

LAMPLIGHTER

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Bereishis
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Bereishit (Genesis), is the first portion of the entire Torah. It recounts the story of Creation and tells, among other things, about the creation of the first people.

We read that Adam was commanded by G-d not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. But Adam was not able to overcome his temptation and he ate the fruit.

According to the Midrash, the command not to eat the fruit was given after three-quarters of Friday had passed and was to be in effect only until Shabbat began. Adam and Eve were not to eat the fruit for only three hours!

When we consider that Adam was created by G-d, Himself, and heard the command from G-d, it seems amazing that he couldn't control himself for a mere three hours.

We learn from this episode the strength and guile of the yetzer hara - that aspect of our psyche which encourages us to go against G-d's will. The yetzer hara may camouflage its aim by trying to convince us that a commandment is too difficult or unimportant. Nevertheless, its real intention is to persuade us to go against G-d's will. Therefore, the more important a certain command is for a particular person, the harder the yetzer hara will try to dissuade the individual from performing the command. Even if the commandment is a very easy one, the yetzer hara will make it seem extremely difficult.

Thus, we can understand how Adam was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit. The yetzer hara employed its most compelling arguments to convince Adam to sin.

The yetzer hara's arguments are highly evident today. Many contend that if the "burden" of the Torah, the details and laws, would be lightened, all Jews would adhere to them. But this is not true. For, even if there was but one commandment - and that for only three hours - the yetzer hara would make it seem impossibly difficult and repressive.

We cannot overcome the yetzer hara by compromising the Torah. We must, rather, realize that we have all been imbued with the strength to overcome the yetzer hara's arguments and guile. If we draw on our G-d-given inner strength, ultimately we will be victorious.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

First Impressions

Rabbi B. Mann

You never get a second chance at a first impression.

The above is an exceptionally profound and meaningful aphorism which usually comes to mind after a first date or encounter with a new co-worker [especially when an unintelligent remark is said].

Another instance where this line may come up is on Shabbos Bereishis, the first Saturday of starting the Torah anew, about which it is said: in the way one conducts himself on Shabbos Bereishis, such is how his entire year will follow.

Based on the saying "we must live with the times, the Parsha of the week" we can equate Shabbos Bereishis which speaks of the creation of the world, to the birth of a child. Just like when a child is born he is born with all of his characteristics, his likes and dislikes, and now that he has entered the world it's time for him to implement and use every strength he possesses to be the best he can and affect the world for the better. We can draw a similarity to our situation on this Shabbos. Whichever way we decide to focus our attitude on this Shabbos determines how our outlook will continue forever more.

It is strange though to decide the course of the new year once your four weeks into it. How can it be called a first impression if there have been numerous occasions already to prove yourself and your inclination, for better or for worse?

If the wealthiest person on earth would approach a situation regardless of if would have unimaginable success or if he would make a complete fool of himself it would have no effect on his status or his influence on others. Similarly in regards to the high holidays and subsequent festivals, because of the immense holiness of those days it is not necessarily apparent from one's behaviour on those days where he will be headed during the rest of the year.

The initial time to see one's true motives is on the first regular Shabbos, and based on that primary exhibition of his objective it can be deduced how he will continue to follow through.

This week we have the chance to prove ourselves. We can't pass up this chance to demonstrate willingness to give up ourselves for a higher cause, to succumb from our selfish tendencies for the greater good.

Slice of LIFE

A UNIQUE GUEST

Nearly fifty years ago, Yitzchak, a young married Chassidic man, who lived in the Stamford Hill section of London, drove on one of his regular business trips to the north of England. He was always careful to plan these expeditions so that he would be sure to get home in time for Shabbat, but this time fate - Divine Providence - decreed otherwise.

He set out early enough on Friday to be able to reach London with plenty of time to spare before Shabbat began, except his car broke down on the highway and he was forced to have it towed to the nearest town, to a garage there. The repair took many hours, and even before it was finished it became clear that he would not be able to get back to London before sunset.

Yitzchak found himself stuck in a small town that he had barely heard of, where he didn't know a single person. His inquiries revealed that there was a synagogue, thank G-d, and he managed to rent a hotel room within walking distance and find a bit of food in a supermarket with kosher certification.

When Shabbat arrived, Yitzchak walked to the synagogue. It was quite an impressive structure considering its location in an area not known for Jewish communities. Unfortunately, it felt desolate and even now at the start of Shabbat there was hardly anyone there. With great difficulty a minyan was finally assembled, yet most of its members did not appear, in Yitzchak's eyes, to be particularly mitzvah-observant.

An older, religious-looking man approached Yitzchak and shook his hand enthusiastically. Without introduction he asked Yitzchak, in not-so-fluent English and in an almost pleading tone, if he would agree to be his guest for Shabbat.

Yitzchak was surprised that the elderly Jew spoke to him in English. He responded that he would be happy to accept the invitation. The old man's face lit up, and without another word he returned to his seat for the continuation of the prayers.

When services finished they left the synagogue together. His host introduced himself as Yaakov Frankovich, adding that everyone called him Yankel.

When they reached his apartment building Yankel mentioned apologetically that they had to walk up many stairs. As they approached the apartment, noticing it was quite small, Yitzchak understood that Yankel lived alone, and yet the table in the middle of the room was set for two. His host saw the wonder on his face, smiled, and remarked that he longed to have guests that for years, and had been setting

a second place in anticipation.

The meal turned out to be surprisingly enjoyable. Hours went by in Torah discussion and singing the songs of Shabbat until it was quite late at night. Yitzchak rose from the table, happy but exhausted, to return to the hotel. To his shock, Yankel pleaded with him to remain and be his guest for sleeping as well. It seemed such an urgent matter for his host that Yitzchak felt he had no choice but to accept, even though he had already paid for his hotel room.

The whole evening he had wondered why Yankel did not move in all these years to a bigger city with a larger, established Jewish community, including others that were religiously observant like him. Before they lay down to sleep, he finally asked him. Yankel promised to tell him his whole story, but not until the Third Meal, at the end of the holy day.

Throughout the night Yankel had prolonged severe coughing fits. In the morning Yitzchak tried to convince him not to walk to shul, but to stay home and rest. The old man refused to consider it.

In their long, slow strolls back and forth between shul and home, the two men became friendlier and closer. Yitzchak was especially impressed with the strong faith of his elder companion and the whole-hearted innocence with which he related to and served the Al-mighty.

Finally, at the Third Meal, Yankel opened up about himself, as he had promised. He was born in Russia. When he was still a child, in the early stages of the Bolshevik Revolution, his grandfather decided that Russia was no longer a safe place for them to live, and the entire family uprooted to England. They settled in this same small town, where they lived in near poverty, but happily free of fear and persecution.

As a result of their pioneering presence, other Jewish immigrant families moved to the town as well. Eventually there was a significant Jewish community, and they built a fine synagogue. His grandfather and grandmother were hospitable to an extreme, and his grandfather always managed to come up with a generous donation to give to anyone who needed it, unless the person was too embarrassed to accept such a gift, in which case he would extend it as a loan.

With the passage of time, the community became caught up in the spirit of "progress." The younger generation mostly moved away to areas distant from their parents, and of the minority that remained, their children, the third generation, moved away too.

When Yankel grew up, his grandfather was already quite old and the Jewish population greatly diminished. He tried many times to convince his grandfather to move to a different city with a larger Jewish community, but he always refused, saying that since they were the founding pillars of the community, they were

obligated to stay.

Before passing away, the grandfather requested that Yankel not abandon the community by moving away. He told him that just the fact that in his house a Jew could find a place to stay and enjoy some kosher food was in itself justification for him to remain. "Who knows?" he concluded his request; "Perhaps someday a Jewish traveller will show up, and you will be able to fulfil the blessed mitzvah of hospitality."

As Yitzchak realized that he was the guest that his new close friend had been awaiting all these years - decades even! - tears welled in his eyes. His elderly host tried to continue speaking, but another difficult coughing spell forced him to pause.

Finally he resumed. "Please don't feel sorry for me," he said. "Really the opposite is true. You can't know how much gratitude I feel towards you that you enabled me to have the merit of fulfilling the mitzvah of bringing home a guest. Now I feel that I have fulfilled my mission from my grandfather."

On Saturday night Yitzchak left as soon as he could to get home. But he promised Yankel to return to visit. He was concerned about his welfare and anyway he wanted to bring him a nice present.

A few days later he was able to travel north again. He drove directly to Yankel's house, but to his knock on the door there was no response.

Already worried, Yitzchak hurriedly drove over to the synagogue. He found the attendant in charge and asked him about Yankel. The man looked at him sadly and answered that the old man had passed away just that Sunday. "He came to shul, suffered a severe coughing attack, and died right here!"

Suddenly the synagogue manager's gaze focused more intently on Yitzchak, and he said, "One moment, aren't you the guest that was here this past Shabbat? I have something for you. Yankel left this package on his table, and it has your name on it."

With great emotion, Yitzchak hurried to open the package. Inside were a few books and a letter. He began to read:

"Yitzchak, my dear friend. I feel that my end is near. Your visit brought me so much joy and pleasure- genuine Yiddische nachas. I hope that the merit of the mitzvah of hosting you will stand for me in the World of Truth, where I will be soon. I bequeath my siddur and chumash to you, along with my heartfelt wish that you will succeed in raising your children in the path of Torah."

From that day on, Yitzchak made it a rule in his household that an extra place should always be set at the table, for any guest who might happen to appear. In addition to his own mitzvah, he wanted this practice to be an ongoing memorial for Yankel's dedication and love his entire live for the mitzvah of hospitality.

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ISSUE 1065

MOSHIACH MATTERS

This week's Parsha relates the order of the creation of the world. From the very beginning it states "the spirit of G-d hovered on the face of the water". The Medrash says that this refers to the spirit of Moshiach. From here it is evident how great our yearning for Moshiach needs to be. The original intent of the world, the first thing to exist was the spirit of Moshiach. This purpose, the first thought, which preceded creation of man and the giving of the Torah must be first priority just as it was G-d's first priority.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

To the sons and daughters
Of our people Israel, everywhere
May G-d bless you all!

Greetings and blessing:

With the conclusion of the month of Tishrei, which is designated in our sacred sources as a "comprehensive month" for the entire year, and which is filled with a variety of festive days and experiences embracing all areas of a Jew's spiritual life throughout the whole year-

Beginning with awe and submission to the Heavenly Reign- the main point of Rosh Hashana; Teshuva- the essence of the Ten Days of Return and Yom Kippur; the performance of Mitzvot with diligence and joy, culminating with the highest expression of joy with the Torah- the essential aspects of Sukkot, Shmini Atzeres, and Simchat Torah-

It is time to recall the custom that was prevalent in many communities to announce at the termination of Simchat Torah: And Jacob went his way.

The point of this custom was to call attention to the fact that, inasmuch as the time has come to return to the routine of the daily life ("his way"), it behooves a Jew to know that he is Yaakov (Jacob, a Jew) and that he has his own way, a way that originates in Simchat Torah and is guided by the joy of Torah and Mitzvot.

This means that whatever a Jew undertakes, even the ordinary day-to-day affairs they must always be conducted in the spirit of "all your actions should be for the sake of Heaven" and "know him (and serve him) in all of your ways"

The month of Tishrei is a "comprehensive month" also in the sense that in this month the Jew acquires "goods" for the whole year, and immediately afterwards one must begin to "unpack" and draw from the stock for the needs of each day in all details. One cannot consider himself free from further obligation on the basis of the accomplishments in the comprehensive month.

Similarly there are also "comprehensive Mitzvot" - although each and every Mitzva must be fulfilled with the fullest measure of diligence and excellence and still greater diligence. Its performance by every Jew is of still greater concern to all Jews and the Jewish people as a whole.

One of the main comprehensive Mitzvot is the Mitzva of Ahavas Yisroel (love of fellow Jew). Of this Mitzva it has been said that it is a "great principle of the Torah," and the "basis of the entire Torah." The basis of the Mitzva is the fact that all Jews constitute one entity, like one body, so much so that every Jew sees every other Jew as "his own flesh and blood." Herein is also the explanation why the fulfillment of a Mitzva by every individual Jew affects the whole Jewish people: how much more so the fulfillment of a comprehensive Mitzva.

...May G-d grant that all the good wishes which Jews wished for one another should be fulfilled, that it be a good and sweet year in every respect, with the realization of the abovementioned pattern of Jewish conduct:

And Yaakov - an appellation that includes all Jews, not only those who have already attained a higher status of "Israel" and "Yeshurun,"

Went - in accordance with the true concept of motion, namely, moving away from the previous state to the higher state; for however satisfactory a state may be, one should always strive to advance to an even higher state in all matters of holiness,

His way - that "his way" even in non-obligatory matters, becomes a G-dly way, as stated immediately after: *and G-d's angels met him* in keeping every Jew's purpose in life to be an "angel" - messenger - of G-d, to make Him an "abode" in this earthly world:

And that all the above should be done with joy, derived from Simchat Torah, and Yaakov "will sing (and praise) the G-d of Yaakov," and merit the speedy fulfillment of the continuation of the verse, "the glory and strength of the Tzaddik will be uplifted," the coming of our Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

With esteem and blessing

For success and good tidings

In all the above,

/signed: Menachem Schneerson/

CUSTOMS CORNER

Amen

One who hears a Jew recite a blessing, even though he didn't hear the complete blessing from beginning to end, and even though he isn't obligated in this blessing, he must nevertheless answer Amen.

However, if a heretic, infant, (or adult who diverted from the wording of the blessing) recite a blessing, one must not answer Amen.

One must answer Amen after hearing a complete blessing from a non Jew.

This that we don't answer Amen after a child's blessing is only if the child is learning the blessings with a teacher, however: when a child recites a blessing to exempt himself, since it is education, we answer Amen. So too, we answer Amen when a child recites the blessings over the Haftarah.

The reason for the obligation is because when a Jew recites a blessing he is praising G-d, and saying Amen show agreement. If he is to not answer it is as if arguing with G-d's praises.

A WORD

from the Director

As we leave the holiday season and begin the Torah again we encounter the stories of the beginning of time once more. After the Torah relates the how G-d created man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, we are told an episode regarding their first two children, Cain and Hevel.

Each of them came to sacrifice from their possessions to G-d. Cain, who worked with produce, brought to G-d from what he grew. Hevel was a shepherd and brought from his sheep. The Torah says that G-d turned to Hevel's sacrifice and not towards Cain's.

It's brought down, that at that time crops harvested were much more precious and valuable than cattle. If this is the case it seems strange that G-d would turn to Hevel's offering and not Cain's.

The explanation lies in how devoted one is to the gift he is giving. Cain gave from his harvest, the best, but of that category the ones selected were less than satisfactory. On the other hand Hevel who gave from his herds, which may have not been the choicest of class, nonetheless he gave his very best.

The lesson from this anecdote that we must implement in our lives is evident. We wake up every morning indebted to G-d for giving us another day. We need to reciprocate by showing our appreciation and offer our very best efforts to Him.

It's possible to think "my efforts are worthless anyway. When I look at my peers they have much greater talents and contribute much more than I do."

Such notions must be pushed away from the beginning. It is crucial to realize that we are not given any task to difficult to accomplish. We needn't do the best, what is expected is that we do our best, to be the best you that you can be.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

TRUE BLINDNESS

Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz was once approached for advice and a blessing by a Jew from Danzig, in Germany; his daughter had suddenly become blind, and no doctor could fathom the cause.

"The reason," said Rabbi Pinchas, "is that her father is also blind, and this is a hereditary disease."

"But my eyes are perfectly healthy," protested the German Jew. "Why, I don't even wear spectacles!"

"The man who is really blind," explained the tzaddik, "is the sinner. Thus we find that the prophet Isaiah admonishes 'the blind people that have eyes,' and the Mishna says: 'Samson followed his eyes, therefore the Philistines gouged out his eyes.'"

Rabbi Pinchas went on to warn his visitor that all the members of his family who looked at him were also in danger of losing their vision; in the words of the Talmud: 'If a person gazes upon the face of a wicked man, his eyes grow dim.'

At these words the distraught man wept, and undertook at once to conduct his life according to the Torah. The tzaddik then promised him that if he fully kept his new commitment his daughter would regain her sight. He instructed him to give her honey from the Land of Israel for, in the words of the Talmud, 'Honey and other sweet things add light to one's eyesight.' This the Sages derived from the verse spoken by Yonatan, the son of King Saul: 'See I pray you, how my eyes have brightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.'

The visitor returned to Danzig and made his entire household kosher in all respects. Subsequently, after his daughter became completely cured, she travelled to Koretz to see Rabbi Pinchas, and while there donated money for the writing of two Scrolls of the Torah.

...

Reb Pinchas once asked the Maggid of Mezritch, "Why do you have many Chassidim whereas I only have a few?"

The Maggid replied, "We know that the Parshiyos of Chukkas and Balak can be together, and so can the Parshiyos of Matos and Maasei. Parshas Pinchas however, is always separate, because Pinchas was a zealot and only wanted the truth. The same is with you, for you are always demanding truth, and consequently you have few follow".

Biographical notes:

Rabbi Pinchas (the son of R. Avraham Abba Shapiro) of Koretz, born in 1726 in the city of Shklov, was considered to be one of the two most pre-eminent followers of the founder of Chassidism, the Baal Shem Tov (along with his successor, the Maggid of Mezritch). His teachings appear in various collections (such as Midrash Pinchas), and are cited in the classic Bnei Yissaschar.

He passed away while travelling to Israel, in the town of Shpituvka, on the 10 Elul 1791.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1)

G-d looked into the Torah and created the world. Man looks into Torah and sustains the world. (*Zohar*)

The Torah's first word, Bereishit, is an acronym for Bet reishit -- "two firsts" (in Hebrew, the second letter of the alphabet, Bet, stands for the number two). This is to say that the world was created for the sake of two things called "first" (reishit) -- the Torah (Proverbs 8:22) and the people of Israel (Jeremiah 2:3). (*Rashi; Midrash Rabbah*)

"And G-d took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to work it and to keep it" (Genesis 2:15)

"To work it" – these are the positive commandments; "and to keep it" – these are the prohibitions. (*Zohar*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 12 OCTOBER 2012

BEGINS		ENDS
7:16	MELBOURNE	8:15
7:09	ADELAIDE	8:07
5:36	BRISBANE	6:30
6:25	DARWIN	7:15
5:35	GOLD COAST	6:29
6:08	PERTH	7:04
6:48	SYDNEY	7:45
6:58	CANBERRA	7:55
7:11	LAUNCESTON	8:13
7:16	AUCKLAND	8:15
7:20	WELLINGTON	8:22
7:12	HOBART	8:15
6:34	BYRON BAY	7:29



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS BIREISHIS
26 TISHREI • 12 OCTOBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:16 PM
	MINCHA:	7:25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7:55 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:51 AM
	MINCHA:	7:15 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:15 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:25 PM
	MAARIV:	8:15 PM