

LAMPLIGHTER

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Shelach
1089
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Shelach, relates the story of the spies sent by Moses to investigate the Holy Land which the Jewish people were to enter. They returned with a slanderous report, playing up the difficulties in conquering the land, thus discouraging the people and weakening their faith. This led to the tragic consequences related in the portion.

Chasidism explains that the spies did not wish to enter the Land of Israel because they did not want to become involved with the materialism of the world. Throughout the duration of the Jewish people's stay in the desert, they were free from such involvements: their food came from heaven (the manna); water they had from the miraculous "Well of Miriam"; they were sheltered by the Heavenly "Cloud of Glory." Thus, they did not wish to leave the desert to enter the Holy Land where they would have to engage in ploughing, sowing, and all other normative activities for their daily existence.

The spies' motive may have been sincere and spiritual, but it went counter to the Divine intent. G-d created the world in order to have a Divine abode in this physical world: man is to transform himself and the material world into a worthy abode for G-dliness. This is done by utilizing and interacting with every created substance for its Divinely intended purpose, thus elevating and sublimating it to a spiritual reality. That is why we were given the Torah and mitzvot (commandments), which enable us to achieve that goal. And that is our mission for the duration of the exile.

The Messianic era is the ultimate purpose of the creation. For then this physical world will demonstrably be a Divine abode, with G-d's Presence fully manifest and experienced. It will be a time of "neither famine nor war, neither envy nor strife, because good will emanate in abundance and all delightful things will be accessible like dust. The singular preoccupation of the entire world will be to know G-d. The Israelites, therefore, will be great sages and know the hidden matters, attaining knowledge of their Creator to the full extent of human capacity, as it is said: "The earth shall be full with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9) (Hilchot Melachim 12:5).

This ultimate perfection of the Messianic era and the time of the Resurrection of the Dead depend on our actions and service of G-d throughout the duration of the exile. The sin of the spies was that they tried to circumvent the process of this refining of the physical world and preparing it for Moshiach.

Mundane entanglements, involvement with worldly matters, may be tiresome and distasteful for one who aspires to spiritual heights. They are, however, an integral part of the Divine plan, and as Chasidism explains: "The ultimate intent of the descent and exile is to prepare for an immense ascent when, in the days of Moshiach, the light of G-d will radiate in a manifest way!"

From Living with Moshiach by Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet, adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Doing What I Want A Lesson From Challah

By Baruch Epstein

I love words, but they are, at times, such an obstacle to communication.

One word can mean so many different things to so many different people. Here's a prime example:

The word *challah* has a variety of meanings. Google's translation tool defines it simply as a "loaf"-a rather pedestrian word. But ask for a challah at a kosher bakery and you will get braided bread. But be sure to make this request in the days before Shabbat or a Jewish holiday - asking for a *challah* on Wednesday is akin to requesting *latkes* for Purim. Then there is the *challah* in halachic parlance, a reference to the portion of every batch of dough that one gifts to a *kohen* (priest) - this meaning of the word is based on the biblical wording in (*Numbers 15:20*).

Since the destruction of the Holy Temple and all the spiritual impurity it has wrought, and the subsequent dispersal of the Jewish people, the *kohen* does not eat this consecrated food; instead, we burn this blessed clump of dough.

Okay, so what underlying thread binds together all these definitions, and, of course, what is the lesson here?

Here's a thought: From all that we own we are required to share. We are expected to contribute to charity with our wealth, allocate time for prayer, study and communal work, and, in general, to generously give from the bounty that G-d has bestowed upon us.

But what of the remainder? After the tithing, after the 30 hours volunteered at the community centre, after Shabbat (the 15% of my week dedicated to G-d), now what? Is the rest of the time, money, and resources "mine, all mine!" to do with as I please?

Here is a *challah* lesson. When we designate some, or even a lot, of any asset for a holy purpose, we acknowledge and honour the sanctity of *that* part. That part is made special. Now the leftover may mistakenly be seen as mundane. Imagine, however, applying the same reverence for the dough we keep as the mass we give to the *kohen*; how different would our dinner tables look then?

When we do good, lots of good, we may be lured into a sense of entitlement. I gave 20% to charity; I can now buy whatever I want with the rest without regard for social responsibility. I volunteered at the school for two hours; I am now entitled to laze around for the rest of the week. I called Aunt Miriam; Uncle David can now find his own way to the grocery store. I gave at the office, so leave me alone.

The *challah* we eat can be as holy as the *challah* we donate. The six days of the week are as opportune as Shabbat. The money in my pocket must be treated with as much awe as the bills in the charity box. It is all G-d's, and we are entrusted with it: part to give away and part to utilize appropriately.

We expect charitable organizations to handle the monies entrusted to them with reverence and responsibility. No less is demanded from us and what G-d has entrusted to us.

Slice of LIFE

Marrying Jews Only?

Rabbi Greenberg knew the young man by the name of John and his mother. John had begun living a Torah life some ten years earlier through Rabbi Greenberg's direction and inspiration and often brought his mother along for Shabbat meals and other functions in the Chabad House. She also began to warm up to Judaism. But in one area she was stubborn; education.

Despite Rabbi Greenberg's efforts, she refused to allow her son to leave the public school where he was learning and enroll in a Jewish Torah school.

And at first it seemed she was right. There was nothing to worry about. John actually got stronger and stronger in his Jewish observance and seemed to be totally unaffected by his gentile surrounding. Or so it seemed.

But today's disappointing revealed the opposite. It seems that the entire time he was in the public school he was tightening his connection to a gentile girl classmate of his and yesterday he announced that they were serious and wanted to get married.

The boy's parents never dreamed it would come to this. They admitted that they erred about his education but what could be done now? Was it too late?

Rabbi Greenberg wracked his brains and tried talking to him from every angle but it didn't work. In fact every Shabbat John and his parents ate in the Chabad House with all the other guests but nothing the Rabbi said or did had any effect.

Then, a few hours before one particular Shabbat he read a story in a Chabad publication, rather a story within a story, that he hoped might convince John to abandon his plans.

That Shabbat evening Rabbi Greenberg opened the magazine and read:

"One Rosh HaShanna Rabbi Yitzchak Gershovitz, the Rabbi in Prague, Czechoslovakia, had over one hundred guests in his Chabad House and at the Rosh HaShanna meal he told them a story about a man who he convinced to leave his gentile girlfriend by telling him a story. Rabbi Gershovitz relates the story as follows:

"A few years ago a man entered the Chabad House in Prague and asked me to

tell him a story. It sounds strange but when you run a Chabad House for a while you'll see that nothing is strange. Anyway, all of a sudden this story popped into my mind about Rabbi Slavtitzki in Belgium: And this is the story I told him.

"A middle-aged Jewish woman entered Rabbi Slavtitzki's Chabad house in Antwerp Belgium together with her twenty year old son and begged him to help. The boy wanted to marry a gentile girl and she was at her wit's end.

"She had already taken him to two top rabbis but their words didn't help.

"The first one explained how marrying 'out' breaks the glorious chain of Jewish self-sacrifice that has been holding the Jews together since the Patriarch Abraham. And the second Rabbi explained eloquently with charts and cold statistics that only ten percent of intermarriages succeed and the resultant families are usually disasters.

"But after a bit of thought her son decided that the Rabbis could preserve the chain without him and about the success rate, well, if ten percent succeeded Then he would be in that ten percent.

"So Rabbi Slavtitzki boldly suggested that they fly to Brooklyn to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe and amazingly the young man agreed.

"The next day they flew from Antwerp to New York, spent the Shabbat in Crown Heights and early Sunday morning they stood in line for 'dollars' (the Rebbe gave out dollar bills, advice and blessings every Sunday to thousands of people each Sunday for several years)."

[The reader is asked to remember that this story about Rabbi Slavtitzki is being told by Rabbi Gershovitz at his Rosh HaShanna meal as the story he told to a visitor. And it is all part of Rabbi Greenberg's story to John]

"After a few hours of slowly progressing, finally the big moment came and they were standing face to face with the Rebbe.

"Rabbi Slavtitzki told the Rebbe why they had come upon which the Rebbe looked at the young man with him, smiled and said, 'I envy you!'

"The young man was, understandably, confused. He wrinkled his brow, shrugged his shoulders and asked 'why'. The Rebbe continued:

"If G-d has given you such a special challenge He must have given you special powers to overcome it as well. And if you overcome this challenge you will be given

even more special powers. I personally have never had such a challenge. I can only envy you and give you my blessing that you reveal and use all your special powers for good."

"The Rebbe's words struck home; the young man decided to live a Jewish life and cancelled the engagement. When Rabbi Slavtitzki asked him what exactly convinced him, he replied: 'The first Rabbi my mother took me to spoke of the past. And the second Rabbi spoke of the future. But the Lubavitcher Rebbe spoke of who I am NOW.'

"Well," Rabbi Gershovitz concluded, "When the visitor heard the story he was very impressed and a few weeks later he sent me a letter saying that it inspired him to leave the gentile girl he was dating and a year later he married a Jewish girl and has established a Jewish home"

Rabbi Greenberg continued:

"When Rabbi Gershovitz finished the story to his Rosh HaShanna crowd it was obvious that one man there was especially moved, as though the story had begun a storm in his soul.

"And sure enough the next day in the daytime Rosh HaShanna meal after the Morning Prayer that man stood up and announced.

"Last night we heard a story about the Rabbi in Belgium and Today we read in the Torah about how Abraham took his beloved son Isaac to sacrifice him (that is the Torah reading for the second day of Rosh HaShanna). Well, like the story about the fellow in Belgium .. I too have a gentile girlfriend. Her name is Cristina.

"And like Abraham I too have decided to make a sacrifice for Judaism! I have decided to sacrifice Cristina! We will not get married."

Rabbi Greenberg finished his story and saw that it had a deep effect on John. He was locked in deep thought as though he had heard a voice from the beyond.

"My girlfriend's name is also Cristina" he said almost in a whisper.

It wasn't long before John also decided to follow the examples of the three men in the stories he heard and raise a Jewish family.

And that isn't the end. Several years later Rabbi Greenberg told these stories to a group of visitors from Brazil and later got a letter from one of them, a Jewish girl, that because of the four stories she left her gentile boyfriend.

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ISSUE 1089

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Midrash reads, "Hadrian once asked R. Yehoshua ben Chananya: 'From what will G-d resurrect man in the future world?'

R. Yehoshua replied, 'From the luz bone in the spine.' "Once G-d has softened this bone with the 'Dew of Resurrection', it will become as yeast is to the dough, and from it the body will be built. The same body that decomposed will be reconstructed. This is implied by the verse, "Your dead people shall live" (and not "shall be created").



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d
13 Nissan, 5711 [1951]
Brooklyn

Greetings and Blessings!

Your letter duly arrived, but numerous preoccupations did not allow me to reply until now. As a matter of fact you don't need my reply, because you received a reply from my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], when you were here.

Nevertheless, I would like to reiterate something that I have already said a few times:

One ought to know, once and for all, that faith is not something that is meant to remain only in one's thoughts; it must permeate the whole of one's life.

You are, without any doubt, a believer. So, the very first point of belief is that G-d directs the world. And if He is capable of directing one-and-a-half billion people, then your own affairs will certainly see the fulfillment of the verse, "I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and deliver you."

Now, think this over. G-d promises, "I will sustain and deliver you." So think: Can a gentile from this or that land disturb G-d from fulfilling His promise (G-d forbid)? Having thought that, now consider: Is G-d really in need of your worry as to how He is going to run your affairs and solve your problems? Or will He succeed in finding good solutions even without your worrying?

After all is said and done, you must remember that the Rebbe - that is, my revered father-in-law, of saintly memory - gave you his blessing, and the blessing of a *tzaddik* is certainly fulfilled. So the blessing you received will also be fulfilled.

However, *until* you see the fulfillment of the blessing, you have been given two options:

Either (a) you will walk around worried in case (G-d forbid) the blessing won't be fulfilled. And then, when the blessing *is* fulfilled, you will have a fresh worry: Why did you have to waste so much vital energy in vain?

Or (b) you will be staunch in your trust and faith in G-d - that He will lead you along the right path and will fulfill all the blessings that you have been given. And then, when you see them being fulfilled in actual fact, you will be able to tell yourself: "Just look how well I handled this deal! I didn't worry about things that were no cause for concern."

This is one of the meanings of my father-in-law's blessings to you, and not only as a blessing but also as a directive. Be happy, because - with G-d's help - the problems that you imagine to be so serious will be solved. You have nothing to worry about. You can be happy, and you can fulfill the directive of the verse, "Serve G-d with joy."

I wish you a kosher and joyful Pesach and a healthy and joyful always, and look forward to hearing good news from you in the near future.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the *sichah* of Pesach, 5703 [1943], which you will no doubt find of interest.

CUSTOMS CORNER

We are told that the mitzvah of *tzitzit* is equivalent to all the mitzvot, because it reminds us of all of them. Our sages say that one who fulfills this mitzvah properly merits having a wife and children. He is also protected from sin, and in that merit he is assured that he will see the face of the Shechinah (Divine Presence).

This mitzvah is not an obligatory one. Only when one is wearing a garment of four (or more) corners is he required to affix *tzitzit* to the corners. If he is not wearing such a garment, he does not transgress by not wearing *tzitzit*.

Despite this, an angel taught Rabbi Ketina that at times of divine wrath; G-d punishes people for not assiduously pursuing mitzvot, even those who choose not to wear a four-cornered garment in order to exempt themselves of this special mitzvah. For this reason, it is proper that men and boys wear a four-cornered garment, with *tzitzit* affixed to it, every day. This garment is called a *tallit katan* ("small shawl"), or simply *tzitzit*.

One can get *tzitzit* from a local Judaic store. What they will look like is a large rectangular garment with eight strings attached to it by five knots. As the laws of this mitzvah are quite extensive do not attempt to make them on your own unless accompanied by an expert.

A WORD

from the Director

This Shabbos has a special lesson from the portion of Shelach. The Parsha relates the story of the Jewish spies who entered Israel to scout out the land prior to the nation entering. The Haftorah also describes a story of sending spies; Yehoshua's sending of spies and the favourable results brought about by their mission.

What is the simple and direct lesson we learn from Shelach? The word Shelach means sending out on a mission. And it is in the form of a command!

The mission associated with Shelach is symbolic of the soul's descent into this material world. Each Jewish soul descends to this material world and clothes itself in a body to carry out the mission of creating a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds. To carry out this mission, it is necessary to "explore the land," to survey the nature of the service which must be carried out, discovering what conflicts and difficulties will arise and what is the best possible way to transform the land into a dwelling for G-d.

In the same vein a Jew must "send out" to help other Jews in other places. He must investigate and see what can be accomplished outside, somewhere else, or what he can gain from somewhere else.

To one who is in a lofty plane and fulfills his responsibilities, as well as to one who still lacks a lot in his Divine service to the outside, we say: Don't be despondent; "send out" someone to that place and you too will reach a higher plane.

Mainly, do not be stagnant. A person must always strive to rise from level to level. Going from strength to strength means that it is continuous, without stop. This Shabbos Parshas Shelach is an opportune time to readjust our bearings on this course.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

One of the Chassidim of the Rebbe Reshab had a large factory for producing Vodka. One night when he had to stay late in the factory, he heard strange noises coming from the storage room where all the vats were. He took a large club, tiptoed quietly into the building, and caught two of his workers crouched down behind one of the vats siphoning off vodka from one of the pipes, and then adjusting the meter to make it appear that nothing was missing.

Understandably he fired the workers on the spot, but before he could report the whole incident to the police the next day, the workers ran there with their own story.

They claimed that the owner had forced them to change the meter, or they were at risk of getting fired, and because of their loyalty to the Revolution and to Mother Russia, they felt they had to report the crime.

The next morning five policemen knocked on the Chassid's door with a search warrant, and when they found that in fact one of the meters was not in order, they put him under arrest and took him away to jail.

Everyone was shocked and confused. The Rebbe, whose advice and blessings had been their fortress of salvation, had passed away just a year ago, and now this catastrophe. It was too much to bear. Their only hope was to ask his son and successor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak (Rebbe Rayatz) what to do.

The Rayatz told them to waste no time and to travel immediately to the grave of his father in Rostov and pray for help.

Travel in those days was dangerous, especially for religious Jews, and expensive to boot. So the Chassidim pooled their money and made a lottery to choose who would go, and the lot fell on Rav Yaakov Landau.

He made the journey, prayed for the poor Chassid, and returned just in time to be present at the trial.

No one knew what the outcome would be, but things looked very black for the accused Jew. There were two witnesses and much evidence against him. The policemen had seen the tampered meter with their own eyes, and begun to imagine discrepancies in his bookkeeping as well.

The smiling prosecutor handed a folio of incriminating papers and briefs to the judge, while the poor Chassid had nothing to present in his defense. All he could do was weep, read Psalms, and hope the prayers at the Rebbe's gravesite would work.

But he knew that only a miracle would do it, the case against him was airtight, and the Judge shot him a couple of looks that made him cringe.

The courtroom was silent; the judge picked up the folio, opened it, flipped through a few pages, mumbled something to himself, stood up in anger and threw the whole thing in the garbage pail behind him! His face was red as a beet as he screamed "GARBAGE!!"

The crowd was astounded, something must have happened to the Judge! It was completely unexplainable behaviour.

"WHAT IS THIS GARBAGE!!" His eyes were glaring at the prosecuting attorney.

"GET OUT OF HERE AND THROW THOSE MEN IN JAIL!!" He pointed at the bewildered thieves. "AND YOU!" he said pointing at the Chassid then turning to the guards, "What is this man doing here?! Get him out of here now, SET HIM FREE!!"

The Judge sat back in his seat, breathing hard while the guards were rushing to carry out his orders, poured himself a glass of water, pushed back his hair that had fallen in disarray over his forehead, pounded his gavel on the table and declared "Next case!!"

The Chassid turned in his seat and looked at Rav Landau. Only the two of them understood what had really happened.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

It is a land that consumes its inhabitants (13:32)

The Hebrew word for "its inhabitants" in this verse, yoshvehah, literally means "its settlers".

Thus Chassidic master Rabbi Yitzchak of Varka explained the deeper significance of this statement: the Holy Land does not tolerate those who settle down, content with their achievements.

And they shall put upon the fringe of each corner a thread of blue. And it shall be to you as fringes; and you shall see it (15: 38-39)

Said Rabbi Meir: it does not say, "and you shall see them," but "and you shall see Him" (the Hebrew Otto, also translates as "him"). This teaches that everyone who fulfills the mitzvah of tzitzit, it is as if he has greeted the face of the Divine Presence. For the blue thread resembles the sea, the sea resembles grasses, grasses resemble the sky, and the sky resembles the Divine throne. (*Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 1:2*)

And you shall see... and you shall remember... and you shall do (15:39)

Sight brings on memory, and memory brings deed. (*Talmud, Menachot 43b*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 31 MAY 2013

| BEGINS | | ENDS |
|--------|------------|------|
| 4:51 | MELBOURNE | 5:52 |
| 4:55 | ADELAIDE | 5:53 |
| 4:43 | BRISBANE | 5:39 |
| 6:10 | DARWIN | 7:01 |
| 4:41 | GOLD COAST | 5:36 |
| 5:03 | PERTH | 6:00 |
| 4:37 | SYDNEY | 5:35 |
| 4:42 | CANBERRA | 5:40 |
| 4:33 | LAUNCESTON | 5:36 |
| 4:55 | AUCKLAND | 5:55 |
| 4:43 | WELLINGTON | 5:46 |
| 4:28 | HOBART | 5:32 |
| 4:39 | BYRON BAY | 5:34 |
| 6:50 | SINGAPORE | 7:41 |



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS SHELACH
22 SIVAN • 31 MAY

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| FRIDAY NIGHT: | CANDLE LIGHTING: | 4:52 PM |
| | MINCHA: | 5:00 PM |
| | KABBOLAS SHABBOS: | 5:35 PM |
| SHABBOS MORNING: | SHACHARIS: | 10:00 AM |
| | LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: | 9:52 AM |
| | The molad for the month of Tammuz is | |
| | Shabbat, June 8: | 8:33 (17 chalakim) PM |
| | MINCHA: | 4:55 PM |
| | SHABBOS ENDS: | 5:52 PM |
| WEEKDAYS: | SHACHARIS SUN-FRI: | 9:15 AM |
| | MINCHA: | 5:00 PM |
| | MAARIV: | 5:45 PM |