

# LAMPLIGHTER

3 Teves  
Parshas Vayigash

116

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Jewish people, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are often referred to by the name of another of our great forebears, Joseph. "Listen, O Shepherd of Israel, You Who leads Joseph like a flock," sings the Psalmist. Rashi explains that every Jew is called "Joseph," "because he (Joseph) sustained and provided for them during the famine," a narrative of which appears in this week's Torah portion, Vayigash.

At first glance, this seems to be an insufficient explanation. Why call an entire nation after one individual, no matter how exalted, just because he was instrumental in aiding the Jewish people during a certain short period in their history?

Chasidic philosophy teaches that every phenomenon in the physical world exists only because of its spiritual root above. Indeed, the physical manifestation in this world is only a reflection of the true spiritual reality. The fact that Joseph sustained the fledgling Jewish people with food (as well as the rest of the known world at the time), reflects the fact that it was he who imbued his people with the spiritual nourishment and sustenance they needed to survive in exile, as well. The lack of food, the famine which hit Egypt, was accompanied by a spiritual famine, for the exile in Egypt was a time of great darkness and trouble for the Jewish people. It was Joseph who gave his descendants the strength to deal with the hardships and adversity of exile.

Joseph, in his role as second in command to Pharaoh, broke new ground and paved an innovative path in the service of G-d. Joseph's brothers were shepherds, an occupation which gave them plenty of time to pursue a spiritual life. By contrast, Joseph lived a life of involvement in the world, first as the manager of Potifar's household, later when he was in charge of his fellow prisoners in jail, and finally, when he was appointed second in command over all of Egypt. Although Joseph was always intimately involved in the day-to-day details of the physical world, as was dictated by his various positions, his greatness lies in the fact that he never severed his spiritual connection to G-d, and in fact, emerged even stronger in his service and commitment.

Much of Joseph's life was spent in exile, in the centre of the most cosmopolitan society of his time. Yet, he remained untouched by the lure of the material world and unbowed in his religious faith.

Joseph therefore symbolizes, more than any of the Patriarchs or the rest of the 12 tribes, the essence of the Jewish people. As we stand on the threshold of the Messianic Era, we look back on the thousands of years of Jewish exile spent under the dominion of the nations of the world. Although we have, of necessity, concerned ourselves with the daily, mundane details of our lives, our relationship with G-d has remained as strong as ever. Indeed, our goal in life is not to withdraw from the world to concentrate solely on the spiritual; a Jew's task is to combine the two realms, imbuing the physical world with holiness. It is in our forefather Joseph's merit that we have been given the power to withstand any spiritual "famine" which could possibly threaten our existence as "Joseph's flock."

*Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

## The Defining Haircut

*By Naftali Silberberg*

The Talmud tells us that before Jacob agreed to travel to Egypt, he sent ahead his son Judah to establish a yeshivah, a Torah academy, in Goshen, the Egyptian territory where Jacob and his sons would settle. Knowing that his descendants would face challenging times in Egypt, Jacob realized that only a proper Jewish education would give them a strong Jewish identity, enable them to withstand all difficulties and persecutions, and insulate them against the threat of assimilation.

From the Jewish standpoint, education is not so much the imparting of data and information as much as instilling within our youth integrity, kindness, and Jewish values. Information alone - even the holy teachings of the Torah - would not have preserved the Jews throughout the difficult years of Egyptian slavery. It was the code of conduct and ethics that were taught in the yeshivah that truly distinguished them from their immoral and cruel taskmasters.

Unfortunately, many of today's "institutes of education" are actually "institutes of de-education." While they impart to their students much important and necessary information, the underlying principle of moral relativism that they espouse throws in doubt all the vital ethics that we strove to implant within our children. Nothing is more destructive than the trendy notion that right and wrong are inherently subjective.

This fact of life increases the importance of providing our children with a rock-solid and concrete set of Jewish values. This education begins at home but is given crucial reinforcement by sending our children to Jewish schools that teach the same values - schools that would make Patriarch Jacob proud.

The very first value we wish to teach our children is the importance of a fierce pride in their beautiful and unique heritage. We are different and unique. We are privileged to be G-d's "ambassadors of light" to a dark and difficult world, a privilege that countless of our grandparents died to protect. And despite all the hardships, pogroms and persecution that we have endured, we are thankful that we are the Chosen People.

This idea is demonstrated by the Upsherin, the traditional "first haircut" ceremony held on a boy's third birthday. This ceremony that marks the start of the child's education is highlighted by leaving peyot, the distinctively Jewish side curls, and the child starting to wear a kippah and tzitzit (four cornered fringed garment). We thus tell the child, "You are yet young and have much to learn. But the first lesson we wish to teach you is that you are a Jew and must never be embarrassed to act and dress as a Jew. Your nation has the most glorious history, a history of teaching the entire world ethics and morals, and an even more magnificent future awaits our people. Come what may, always be a proud Jew!"

# Slice of LIFE

## A MIRACLE FOR SAFED

In the winter of 1980, Rabbi Aharon-Eliezer Ceitlin of Tsfat (Safed) flew to the United States, charged with arranging a gala fund-raising dinner on behalf of the Chabad institutions in his city. He arrived in New York about two months before the scheduled date in order to take care of all the necessary preparations.

He had never organized such an event before. There was a myriad of technical details: renting a hall, printing and mailing invitations, advertisements, speakers, entertainment, etc. Whenever he had a problem, he asked for **the Lubavitcher Rebbe's** advice, which he duly received and implemented. On his own initiative, the Rebbe even donated the first \$40.

It was the seventh of the Jewish month of *Tevet* and the night of the affair was fast approaching, when the telephone in Rabbi Ceitlin's temporary office rang. Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, was on the line with an urgent message: I have something for you from the Rebbe!

On his way, Rabbi Ceitlin's mind raced furiously, but he could not imagine what the Rebbe might want to give him...Breathless, he entered the secretary's room.

Rabbi Groner pulled a large package from his drawer. In it was a bottle of vodka, fifty \$1 bills, and a note in the Rebbe's handwriting which read, "Enclosed is my participation in the *Melave Malka: nun* [50] dollars and a *kankan yash* [container of liquor]. May it be G-d's will that everything should be a great success."

Rabbi Ceitlin was flabbergasted. The Rebbe had already "participated" with his donation of \$40. Why the additional fifty \$1 bills? Why the vodka, so many days in advance? Why did he refer to the bottle as a "*kankan*"? That he specified the amount of his donation was also uncommon. And why in such an unusual way: "*nun*", not

"fifty" or "50"? The Rebbe's secretary could not offer an interpretation.

Rabbi Ceitlin left the office puzzled, but full of joy at the special interest the Rebbe had shown him. That evening, he still could not get over what had happened. He paced back and forth in the living room, unable to calm down. Something made him return to the office to continue working. He took the package with him, tucked securely in the inner pocket of his overcoat. The time was 9 p.m.

As he walked, a car drew up alongside him. It was Naftali Greenwald, his brother-in-law who lived in the neighborhood. Naftali rolled down his window, and Rabbi Ceitlin leaned over to talk with him. Suddenly, they heard a terrifying voice: "Your money or you're dead."

Rabbi Ceitlin's blood froze in his veins. He slowly turned. Although 6'4" tall himself, he had to look up to see the threatening, icy eyes that stared down at him. It was a mountainous black man, and he was pointing a gun right at this forehead.

Rabbi Ceitlin quickly glanced down the street. It was deserted. Instinctively, he put his hand in his coat pocket. His fingers touched the bottle of vodka and the packet with the Rebbe's dollars, but they refused to come out. Something told him that the man was only interested in those dollar bills, and with them he refused to part. Yet, he did not think the man would be satisfied with money from his other pockets. What to do?

Suddenly, the roar of the car engine shattered the silence. Naftali had stepped on the gas with the car in neutral, hoping the noise would scare the thief away. Instead, the man became enraged. He aimed his gun at the driver and pulled the trigger. The same moment the bullet struck the metal door, the car shot forward. Rabbi Ceitlin, who was now alone with the gunman, began yelling with all his might, at the same time trying to back away.

The mugger again raised his gun and aimed it at Ceitlin. Holding it with both hands, he shot from point blank range!

Rabbi Ceitlin kept shouting and

backing away. Astonished, the gunman turned and fled. Twice he looked back to see if Ceitlin was really still there.

Rabbi Ceitlin was in a state of shock. He knew he had been shot at, but he did not feel any pain. He pinched himself. He ran his hand over his body, searching for wounds. He could not smell any blood. He began to think he dreamt it all.

A few minutes later, his brother-in-law arrived with three police cars, to find Rabbi Ceitlin still clutching the Rebbe's package in his pocket. Suddenly they realized a double miracle had occurred. The first bullet had passed through the flesh of Rabbi Greenwald's hand, without hitting a bone or a nerve. The greater miracle: Rabbi Ceitlin was not injured at all!

News of what had happened spread like wildfire. The attack publicized the dinner that was to be held only a few days later better than any advertisement. Everyone would come to the dinner organized by the "hero" of the day. Those who attended were surprised to see Rabbi Groner sitting at the dais. After Rabbi Ceitlin told his story to the rapt audience, Rabbi Groner was invited to speak. He began:

"It is written in the *Gemara (Berachot 57a)* that one who sees Huna in a dream will have a miracle happen to him. If he sees Chanina, Chananya, Yochanan, or Nisi, many miracles will occur. However, this applies only if he sees these names in writing. Rashi explains that all these names contain the letter *nun*, the first letter of the word -- miracle."

Rabbi Groner went on to suggest an explanation of the Rebbe's unusual note.

"The Rebbe specified the number of dollar bills in order to use the letter *nun*. He also referred to the bottle of vodka as a *kankan*, rather than the usual word for bottle, *bakbuk*, because *kankan* contains two *nuns*, representing the double miracle that would take place."

In the end, the dinner was a tremendous success, and so the second part of the Rebbe's note was fulfilled as well: "**May it be G-d's will that everything should be a great success.**"

*Adapted by Wonders and Miracles Vol. 2 by Yerachmiel Tilles*

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## MOSHIACH MATTERS

In this week's Parsha Yaakov tells Pharaoh that his "years of sojourn, have been [only] one hundred and thirty few and bad years..." because although to have lived to such a ripe old age was clearly considered a long life, Yaakov was constantly living with the hope and vision of the future; living with the times of the ultimate redemption when life will continue eternally. When Pharaoh asked him to sum up his life, how could the experienced one hundred and thirty compare to the expected infinite?



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

B.H.  
Sivan 5738  
Brooklyn, NY

Dr.  
California  
Greeting and Blessing:

Thank you for your letter upon your return from Eretz Yisroel.

I am pleased to note that you and your wife enjoyed your visit in Eretz Yisroel and were impressed with the activities of Chabad there. As I have remarked on similar occasions, it is customary to bring back souvenirs from the lands one visits that are characteristic of native features and products, etc. I trust therefore, that you too brought back with you the right souvenir from the Holy Land, namely, an extra measure of holiness, which will serve as a fitting memento of your visit. And, of course, there is always room for improvement in matters of holiness, Torah and Mitzvos, in the daily life. In your case this is even more important, not only for your own benefit, but also for the benefit of the many who look to you for inspiration; and one is inspired not by someone else's good thoughts and intentions, and not so much by word of mouth as by living example, which need no elaboration to a psychologist.

Now to the main subject of our correspondence, namely, saving Jews from getting involved in avoda zora through T.M. and the like by offering them a kosher alternative.

With reference to your letter, I would like to make the following observations:

Although a well-planned and systematic approach is generally required to ensure success of any project, I do not think that we can afford to delay too long the implementation of our plan through time-consuming preparations; and for two reasons: firstly, every day that the plan is not in operation means so many more Jews turning to those unholy cults ad there is no other sure way of preventing or discouraging this.

Secondly, and this is also a weighty consideration, every new project is provisional by nature, for it is expected that as it progresses there would be need for changes and improvements, which is common experience in various fields, medicine, science, business etc.

I note in your letter that your discussions with your colleagues have advanced to the point of forming an ad hoc committee. I therefore believe that the stage can now be set to start immediately a pilot clinic or similar facility, to start offering actual treatment, on the basis of your ad your colleagues' professional expertise and mutual consultations. The pilot project should be set up in a way that allows for ample flexibility for modification and change as may be necessary.

As indicated, I will be able to provide the funding for the initial stage, within limitations. You will o doubt send me a tentative budget of the initial outlay, with an estimate of the period of time it may take until the setup becomes self-supporting. Indeed, I am confident that before long it will not only be self-supporting, but also profitable, considering the popularity of techniques involved. But it is important to start in a way that will not inhibit the effectiveness and development of the project, even if it costs much more.

With regard to specifics, I do not think it advisable to use the term "mystic" for the planned healing center, since the goal is to attract the greatest number of Jews ad save them from avoda zora, and the said term might discourage some. Moreover, generally mysticism connotes something that lies beyond the pale of human comprehension, while the therapeutic benefits of the techniques are quite understandable rationally. Besides, to emphasize the mystical aspect would leave the door open also, lehavdil, to non-Jewish mystical cults.

For the same reason it is advisable to be circumspect in regard to the description of the techniques to be used I the healing center. For example, you mention the use of "mikvot." While it is not in my domain to assess the therapeutic effect of relaxation in a hot mikve, I fear that to include a mikve "officially" in the regimen might be suspected - by some people, a least, that it is a gimmick to involve them in mitzvos. I think that veiling in it some such term as "immersion" hot bath and the like would entirely allay such suspicion.

As for calling the healing center..... it is a name already in use by various organizations and journals. Another suitable name would have to be found, but there is no need to make the final decisions on this right away.

Finally, let me relieve you of any apprehension that you might be "pushing" me on this matter. On the contrary, in connection with such a vital project, "pushing" could only be all to the good, since time is of the essence, as I emphasized above.

In view of the fact that everything is by hashgocho protis, it is significant that your letter and my reply were written in proximity to the Yom Tov of Kabbolas Ha'Torah, when we renew nd redouble our commitment to the Torah on the basis of "naasah" before "v'nishma," with emphasis on the doing and that "naaseh" is the key to "v'nishma."

With esteem and blessing,  
Signature

## CUSTOMS CORNER

It is a Mitzvah for a person to involve himself in the preparations for Shabbos. It is even taught in the Talmud that great sages involved themselves in menial labour just for the honour of the Shabbos.

Some of the preparations for Shabbos mentioned in Jewish Law are:

- Cleaning the house
- Setting the table
- Showering, cutting one's nails, and taking a haircut
- Wearing special clothing
- Eating less on Friday afternoon (so that one has an appetite for the Shabbos meal)

In general, a person should act in the manner that a person would when greeting a queen, indeed sages stated that they would go out to "greet the Shabbos queen".

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*In this week's Parsha Yaakov hears of the news that his son Yosef, who had been taken to Egypt many years earlier and been announced as dead, was in fact alive. The Torah relates that Yaakov's "spirit was revived" by this news only after he had seen the wagons that Yosef had sent to bring him to Egypt.*

*What was the message in the wagons? The commentaries explain that the Hebrew word for wagon is "eglah" which can also mean "calf". This was in connection to a unique law in the Torah, where if a person is found dead in the fields surrounding a city, and the reason for his death is unknown, it is a Mitzvah for the elders of the city to behead a calf in atonement for the death of the individual, although the person was found in a place that is outside of their jurisdiction.*

*Yosef had learned this specific law with his father as his father had seen him off for the last time, saying "I wish to escort you on your journey (to find your brothers) just as we know that the liability of the elders is for not having properly escorted the visitor from their city."*

*These wagons were really wagonloads of revelation to Yaakov as to Yosef's condition in Egypt. They were silently screaming: "yes, I do remember the laws we leaned together. Yes, I have internalized them. I have learned that just as the elders of the city must feel the responsibility even for those that are not in their immediate area, so too did I realize that even outside the 'city' of holiness of your home, in this depraved society in Egypt, I am responsible to maintain my holy standards." This revived the spirit of Yaakov.*

*The lesson for us is clear. No matter where we may roam, in any spot on the spectrum of the different times and shades we experience throughout our lives, it is our responsibility and our privilege to remain true to our holy status as the nation of the Holy One Blessed Be He.*

*J. I. Gurtman*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## WORSE THAN POVERTY

Reb Moshe looked around his barren house, but his search was in vain, for there was nothing of value left to pawn. His formerly elegant surroundings were bereft of their fine furniture, crystal chandeliers and French tapestries.

It was almost impossible to believe, but Reb Moshe and family were now paupers. Even their fine tailored clothing had been sold, and each remained with only one suit of clothes. Reb Moshe and his family took one last look at their beloved house, and then turned to go out the door for the last time. The only possession they took was a small bundle of personal items of no special monetary value. They stood on their front steps with no particular place to go.

Reb Moshe was a follower of the great Chasidic leader, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir of Gur, and so he went to the Rebbe for advice. Although he was now penniless, Reb Moshe still had a plan in mind. In a distant country he had very wealthy relatives who would certainly help him out of his difficult straits. They would surely lend him enough money to begin his business again.

When Reb Moshe entered the Rebbe's room, he poured out his broken heart, and then offered his solution. "I will travel to my relatives and ask them to help me. With a loan, which I will certainly be able to repay, I will be able to start my business again and save my family from this unbearable situation."

But, to his great surprise, the Rebbe shook his head, no. Reb Moshe thought that perhaps the Rebbe didn't agree with the idea of his traveling, so he suggested an alternate plan: "Maybe I should just write to them and explain my situation. After all, they are close relatives, and they are easily able to send me enough money to get started." But the Rebbe nodded again, "No, I am not in agreement with that suggestion."

There was nothing to do but leave, and Reb Moshe departed with a heavy heart. He had no idea where to find his salvation. Still, he took his Rebbe's advice to heart and sought any kind of work to sustain his family, all to no avail.

At his wits' end, Reb Moshe returned to Gur, hoping the Rebbe would perhaps see things differently. But, no, the Rebbe still didn't countenance approaching the wealthy relatives. Now, things had become even more difficult.

The man traveled to Gur one more time and stood before the Rebbe, pleading, but the Rebbe answered him, "I cannot change my opinion, regardless of how you ask and what you say."

Finally Reb Moshe could no longer restrain himself; he wrote a lengthy letter to his relatives. As he expected, he soon received a reply from them and a generous sum of money to help him get back on his feet. Little by little he rebuilt his business connections. He bought new merchandise, he leased a new property, and his life began to resemble his former life of prosperity.

But just when he thought things were going on an even keel, Reb Moshe fell ill. What began as a simple cold progressed to the point that he was bedridden and doctors pronounced his situation very dangerous. His one desire was to travel to Gur. But that was impossible: he was too weak to be moved. Instead he dispatched a close friend to go to the Rebbe and speak for him.

The friend was ushered into the Rebbe's study, where he informed the Rebbe of Reb Moshe's precarious state. The Rebbe was very pensive, but then spoke.

"Sometimes a person will find himself in a situation which he feels is unbearable. He may be ill, he may lose his fortune, any of the hundreds of calamities large or small that afflict the human race.

But know that everything G-d does is ultimately only for his good. Every soul must have its correction in this world to enable it to proceed to its higher level in the World of Truth. And so, even when things seem bad to the eyes of man, they are contrived Above only for his benefit.

"There are times when, for a particular reason, the Heavenly Court decrees a sentence of death upon someone. But when an advocate intervenes on his behalf, the Heavenly Court is moved to lighten its verdict and to make the tikun (correction) to the person's soul in another way, through a different type of atonement. Since, 'a pauper is considered [in some respects] as one who is dead' [see Rashi on Ex. 4:19 and Gen. 29:11], poverty is sometimes substituted for death by the Heavenly Court.

"This is what happened to Reb Moshe. When he came to me for advice as to whether to accept help from his relatives, I could not agree, for I felt that it was not 'basher' [in tune with his destiny] for him to do so. When he asked me repeatedly for my agreement, I kept refusing, for my inner vision told me that he should not accept this help.

But in the end, he was unable to restrain himself from accepting the money from his relatives. When he cast off from himself the burden of poverty, he removed from himself the substitute sentence, and his vital force was cut off."

The friend left Gur quickly, hoping to return to Reb Moshe while the Rebbe's words could still be of help. But when he arrived home, his friend had departed from this world.

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

And Serach their sister (46:17)

When Jacob's sons returned from Egypt with the news that Joseph is alive, they said: If we tell him straightaway, his soul will fly from his body. So they told Serach to play on her harp and sing, "Joseph lives, Joseph lives, and he is the ruler of Egypt," so that he should absorb the message slowly.

Said Jacob to her: "The mouth that informed me that Joseph lives shall not taste death." Serach was among those who came out of Egypt and among those who entered the Land; She was the "wise woman" who handed over Sheva ben Bichri to Joab (II Samuel 20); in the end, she entered paradise alive. (*Sefer HaYashar; Tzror HaMor*)

And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father... and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck (46:29)

But Jacob did not embrace Joseph and did not kiss him; our sages tell us that he was reading the Shema. (*Rashi*)

Why did Jacob choose that particular moment to read the Shema? Because Jacob knew that never in his life would his love be aroused as it was at that moment, the moment of reunion with his most beloved son after twenty-two years of anguish and loss. So he chose to utilize this tremendous welling of emotion to serve His Creator, channelling it to fuel his love for G-d. (*The Chassidic Masters*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 6 DECEMBER 2013

BEGINS	ENDS
8:13 .....MELBOURNE .....	9:19
8:00 .....ADELAIDE .....	9:03
6:14 .....BRISBANE .....	7:12
6:44 .....DARWIN .....	7:37
6:14 .....GOLD COAST .....	7:12
6:53 .....PERTH .....	7:54
7:37 .....SYDNEY .....	8:39
7:49 .....CANBERRA .....	8:52
8:15 .....LAUNCESTON .....	9:24
8:10 .....AUCKLAND .....	9:15
8:24 .....WELLINGTON .....	9:33
8:19 .....HOBART .....	9:30
7:14 .....BYRON BAY .....	8:13
6:39 .....SINGAPORE .....	7:30



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD  
PARSHAS VAYIGASH  
3 TEVES • 6 DECEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:13 PM
	MINCHA:	8:20 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:55 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9:30 AM
	MINCHA:	8:05 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:19 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	8:20 PM
	MAARIV: SUN-FRI:	9:15 PM
FRIDAY:	FAST BEGINS:	4:11 AM