

LAMPLIGHTER

12 Adar II
Parshas Tzav
Parshas Zachor
1130
14 March
5774/2014

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

On the verse "He tells His words to Jacob, His laws and ordinances to Israel" our Sages comment: "That which G-d does, He tells Israel to do." Conversely, G-d himself fulfills the same precepts He commands the Jewish people to fulfil. It follows, then, that on the night of the Passover Seder G-d "reads" the Hagada along with us, albeit in a higher, more spiritual sense.

The Hagada begins with the words "This is the bread of affliction." This opening section makes three points:

1. This is the bread of affliction (Matza) that our forefathers ate in Egypt.
2. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and conduct the Passover Seder.
3. This year we are here; next year in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves, next year we will be free people.

The Jewish people are not alone in their exile; G-d is in exile with them. The inner meaning of exile and "affliction" is a lack of understanding and perception of G-dliness; indeed, the entire concept of exile is none other than the concealment of the true G-dliness that sustains the world.

G-d fills the entire universe; the reason we cannot see this openly is because the Divine Presence is in exile. Thus, "This is the bread of affliction" refers to the phenomenon of exile, "which our forefathers (Avot - symbolic, in Chasidic philosophy, of human understanding and intellect) ate in the land of Egypt." (Mitzrayim - from the Hebrew meaning limitation, i.e., within the limitations imposed by the physical world.)

Next, G-d gives us His "recipe" for redemption: "Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat." I promise, G-d declares, that whoever is hungry for the truth, for the light of My holy Torah, will have his spiritual hunger sated.

"Whoever is in need, let him come." Even a person who is already knowledgeable and well-versed in Jewish teachings will be blessed with a richness of understanding, just as the Paschal sacrifice was eaten only after the meal, on a full stomach.

This "richness" leads to the third point: Even though we are now "here," in exile, "next year in the land of Israel" - we will be in a state of redemption. Not that we will have to wait an entire year for Moshiach to come, G-d forbid, but the Redemption will occur "in the blink of an eye," and by this time next year we will have long since been "in the land of Israel."

"This year we are slaves, next year we will be free people." In the Messianic Era we will experience the ultimate liberation, for Moshiach will uncover the true and inner essence of every Jew, and the entire world will attain its ultimate freedom.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 3

A Special Holiday

The Midrash tells us that the only holiday that will really be noticed in the days of the Moshiach will be Purim. To understand why Purim is so great, let us look at what happened at that time.

The Jewish people just before the first Purim were probably in the best political situation ever. The Queen of the world, Esther, was a Jewess! One of the King's chief advisors was Mordechai the Jew. All the Jews got invited to the King's personal party. There was Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality... *peace*, the Jewish dream.

Suddenly there arose to power a man called 'Haman' who, with no effort, convinced the King, "To kill, destroy and liquidate all the Jews in one day" for no clear reason!

What was the reaction of the Jews to this sudden catastrophe? They didn't utilize their connections, nor did they take to the streets in protest. They all fasted and prayed for three days non-stop.

What makes this even more remarkable is that they all could have escaped death by simply... denying their religion! Haman's decree was to kill all the *Jews*, and anyone who would deny their religion would be saved. But shockingly in the twelve months that the sword of destruction hung over them, not even one Jew even thought of denying Judaism! This is a tremendous soul sacrifice that is unparalleled in the history of man; that an entire nation would risk death for one full year rather than say a word against their G-d!

And this is what makes Purim so great, even higher than all the other Holidays.

This explains two unusual factors of the Magilla: 1) throughout the entire story, the Jews are called only by the name 'Yehudim' and not by their usual Biblical names; such as Bnei Yisroel etc. 2) no *name* of G-d appears even once in the entire book.

The reason for these oddities is that the word 'Yhudi' is rooted in the Hebrew term for surrender, "Hoda'a". On Purim, for the first time in history, all the Jews completely surrendered to G-d. This dedication reached G-d's essence, higher even than his holy *names*.

In retrospect we can see that the Miracle of Purim was more a spiritual than a historical one. It was the battle of the Jewish people against the archenemy of G-d, 'Amalek'.

May we merit experiencing the eventual victory over Amalek through our Righteous Moshiach.

Purim is even holier than Yom HaKippurim! (the day of atonement, usually considered to be the holiest day). The Zohar explains that therefore the name 'Kipurim' can be interpreted 'Ki-Purim'... 'almost like Purim'.

Purim is also more potent than Yom Kippur. Before the first Purim (some 2500 years ago) the Jews had publicly bowed down to idols and partaken in the forbidden feast of King Achashverosh; sins that Yom HaKippurim cannot cleanse. But Purim not only erased these sins, it transformed them into a holiday of joy and festivity.

We also find (Talmud Shabbos 88a) that the first time in history that the Torah was actually fulfilled (almost 1,000 years after it was given on Mount Siani) by the Jewish people was... on Purim. Therefore Purim is higher than Shavuos (The holiday of the giving of the Torah).

And the joy of Purim exceeds even that of Simchat Torah (considered the happiest holiday of the year); Purim is the only holiday that there is no limit on getting intoxicated and being happy (of course being careful not to transgress any commandment).

Slice of LIFE

LIKE FATHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

The "Ploni" family were devoutly Orthodox Jews from Hungary who lived in the populous Jewish neighbourhood of New York's Lower East Side in the 1950's. The father, meticulousness in mitzvah-observance, was highly respected in the community. The mother was a popular woman who worked in the summers as a cook in Camp Emunah (the Lubavitcher camp for girls in the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York). Thus, she was well-acquainted with Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda ("J.J.") Hecht, of blessed memory, the founder and director of the camp.

One Thursday she showed up at Rabbi Hecht's house in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Bursting into tears, she begged his help. Her daughter had run away from home the year before at age 16. She had attached herself to a group of disreputable people and had ceased completely to observe *mitzvot*. They no longer had any idea of where she was. Relatives and friends had helped them to search, but every hopeful lead had turned out to be a false trail.

Finally they heard from her, but the news was not good. "Yesterday," wailed the hysterical mother, "she telephoned my married daughter, and told her that next week she will marry her non-Jewish boyfriend. Please, Rabbi Hecht, you must help us!"

Rabbi Hecht immediately called 770, and arranged for the Plonis to be on the list for *yechidut* (private audience) with the Lubavitcher Rebbe that night. He also hired a private detective to try to track down the runaway daughter's whereabouts.

That evening the Ploni couple entered the Rebbe's private room and poured out their hearts to him. The Rebbe listened with careful attention to all the details of what had occurred and then turned to Rabbi Ploni and asked him what seemed at first to be a strange and irrelevant question: "When you and your wife became engaged, did her parents give their approval?"

Rabbi Ploni's face drained white. From his appearance the answer was already clear. He explained that at the time a major quarrel had broken out in the family, and

her parents had refused to give their blessing to the match.

The Rebbe probed further. "Afterwards, did you ever ask their forgiveness?"

Rabbi Ploni averted his gaze. With head down, he admitted that he hadn't.

"If so," instructed the Rebbe, "you should travel to their gravesite and beg their forgiveness."

"But," protested Rabbi Ploni, "nobody knows in what graveyard in Hungary they are buried, and anyway, most of the Jewish cemeteries there have been destroyed over the years. The chances of finding their site have to be considered infinitesimal."

"If so," replied the Rebbe, "tomorrow you should assemble a *minyán* and go to the "Ohel" [resting place] of the [previous] Rebbe, my father-in-law. Tell aloud the whole story there and ask for their forgiveness there, and G-d will help you."

The next morning, Friday, Rabbi Ploni gathered a *minyán* (one of whom was Rabbi Hecht's brother-in-law, Rabbi Moshe Zvi Lasker, from whom we know this story). In accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, Ploni related the whole course of events in front of them at the Ohel of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. He then asked the forgiveness of his deceased in-laws.

Meanwhile, the detective had succeeded in locating the missing daughter. He tried to convince her to return home, but she wouldn't listen. So he reported to Rabbi Hecht, who called in the parents for a conference that same day.

After examining and discarding a number of possible plans, they finally decided that the parents would lodge a complaint with the police against their daughter. First of all, she was still under 18, so according to New York State law required parental consent before marrying, which they refused to give. Second, they told the police, she stole from them various things when she ran away.

That Shabbat the police arrested her. Her 'fiancée' tried to secure her release but was unsuccessful. The wedding had to be postponed.

When the parents arranged her release, the girl still refused to return home. Her spirit unbroken, all she wanted was to reunite with her non-Jewish intended. Rabbi Hecht spent many hours over several different occasions to try to influence her.

In the end she agreed to at least first go



PURIM

**MEGILLAH READINGS IN THE
CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD:**

SUNDAY 16 MARCH
EVERY HOUR ON THE HOUR
10.00 AM - 7.00 PM

to Eretz Yisrael for a while to complete her studies. Rabbi Hecht and her parents were pleased, as now she would be far away from her fiancée and crowd of friends. After some time in Israel she slowly came back to her roots. Eventually she married an observant Jew and raised a strong Jewish family.

Biographical notes:

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (11 Nissan 1902 - 3 Tammuz 1994), became the seventh Rebbe of the Chabad dynasty after his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, passed away in Brooklyn on 10 Shvat 1950. He is widely acknowledged as the greatest Jewish leader of the second half of the 20th century. Although a dominant scholar in both the revealed and hidden aspects of Torah and fluent in many languages and scientific subjects, the Rebbe is best known for his extraordinary love and concern for every Jew on the planet. His emissaries around the globe dedicated to strengthening Judaism number in the thousands. Hundreds of volumes of his teachings have been printed, as well as dozens of English renditions.

Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda (J.J.) Hecht (24 Cheshvan 1923 - 15 Av 1990), has been described as the Lubavitcher Rebbe's Foreign Minister. In 1944 he conducted one of the first Jewish "release time" programs for children from public schools in New York City to study their faith. In 1945, he was appointed the official director of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE). In 1953 he started one of the first camps for religious Jewish girls, Camp Emunah. Rabbi Hecht was the official translator of the Rebbe's talks to children and for the farbrengens on the radio. The Rebbe once described him publicly as one of "the chasidim who share deep soul bonds with him."

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ISSUE 1130

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The king Moshiach will arise and restore the kingdom of David to its glory of old, to its original sovereignty. He will build the Holy Temple and gather the dispersed of Israel. In his times, all the laws of the Torah will be reinstated as before; the sacrifices will be offered, the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year instituted as outlined in the Torah. (*Maimonides*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

A Purim Message from The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory

Dear Friend,

On the festival of Purim, when we all listen carefully to the reading of the Megillah and ponder upon the story it tells us, let us all remember a few important details and facts about what took place in those days, at this time:

There arose then a Haman, who issued a decree to murder and destroy all Jews at a fixed date.

Queen Esther then calls upon Mordechai to gather all the Jews and fast, after which she will go and plead with the King to rescind the terrible decree.

Mordechai thereupon goes and gathers tens of thousands of Jewish children and teaches them the Torah; he teaches them the procedure of offering the Omer when the Bet Hamikdash would be rebuilt.

All the children are so enchanted by the new spirit that Mordechai has inculcated into them, that even facing the danger of death, they exclaim: We stick with Mordechai and the Torah for life or death!

In that very same day the decree becomes null and void. Haman's downfall is already assured and the Jews are saved, even though they learn of it only after a number of months.

The experience of our fathers is a lesson to us all.

Let us remember that one of the chief means of frustrating the Hamans of our time, bring about their downfall, and bring light and joy to our people is:

TO GATHER JEWISH CHILDREN AND TEACH THEM TORAH AND YIDDISHKEIT!

To tell them that the true and complete redemption really ties in our own hands, for as soon as we Jews return to G-d in complete repentance we are redeemed immediately, by our Righteous Mashiach.

To tell them further, that our Holy Bet Hamikdash will be rebuilt soon, and we must all be worthy and prepared to serve our G-d in the Holy Sanctuary.

On the day when the Jewish children are imbued with this spirit, and are ready to exclaim - "We remain with you, our Torah, for life or death" - on that very day our Torah assures us, all the Hamans will be defeated, and all Jews will have "light, gladness, joy, and respect," speedily in our time.

Wishing you a Happy Purim,

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

CUSTOMS CORNER

In Jewish law, we find that certain positions are passed from father to son, provided that the son is worthy of filling his father's post, while other positions are not inherited.

There are several references in the Torah to the fact that a worthy son of a high priest inherits his father's position. Despite the fact that he is inheriting the position, the son needs to be anointed.

Positions of religious leadership, on the other hand, were generally not inherited. Despite this, some say that today it is customary for religious positions to be inherited. The Chatam Sofer explains that since the rabbis of today are also expected to serve their communities in a practical and political sense, the modern rabbinic positions are ones which can be inherited by sons who are worthy.

If a cantor is hired for a lifetime position, and his son is sufficiently G-d-fearing and also has an adequate voice, the community should hire the son to replace the father when he is no longer able to sing, or to aid his father as needed. The same applies to all similar community positions, such as charity collectors or scribes of the Beit Din (Jewish Court of Law).

A WORD

from the Director

The Torah reading's last words make Amalek the eternal enemy of Israel, proclaiming "war with Amalek from generation to generation."

"When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. And the hands of Moses became heavy..." With these words the battle is decided; not just Moses' struggle, but the war of the generations, ours as well.

Israel's perpetuation, its victory over the irresistible currents of history, is assured not by eloquence and noble ideals, but by its actions. The hands of Moses decide the battle. There are few abstract ideals, though Jewish in origins that are not now part of the universal heritage of the civilized world. In the abstract, love of G-d and mankind, the superiority of spirit over materialism, faith in the Creator -- these are not by themselves marks of Judaism or Jewishness. Other religions (and to a degree, non-religious people as well) profess these ideals.

The distinguishing characteristic of Israel is its concretization of these abstractions, its unique method of sanctifying human life and activities, its individual and exacting road to G-dliness, and its own conception of the G-dly life -- these make Judaism. Not the eloquence of oratory, not the profundities of theology, not the inspiration of the heart, but the tangible, physical hands, the deeds, the day-by-day affirmation by doing what G-d demands of us -- these spell the victory of Israel over Amalek. When Jews "let down the hands," when observance of Torah is neglected, then Amalek prevails, the future of Israel is in doubt. The Jew without mitzvot has little to make or keep him Jewish.

Of course Moses' hands are heavy -- performance of mitzvot, practicing self-control, bringing Judaism into every sphere of life -- this is no shortcut to Heaven. But there can be no viable, inspiring, worthwhile Judaism without mitzvot. A Judaism of words alone has the weight of the air it is. A Judaism of deeds, of mitzvot, has the solidity to survive the crush of persecution and the blandishments of assimilation, to prevail over any weapon the enemies of Israel can devise.

On behalf of the Chabad House of Caulfield, I wish you a Purim Sameach -- a very happy and joyous Purim!

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

FAST OR FEAST?

Rabbi Elazar Rokeach of Amsterdam sat at the head of the long table crowded with relatives and prominent members of the community. It was Purim, and the great Rabbi was about to begin the festive Purim meal.

The huge table was laden with enormous platters of meat, stuffed fish and other delicacies that had been sent to Rabbi Elazar as *meshlo'ach manot* (the special gifts of food that are one of the mitzvot of Purim). Fine wines and other beverages were also available in abundance.

In between the many courses, Rabbi Elazar held forth on the meaning and significance of the Purim holiday.

The celebration was well underway when a knock was heard at the door. Standing on the threshold were three emissaries of the Queen on an urgent mission. After apologizing profusely for interrupting, they asked to speak to the elderly Rabbi. Rabbi Elazar motioned for them to approach the table and deliver their message. They told him that in a certain district of Holland a dam had burst, and that thousands of innocent people were in danger of drowning.

As is obvious from its modern name, much of the Netherlands ("lowlands") lies below sea level. Over the centuries, a series of dams -- high, fortified walls -- were built to protect the Dutch people from being inundated by the ocean. One of these dams had now given way, and a sizeable portion of the country was in the direct path of the water.

The Queen's emissaries had heard much about the piety of the saintly Rabbi. Thus, after delivering their message, they fully expected him to go off into a corner and pray. Surprisingly, however, they were invited to sit down and join in the festivities.

It was even more curious when Rabbi Elazar ordered every bottle of wine and whiskey remaining in the house to be placed on the table. Within minutes it was covered with an assortment of bottles and decanters. "Now, gentlemen," he continued, "let us fulfil the mitzva of the day to the best of our abilities. We will drink until we cannot distinguish between 'cursed is Haman' and 'blessed is Mordechai.'"

The dozens of guests, including the venerable Rabbi, quickly drained all of the assorted bottles of liquor. Before the astonished eyes of the Queen's emissaries the elderly Rabbi jumped up to conduct the revelry, whereupon everyone began dancing around the table.

The emissaries could not believe what they were seeing. The scene in the Rabbi's house was starting to resemble an unruly tavern. Without anyone noticing, the three men crept outside and returned to the royal palace.

The Queen was overjoyed to see them. She told them that their mission had been successful, and that the breach in the dam had been repaired. Instead of death and destruction, the damage had actually been quite minimal.

The emissaries were shocked, especially when they learned that the dam had been fixed at the exact time Rabbi Elazar and his guests were at the height of their carousing!

They proceeded to describe to the Queen everything they had witnessed in the Rabbi's house. Now it was the Queen's turn to be surprised, and on two accounts: How could such an esteemed Rabbi have behaved in such a manner? And more importantly, why was it that the workers had suddenly been able to fix the dam at that exact moment?

A few days later Rabbi Elazar was summoned before the Queen. Officially, it was to be thanked on behalf of the nation. Privately, however, the Queen hoped to clarify exactly what had happened that day.

When the right moment presented itself the Queen asked him directly. Rabbi Elazar smiled, his countenance exuding an ancient wisdom. "We Jews act in a unique manner," he replied. "Whenever it seems as if G-d is angry, we try to appease Him by fulfilling His will."

"The day the dam broke was Purim," he continued, "when we are commanded to be happy to the point of intoxication. Had I responded by praying and imploring G-d amidst tears, not only would I have failed to fulfil His wishes, but actually transgressed one of His commandments. It was precisely because I recognized the magnitude of the danger that I encouraged everyone to be even more joyful, in the hope it would arouse G-d's mercy."

The Queen was very pleased by Rabbi Elazar's explanation, and sent him home accompanied by a royal entourage.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

It came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed (17:11)

Did then the hands of Moses wage war or break war? Not so; but so long as Israel looked upwards and subjected their hearts to their Father in Heaven, they prevailed; and when they did not, they fell. (*Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 29a*)

And G-d spoke to Moses, saying: Command Aaron and his son... this is the law of the ascending offering... (Leviticus 6:1-2)

The expression tzav ("command") implies an urging for now and for future generations. (*Torat Kohanim; Rashi*)

And the fire upon the Altar shall be kept burning in it... and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning (6:5)

Although a fire descended from heaven upon the Altar, it is a mitzvah to add to it a humanly produced fire. (*Talmud, Erubin 63a*)

This is a rule that applies to all areas of life: the gifts of life are bestowed upon us from Above, yet it is G-d's desire that we add to them the product of our own initiative. (*The Chassidic Masters*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 14 MARCH 2014

BEGINS	ENDS
7:23MELBOURNE	8:20
7:19ADELAIDE	8:13
5:49BRISBANE	6:41
6:44DARWIN	7:33
5:48GOLD COAST	6:39
6:19PERTH	7:12
6:58SYDNEY	7:52
7:07CANBERRA	8:02
7:17LAUNCESTON	8:15
7:25AUCKLAND	8:20
7:27WELLINGTON	8:24
7:17HOBART	8:16
6:47BYRON BAY	7:39
6:59SINGAPORE	7:46



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS TZAV
12 ADAR II • 14MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:23 PM
	MINCHA:	7:32 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:00 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	PARSHAS ZACHOR:	APPROX. 11:30 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:23 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:20 PM
	MEGILLAH:	8:40 PM, 10:00 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	SUNDAY: MEGILLAH, every hour on the hour	10:00 AM-7:00 PM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA: SUN:	3:00 PM
	MON-THURS:	7:25 PM
	MAARIV:	8:10 PM