

LAMPLIGHTER

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Shabbos Bereishis

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

"In the beginning, when G-d created the heaven and the earth..." With these momentous words the Torah begins the very first chapter of Bereishis, establishing G-d's Kingship over all of creation.

The Torah, however, is not history book. The Torah is the guide by which we live our lives, applying its teachings to every aspect of our existence.

The ancient Sage, Rabbi Yitzchak, raises a pertinent question. "Why does the Torah open with the story of Creation?" he asks, as quoted by Rashi in his commentary. "Why didn't G-d begin with the words, 'This month is to you,' - the first commandment containing practical implications?"

"The might of His deeds He told to His nation; to bequeath to them the heritage of the nations," Rabbi Yitzchak himself answers.

"If the nations of the world will one day accuse the Jewish people of being thieves, having 'stolen' the land of Israel from the seven nations who formerly inhabited it, they will counter, 'The entire earth belongs to G-d! He is the One Who created it and bequeathed it to whom He saw fit. It was His will to give the land to the nations; it was His will to take it from them and give it to us.'"

According to this explanation, the entire order of the Torah's portions was changed solely to refute the world's complaint that the Jewish people misappropriated their land. But is their accusation really so important that G-d would change even one letter in His holy Torah for its sake? Would not a refutation in the Oral Tradition have been sufficient to counter whatever complaint Gentiles would one day lodge against the nation of Israel?

In truth, the Torah's choice of language holds significance not only for the nations of the world but for Jews themselves.

"In the beginning" contains an important lesson for every Jew to apply in his daily life. In general, the life of a Jew may be divided into two realms: the religious and the secular. The Jew willingly observes his various religious obligations because the Torah requires him to.

When, however, he is asked to also sanctify those mundane aspects of daily existence that seemingly fall outside the domain of religious observance, he balks, rejecting this demand as an invasion of privacy.

The secular realm of a person's life, pertaining to the physical and material domain, metaphorically belongs to the "seven nations." Yet it is precisely this realm that the Jew is called upon to conquer, elevating his every action by performing it solely for the sake of heaven.

"You are thieves!" the world cries out against the Jew. "How dare you conquer the domain of the seven nations and blur the distinction between religious observance and the mundane?!"

To which the Jew replies, "All of creation belongs to G-d." Every realm of existence is part of Divine plan and can be made holy.

Indeed, such is the mission of every Jew -- to transform wherever he may be into a spiritual Land of Israel.

Judaism demands that we sanctify even the lowest aspects of the material world, thereby imbuing all of creation with holiness and demonstrating the unity of the One Creator.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. XX

It's a Brand New World

By Yossy Goldman

In the beginning G-d created heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1)
For a change, let's talk a little philosophy.

From the first verse of the Torah it seems that once upon a time there was nothing. Then the Creator brought the universe into existence. According to the Tanya, seeing as the world didn't always exist, it isn't quite natural for it to exist now. Therefore, the creative force of G-d, which brought the world into existence initially, must constantly be present to fuel its continued state of being. Remove that Divine energy from the world, and it simply ceases to exist. It would be like pulling the plug on creation.

This concept is known as the law of continuous creation. Indeed, in our daily morning prayers, we describe G-d as the One who "in His goodness renews each day the work of creation." The Tanya, then, would understand that to mean not only each day but also each moment.

I suppose we could understand this idea from the simple analogy of a person throwing a ball up into the air. When he throws the ball, his strength will determine how high the ball will fly. The stronger his arm, the higher it will fly and the longer it will defy the natural law of gravity. But as soon as the power of his throw is spent, the ball can no longer defy nature and comes hurtling down again.

Likewise, if we want the initial or "natural" state of the world--which was non-existence--to be defied, then we need to keep fuelling that same initial thrust of creative energy into the world that brought it into existence in the first place. Otherwise, the universe simply reverts to its initial state of nothingness and non-existence, just like the ball that runs out of steam and falls back to earth.

Now let's move from the philosophical to the practical and we discover a beautiful message of hope and inspiration in this concept. We are often burdened by the past, weighed down by our personal history and experiences. Our mistakes and failures still haunt us and prevent us from moving on.

Here then is a stirring message for all who would be hampered by past disappointments. It's a brand new world. Every day, every minute, every second G-d is recreating the world anew. Forget about the past. What was was. Today is a new world, a new present filled with exciting new opportunities. At any given moment we can begin again.

Especially in the week of Bereishit, when we read the Torah from the very beginning, it is a most opportune time for each of us to make a fresh start and a new beginning. New beginnings aren't always easy. But this idea of continuous creation offers powerful inspiration to give ourselves a new chance filled with new opportunities. As we start a new Jewish year, let us embrace this promise and be encouraged to begin again.

Slice of LIFE

HIGH FASHION

Yosef Silverman (of Pittsburgh) had a good friend, whom we will call Chaim, who learned in the 770 Eastern Parkway Yeshiva in Brooklyn and used to go on "Tefilin Campaign" every Friday with a group of his friends.

Chaim used to take the subway with four of his friends to the sky-scrapers in the heart of Manhattan and go visiting the exclusive offices one after the other looking for 'unaffiliated' Jews that perhaps wanted to put on *tefilin*.

Generally they got positive responses and a few Jews even put *tefilin* on for themselves. But one law firm was like an impenetrable iceberg. The non-Jewish lawyers were friendly and good humoured but the Jewish ones had no time. And those that might have been interested were quickly discouraged by the head of the firm.

He was a no-nonsense every-moment-is-precious hard as nails attorney who was worth several hundred dollars per hour. When he was anywhere in the office, even in his room, there was no chance that our heroes could even pass the front desk. And if he chanced to come out of his office he would have them evicted; he'd mumble something to the receptionist on the way to his room and in a few minutes she would politely ask them to leave.

This went on for about half a year, they made zero headway but they didn't give up. In any case it was only one of the offices on their route and some Jews have to be asked a thousand times before they agree. At least they would get in the first few hundred.

One Friday they arrived just as their subway was pulling out and were waiting for the next to come when one of the vendors there, a Mexican fellow who set up a table and sold pens and other small items, approached them, pointed to Chaim, held up a black tie and said, "You need a tie."

"No thanks." Chaim said politely. "I don't like ties. But thanks anyway."

"No!" The Mexican insisted "You NEED a tie. You are an important person with a white shirt. Such a person needs a tie. Here, I sell you the tie for less. I give you a reduction. Five dollars instead of seven. Good? Take it!"

"Nope! Sorry. I don't want a tie." Chaim protested calmly. "Thanks anyway. but sorry, I don't want it!"

But the fellow wouldn't take no for an answer. For the next five minutes he kept it up. "This tie is just for you! If you wear it you will

look good! I know what I am saying. You need it." etc, etc.

Chaim tried to protest more assertively, "Hey! Leave me alone. I don't have money for a tie, okay? And I won't wear it anyway. None of us wear ties!" But to no avail. The Mexican was not giving up. Finally the boys decided the only way to get rid of him was to simply buy the tie.

Each friend smilingly chipped in a dollar. Chaim gave him the five and took the tie, happy to finally have a little peace and quiet. "Okay?" one of the fellows said. "Now are you happy? We bought the tie!"

"NO!" The salesman said. "I'm not happy! You must WEAR the tie! What, you think I sold for me the tie? No! It's for you! You MUST wear it. It will make you look good. See?" And he grabbed for the tie.

"Look," Said Chaim exasperatedly, "Leave me alone! It's my tie now and I'll do what I want with it. I don't have to wear it if I don't want. Do you understand? Not only that, I never wore a tie in my life and I don't even know how to make a knot! So do me a favor and leave me alone. Okay, amigo?"

"Oh! No problem!" he answered "I show you how to tie it. Here, look. Give me the tie, bend over a bit ... I put your collar up like this. See." And before Chaim knew it the fellow had done it -- Chaim was wearing a tie! He shrugged, thinking to himself that as soon as he gets on the train he'll take it off.

But the Mexican knew his business. "Ah! It is beautiful!!" he stepped back and said admiring his own work. "Now you must promise me that you won't take it off."

"What? You mean I have to wear it the rest of my life?" They all laughed including the salesman. Chaim was wondering why the subway was taking so long. "Why can't you just leave me alone?"

"Sure," he answered. "Just promise me you will wear it today. So you give it a chance. Good? Promise? You see it looks so beautiful! You must promise!"

"Who are you anyway?" Chaim exclaimed. "Did my mother send you or something?" The others roared with laughter.

But then, for some reason, Chaim surprised himself by suddenly blurting out "Okay! Okay! I'll leave it on today."

At that moment the subway came roaring in, they all got on and twenty minutes later they were in Manhattan, involved in putting *tefilin* on Jews. They had already forgotten the Mexican and the bizarre episode with the tie.

Finally came the turn of the 'ice berg' law firm.

They got out of the elevator on the fifteenth floor, entered the large marble-floored reception room and smiled at the receptionist. A few of the gentile lawyers smiled and said hello as they rushed from room to room.

Then appeared the boss!

"Why are they here?" he said to the receptionist. Then, not waiting for an answer turned to them and said sternly, "Who are you? What do you want?"

"We're from the Lubavitcher Rebbe and we came to see if there are Jews here that want to put on *tefilin*," one of them answered, preparing to get evicted as usual.

He looked at them silently for a second or two like a wolf about to pounce on his prey. Then he pointed at Chaim and said. "YOU! I want you to follow me!"

It didn't look good. After all, this guy knew all the laws. He was the head of the firm! It could be that somehow they were trespassing. Maybe he would call the police. But Chaim, without thinking too much, followed him down a wide, highly polished corridor into his plush office.

The lawyer closed the door behind them, turned to Chaim and said. "I want to put on *tefilin*."

After a few years of wrapping *tefilin* on people, nothing really surprised Chaim anymore. After five minutes he had finished the 'mitzva'.

"You probably want to know why I finally agreed to put on *tefilin*, right?" The attorney asked. "Well, I'll tell you."

"I might look like a successful man but the fact is I'm having several big crises in life. Our firm is losing several very big cases and suffering other financial setbacks. Not only that but I'm having some personal problems as well. I'm not used to being on the helpless side but I needed help. I didn't know to whom to turn, I mean, someone who really cared. As lawyers, we live a pretty cold life sometimes."

"Then, yesterday I happened to see one of the cards you fellows left here with the Lubavitcher Rebbe's picture on it, and it struck a note. I began to wonder if perhaps he could do something. After all, I did put on *tefilin* after my Bar Mitzva for a while. Anyway, maybe you won't believe this, but last night I had a dream.

"I dreamt that I saw the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He smiled and I asked him if he could help me. He answered, 'But I send you a group of young men every Friday with *tefilin*! To which I replied, 'What, those ragamuffins? They look like a bunch of vagrants! Why, none of them even wears a tie!!'

"The Rebbe looked at me and said 'You want a tie? Okay, I'll send someone with a tie!' And I woke up."

"So when I saw you with a tie I knew that it wasn't only a dream."

The attorney began putting on *tefilin* regularly and a close friendship developed between him and the fellows. As far as anyone knows his problems were alleviated.

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ISSUE 1106

MOSHIACH MATTERS

In Yemot ha-Moshiach, the Days of Moshiach, nature will not change. All that will be is total universal goodness and morality. This means that nation does not oppress nation, that there is no suppression of religion, and so on.

In the "Days of Moshiach," morality becomes the norm, or maybe the primary pursuit of mankind. "The World to Come", however, is when nature itself starts to change, when earth becomes heaven. And then it's eternal, and there's no death.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d
23 Teves, 5715 [1955]
Brooklyn

Greetings and Blessings!

In reply to your letter of Motzaei Shabbos: There is doubtless no need to alert you to the fact that the luminaries of Israel held melancholy and depression in extreme disfavour. This is also discussed in Tanya, ch. 26, and in many other places. In addition, one can plainly observe that not only does such an attitude fail to correct any situation, but in fact it does quite the opposite. This is also true with regard to the matters with which you are occupied. It is especially true in this country, where a happy approach strikes a responsive chord in people's hearts, whereas its opposite does not.

Above all, there is no basis for your melancholy; for it is written that "a wise wife comes from G-d." And the way to arrive at this is to follow the advice of the Sages - to seek and seek, as one does when looking for lost property. In such a case, this is obviously done energetically, albeit in accordance with the custom of upstanding Jews to do so through intermediaries. You should continue to engage in this, with firm trust.

And G-d, Who since the Six Days of Creation has been "arranging matrimonial matches," as the Sages teach in Bereishis Rabbah, will no doubt make available to you, too, the match that will be suitable for you, materially and spiritually in unison. [After all, you are] involved in bringing the hearts of the Children of Israel close to our Father in Heaven through the study of the inner dimension of the Torah, and through a lifestyle directed by the inner dimension of the Torah - and the inner dimension of the Torah brings about the marriage (and not only the betrothal) of the Community of Israel with the Holy One, blessed be He. Accordingly, may the merit of this involvement help you speedily find that which is lost. May you soon find a match that is good in every particular and build - in a spirit of joy - a Chassidic home, "an everlasting edifice...." [...]

As to the participants in the study circles, concerning whom you wrote, I mentioned them each by name at the holy resting place of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz]. A holy and righteous man [even after his physical passing] is called "alive" - and, as Ramban writes (on Bamidbar 1:45; see there), "If a person comes before [Moshe and before Aharon,] the holy man of G-d, and is known to them by name, this will accord him merit and life."

With blessings for success in the near future,

CUSTOMS CORNER

Honouring one's parents

One must be extremely careful to honour and revere his father and mother, for the Torah compares it to the honour and reverence of G-d.

1. Both man and woman are enjoined to honour and revere parents. However, a married woman is not in a position to supply her parents with their needs inasmuch as she depends on others, and she is therefore exempt thereof. But she is obligated to do for her parents all she can as long as her husband does not object.
2. One must honour and respect his step-mother during his father's lifetime and his step-father during his mother's lifetime. It is proper that one honour and respect them even after the death of one's own parents.
3. One must honour and respect his father-in-law and his mother-in-law (as we find that King David honoured King Saul, who was his father-in-law, by calling him "my father"; (see I Samuel 24:12). Likewise one must honour and respect grandparents. Also implied in this Mitzvah is that one must honour his elder brother and sister.

A WORD

from the Director

Our sages tell us that the word the Torah starts with, "Bereishis" meaning "in the beginning" can also be read as "Beis Reishis" which means "two beginnings" or "two firsts". This refers to the two who preceded the world and were the reason for its creation; the Torah, and the Jewish People.

This perspective that the Torah takes, teaches us about how a Jew approaches the world. The Jew, the ambassador of G-dliness to the world, finds himself in a corporeal reality, struggling to navigate through the jungle of crude existence. The Torah, in conveying G-d's infinite wisdom lays down a fundamental outlook. Right in the beginning, this world was created for the Jew. This world was created based on the patterns and the details of the Torah as its blueprint. This world is a place we are neither afraid of, nor dependant on. It is a place we beautify.

As the G-d addresses the Jewish people saying "come to my garden", we now approach the world as a garden in which to plant, grow and develop the world to its state of true awareness of its creator. This is the world in which the Jew sitting in his store, or walking in the park, will say a verse of praise to Hashem, or extend a warm hand to a friend.

There was once a Chassid by the name of R' Binyamin Kletzker, who was a lumber merchant. When calculating his year's earnings, he listed all of the transactions. Coming to the sum total at the bottom of the page he paused, thought for a moment, and jotted his conclusion "there is none but Him [G-d]."

This is the mindset of a Jew. Even in his business, in his worldly relations, he is always cognizant of Hashem. This is the reason for his being, and the sum total of his existence.

May we merit making this new year, a year in which we recognize in all that "there is none but Him."

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED

Once...

THE KABBALAH OF TOBACCO

One Rosh Hashana, when the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov were praying together, one of them dropped a snuff-box. When he bent down in the middle of his prayers to retrieve it, another of the disciples noticed and severely berated him for interrupting his prayers just to take a whiff of tobacco.

The Baal Shem Tov, with his spiritual insight, realized that the rebuke of his holy disciple had brought a heavenly judgment upon his friend, to die within the coming year. The Baal Shem Tov made a "soul ascension," and argued fiercely before the Heavenly Court, to no avail. He continued trying, and on the night of *Hoshana Rabba* [the seventh and final day of the Sukkot festival and, according to Kabbalah, the last opportunity to influence the Divine Judgment for the year before it is dispatched] his soul ascended one last time, and he argued and cried out in prayer. Finally, it was agreed that if the accuser himself would judge his friend favourably, the latter would be delivered from the verdict.

The Baal Shem Tov entered the study hall and found the disciple who had chastised his friend engaged in the Hoshana Rabba night custom of reciting the entire book of Deuteronomy [before midnight, followed by the entire Book of Psalms after midnight]. The Baal Shem Tov took away his ability to maintain a high level of spiritual consciousness, making it impossible for him to recite the verses with the appropriate attachment to G-d. The student began to pace the study hall, contemplating on the Greatness of G-d, His Oneness, and other matters (in order to regain his focus).

Suddenly, a thought entered his mind. "Why is it that the tobacco plant has only been discovered in the past century or two, making it possible now for people to snuff or smoke it? Perhaps there are souls in our generation too sublime to be clothed in the physical world, and the only way to rectify them is through something equally refined, like the sense of smell." This led him to feelings of regret over the anger he had showed his friend; for who knows which souls he raised up by snuffing tobacco with the appropriate mystical intentions?

On the day of Hoshana Rabba, it was the Baal Shem Tov's custom to answer all questions about what had been decreed above and below, and about what would happen throughout the world in the coming year, for with his divinely inspired knowledge, he could see from one end of the earth to the other.

On that day, he was in especially good spirits. Each of his students prepared a different question, some in areas of Torah discourse, and some with questions on the Talmud, or other matters. The Baal Shem Tov would answer them all.

That disciple, who had berated his friend, chose to ask his question about the discovery of tobacco. When he presented his question, the Baal Shem Tov said to him, "Tell me what you think!" He gave his reason, and the Baal Shem Tov said, "But say no more! Tell me all the thoughts that you had last night." The student remembered what he had thought, and told the Baal Shem Tov how he had judged his friend favourably.

At that moment, the heavenly decree was annulled.

The Baal Shem Tov was then able to tell him the whole story about what he had brought upon his friend. He warned him always to judge G-d fearing people favourably, so as not to bring supernal judgments upon them, that it should always be good for them.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

In the beginning (1:1)

"In the beginning" refers to the beginning of time – the first, indivisible moment, before which time did not exist. (*Soforno*)

Therein lies the answer to the question, posed by certain philosophers, as to why did G-d create the world only when He did? Why not a hundred years or a million years earlier? But time is itself part of G-d's creation. We cannot ask why the world was not created earlier, since there is no stretch of time that can be termed before creation. (*Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi*)

And G-d said, "Let there be light!" and there was light... And G-d said, "Let there be a firmament"... And G-d said, "Let the earth sprout grass"... (1:3, etc.)

The world was created with ten utterances. (*Ethics of the Fathers, 5:1*)

Of course, G-d could have created our world, in all its infinite detail, with a singular expression of His desire for a world. The fact that He created the world with ten utterances i.e. in its details, brought a significance and value to each and every being with its particular traits. (*The Chassidic Masters*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: SEPTEMBER 25, 26, 27, 2013

BEGINS			ENDS		
25th	26th	27th			28th
6:00	6:58	6:02	MELBOURNE		7:00
5:55	6:52	5:57	ADELAIDE		6:53
5:27	6:20	5:28	BRISBANE		6:21
6:25	7:14	6:25	DARWIN		7:14
5:25	6:19	5:26	GOLD COAST		6:28
5:56	6:51	5:57	PERTH		6:52
5:35	6:30	5:36	SYDNEY		6:32
5:43	6:40	5:45	CANBERRA		6:41
5:52	6:52	5:54	LAUNCESTON		6:54
6:01	6:58	6:02	AUCKLAND		7:00
6:01	7:01	6:03	WELLINGTON		7:03
5:53	5:54	6:45	HOBART		6:55
5:25	6:18	6:26	BYRON BAY		6:19
6:42	7:30	6:41	SINGAPORE		7:29

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

BEREISHIS

23 TISHREI • 27 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	6:02 PM
	MINCHA:	6:10 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:40 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9:06 PM
	Moled Month of Cheshvan: Friday October 4, 2013	11:30 & 3 chalakim PM
	MINCHA:	5:55 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	7:00 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	
	SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	
	SUN-THURS:	6:10 PM
MAARIV:		
	SUN-THURS:	7:00 PM, 9:00 PM