just smiled kindly and said, as though it was the most obvious thing in the world,

"What is the problem? Just go into the street and ask the first capable-looking person you see to help you. And he will

certainly help."

The Rebbe said it with such certainty and simplicity that she wondered why she hadn't thought of it herself. But after she thanked him profusely, backed out of the room and closed the door behind her she realized that it wasn't so simple.

First of all she was a very timid and modest woman that never had any business dealings with, or even spoke with strangers. Not only that, but she never had heard of such a thing as stopping strangers in the street and asking them to work for her. But for some reason she felt that she could do it.

She left the building and tried to catch someone's attention or glance as she walked down the street, someone capable-looking. But no luck. No one looked at her and the few that did look didn't appear very able-bodied. Just as she was about to forget the whole thing, she noticed standing in front of her house, a man who looked approachable. So she approached him, excused herself and asked, in very broken English with a few words of Yiddish mixed in, if he could help her.

"Help? You want help? Where do you live?" he replied in a friendly tone. She pointed to her house and the synagogue next door, he followed her in, asked what she wanted done and proceeded to do it all in just a fraction of the time it had taken the previous worker.

When he finished he introduced himself, said his name was James, asked when he should return and, sure enough, the next day showed up again.

Even more interesting thing, was that when Rabbi Youngreiz offered to pay him at the end of the first week he smiled and refused and so it was at the end of the first month and the one after that.

In no time James became a member of the family; the children obeyed him like an older brother, he attended all family celebrations.

But most amazing was that James worked for the Youngreiz family each day for a few hours for thirty six years! Watched all the children grow, marry and have children of their own. And refused all payment!!

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 1048

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev asked his Chasidim, "Why did Moshiach tell Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi that he will come 'Today, if you listen to G-d's voice'? For, aren't we taught that G-d will first send Elijah the Prophet before that awesome day arrives?" Reb Levi Yitzchak answered himself, "Elijah comes to elevate everyone from their mundane tasks and prepare them for Moshiach. However, 'If you will listen to G-d's voice,' if we will prepare ourselves on our own, then Moshiach will be able to come 'today,' immediately, without the Prophet having to come first to prepare us." (*Siftei Tzadikim b'Haalotcha*)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Freely translated

In the Month of Elul, Chodesh Horachamim, 5733 [Month of Mercy, 1973]

To the Boys and to the Girls

Participants in the Tzedoko [charity] Campaign

G-d bless you

## Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to be informed that you fulfilled my request to act as my agents in the Mitzvah [commandment] of Tzedoko connecting it with a word of Torah, and adding to it your own Tzedoko.

Needless to say, in every case of doing a Mitzvah there is no place for a "Thank you" from a human being, since doing the Mitzvah in fulfillment of G-d's will is itself the greatest reward and truest happiness, and as our Sages of blessed memory declared: "The Reward of a Mitzvah is the Mitzvah itself."

However, it is in order to express thanks for acting as my agents in this joint effort and for this I say: Thank you very much to each and every one of you.

I also take this opportunity, as we have entered the month of Elul, to remind you of the special significance of the month, the Month of Divine Grace in preparation for Rosh Hashonoh and for the entire coming year, may it be a good one for all of us.

The Alter Rebbe [Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidut] explains the special significance of this month by means of the well-known parable of a "King in the field;":

"When a King approaches the city of his royal residence the people of the city go out to welcome the king in the field. Then everyone who wishes is permitted to come and greet the king and he receives everybody graciously and with a smiling face. But after he enters his Royal Palace special permission is required to see the king and this also is the privilege of a chosen few."

This, then, is the significance of the whole month of Elul, when the King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed be He, makes known that He is "in the field" and everyone - man, woman, boy and girl can come to Him without difficulties, or special introductions.

But - one may ask - what is the meaning of approaching the King in the field, since G-d has no likeness of a body, nor a body and as the Torah warns; "You have not seen any image (of G-d)?"

Therefore the Alter Rebbe goes on to explain that this approach has to do with prayer, for prayer in general and in the days of Elul in particular is an occasion concerning which is written, "May G-d cause His face to shine upon thee" - face to face - the person praying standing directly in the presence of the King, as in the parable above.

And the Alter Rebbe adds, that in order that such closeness be truly meaningful in a lasting and tangible way, it must be followed by actual study of Torah, by Tzedoko and Good Deeds.

May G-d grant that each and every one of you should go from strength to strength in all matters of Goodness and Holiness, Torah and Mitzvos, and be a source of pride and true Nachas [pleasure] to your parents and teachers, and may you make fullest use of the auspicious days of this month and be inscribed for a good and sweet year materially and spiritually.

With the blessing of kesivo vechasima tovah [written and sealed for good],

## CUSTOMS CORNER

Beginning this Shabbos (August 18), the psalm *L'David Hashem Ori* (Psalm 27) is recited at the end of the morning and afternoon prayers. This special addition is recited throughout the month of Elul and the High Holiday season, until Hoshanah Rabbah (Tishrei 21) -- a total of 50 days.

### Elul Observances

As the month of Divine Mercy and Forgiveness, it is a most opportune time for *teshuvah* ("return" to G-d), prayer, charity, and increased Ahavat Yisrael (love for a fellow Jew)

Specific Elul customs include the daily sounding of the shofar (ram's horn) as a call to repentance. The Baal Shem Tov instituted the custom of reciting three additional chapters of Psalms each day, from the 1st of Elul until Yom Kippur (on Yom Kippur the remaining 36 chapters are recited, thereby completing the entire book of Psalms).

Elul is also the time to have one's *tefillin* and *mezuzahs* checked by an accredited scribe to ensure that they are in good condition and fit for use.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This Sunday is the 1st day of the month of Elul, the final month of the year before Rosh Hashana. One of the most fundamental principles in Judaism is that a person can always change for the good. Regardless of one's past actions, the only requirements are remorse for misdeeds, the resolve not to repeat them, and a sincere desire to draw closer to G-d. This process of returning to one's true, inner nature (which is essentially good in the Jew) is known as teshuva, to which the entire month of Elul is dedicated.*

*Unfortunately, the concept of teshuva is sometimes misconstrued. "Becoming a baal teshuva" is not just for Jews who were never exposed to Torah and never had a chance to learn the basics. The greatest rabbis and scholars are also obligated to "do teshuva," for when it comes to levels of holiness and purity, there is no end to up. Only G-d can assess what is in a person's heart, ignoring the externals. On the contrary, a person who was raised in a religious home is better equipped to "do teshuva," armed with the benefit of a Jewish education to guide him.*

*The story is told of a teacher in a "baal teshuva" yeshiva who, in the course of an audience with a certain Chasidic Rebbe in Israel, described how wonderful his school was. In the midst of the conversation, he felt a sudden need to clarify that he himself "was not a baal teshuva."*

*"And why aren't you a baal teshuva?" the Rebbe gently chided him.*

*"Doing teshuva" is not a one-shot deal. A Jew doesn't become a "baal teshuva" by beginning to perform mitzvot and assuming that he's made it. The initial turning toward G-d may be revolutionary, but teshuva is an ongoing process. Every day we are faced with choices; every day is a new opportunity to elevate and refine ourselves. The upcoming month of Elul is a particularly good time to renew our resolve...*

*J. I. Guterlich*

## IT HAPPENED

Once...

## EXILE AND REDEMPTION

One week nearly three hundred years ago, in the area of Sali, Morocco, a plague broke out amongst the cattle. As a result, all the Jewish-slaughtered animals were found to be *traife* ("unfit"-disqualified). Only one calf was "*kosher mehadrin*" acceptable without question, and that was the one slaughtered specifically for the *tzaddik*, Rabbi Chaim Ben-Atar, the "*Ohr HaChayim Hakadosh*."

When one of the wealthy men in the city heard about this, he rushed to Rabbi Chaim's house, hoping to get some meat in honour of Shabbat. He offered an enormous price for a piece, but the Ohr Hachaim refused, saying, "This is not a butcher shop, and the meat is reserved for the poor Torah scholars of our city." Indeed, every week it was his custom to distribute meat to the poor Torah scholars in honour of Shabbat.

While they were speaking, one of Rabbi Chaim's "customers" walked in. Upset, the rich man exclaimed, "Huh? You call this one a *Talmid Chacham* ["wise student"-i.e., accomplished Torah scholar?]" The Ohr Hachaim ignored his comment and gave the scholar his portion. The rich man realized the futility of his endeavour, and stalked out in anger.

That night, the Ohr Hachayim had a dream in which he was told from Heaven that since he had not protested against the embarrassment of a *Talmid Chacham*, he would have to go into exile for a full year. Immediately, Rabbi Chaim packed his few belongings and set out on his long arduous journey, traveling from one town or village to another, making sure not to sleep two nights in the same place. He often went to sleep hungry, yet he accepted his pain with love and prayed to the One Above to forgive him for his sin.

One Friday many months later, the Ohr Hachayim found himself on the outskirts of a city. He sat down on a stone to rest his weak body and reflected on the first verse of the weekly Torah reading, "*Eem b'hukotai tailaihu*." When he continued walking towards the city, deep in thought and attachment to the Creator, forty two original explanations of this verse occurred to him!

Later, when he arrived in town, he went directly to the local *shul*. The *shamash* [caretaker] invited him to his home for Shabbat. At the conclusion of the Friday night meal, the *shamash* told his guest of the local custom to join the meal at the house of the Rabbi of the city. So they went together, joining the throngs already gathered, waiting to hear the Rabbi's pearls of wisdom.

When the time came and all eyes turned towards the head of the table, the Rabbi was still sitting quietly, in a trance-like state. After a few more moments, he roused himself and began to speak. He transmitted

fourteen brilliant explanations on the first verse of the weekly Torah reading, "*Eem b'hukotai tailaihu*," and then concluded, "These explanations I just heard in Heaven, in the name of the holy *tzadik*, Rabbi Chaim Ben-Atar."

"Mr. Chaim ben-Atar [i.e. not a *tzadik*, not a rabbi -ed.]" the unknown guest called out. All eyes turned to see who had the *chutzpa* to dishonour the Ohr Hachayim, and were prepared to punish him. However, the *shamash*, feeling responsible for his guest, requested them to leave the poor man alone.

At the conclusion of his Shabbat day meal, the Rabbi expounded on a second set of fourteen interpretations, saying that these too he had heard in Heaven in the name of the holy *tzadik*, Rabbi Chaim Ben-Atar.

The same scenario repeated itself. Again the anonymous guest screamed out, "Mr. Chaim Ben-Atar," heightening the irritation of the townsmen.

Before the Third Meal, the *shamash* warned his guest to behave properly. To no avail. The scene repeated itself a third time. They decided to lock the disrespectful guest in a room until after Shabbat, and to keep him locked up until fitting measures would be decided upon.

That night, a sudden strong storm swept through the city, causing much damage. The townspeople frantically rushed to the Rabbi for his prayer and blessing. The Rabbi told them that he had just been informed from Heaven that *Gehinom* closes on Shabbat, and it does not reopen on Saturday night until the Ohr Hachayim recites *Havdala* [the "separation" ceremony to enter into the new week]. Since the *tzadik* could not make *havdala*, being that he is currently locked in a room, a great uproar ensued above, which is the cause of such a harrowing storm below.

Upon hearing this and realizing their mistake, the townsmen immediately released their holy guest from his confinement. Rabbi Chayim understood that this was his sign that his repentance had been accepted in Heaven, and the next day set out to return to his home.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

From when the sickle begins to cut the upright corn (Deut. 16:9)

Once a group of Chasidim complained to their Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch, that their spiritual advisor was being unduly harsh. The Rebbe told the spiritual advisor privately later, "It is sure that one must eradicate ego and pride without mercy, as it says, 'From the time the sickle is first put to the standing corn'-one must put the 'sickle' to the 'standing corn' of egotism. However, this is only in regard to oneself. Concerning others, the Torah clearly states, 'do not swing the sickle on your neighbour's grain.'"

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 17 AUGUST 2012

BEGINS		ENDS
5:28	MELBOURNE	6:27
5:28	ADELAIDE	6:25
5:09	BRISBANE	6:03
6:24	DARWIN	7:14
5:07	GOLD COAST	6:01
5:33	PERTH	6:28
5:09	SYDNEY	6:05
5:15	CANBERRA	6:12
5:14	LAUNCESTON	6:15
5:30	AUCKLAND	6:28
5:23	WELLINGTON	6:24
5:11	HOBART	6:13
5:06	BYRON BAY	6:00



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS RE'EH  
30 AV • 18 AUGUST

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:28 PM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:10 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:41 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:27 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS MON-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	MAARIV:	6:25 PM