

LAMPLIGHTER

19 Adar II
Parshas Shemini
Parshas Parah

1131

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The number seven is a recurring motif in the Torah: Shabbat is the seventh day of the week; Shavuot falls exactly seven weeks after Passover; the Shmitta (Sabbatical) year is the seventh year; and the Jubilee year comes after every seven Shmitta years. We see the significance of this number in many other instances as well.

Seven symbolizes the cyclical nature of the world, which was created in six days; the seventh day completed the creation. The whole cycle of the world revolves around the number seven.

At the end of last week's Torah portion, we find mention of the number seven - the "seven days of consecration" of the Sanctuary.

But at the beginning of this week's portion, Shemini, we come across an entirely new theme, the concept of eight. Shemini - meaning "eighth" begins with the words: "It came to pass on the eighth day."

The seven days of consecration culminated in the dedication of the altar on the seventh day. The next day, referred to as "the eighth day," the dedication of Aaron and his sons took place - something not directly related to the consecration of the Sanctuary itself. Why then is this considered the eighth day, since there seems to be no connection to the previous seven?

The question appears even more valid when we look at what eight symbolizes. While seven stands for wholeness and completion within nature, eight symbolizes that which is on an even higher level than nature - the aspect of G-dliness which is not confined to the laws of creation. We learn that on the eighth day "G-d appeared unto you" - there was an even greater revelation of G-dliness. If this is so, why did the supernatural revelation (the number "8") come as a continuation of what occurred on the first seven days? Why did the supernatural revelation come only after the revelation of G-d in nature?

Furthermore, all of the great revelations of G-dliness that are to take place after Moshiach comes are dependent upon our deeds now. How can it be that our actions, which take place in this limited, finite world, can bring about revelations of holiness that are above the laws of nature?

G-d asks of us only that which we are capable of doing. If we give G-d our whole effort, our complete dedication, then we receive the G-dly revelations as a gift from Above. If we give G-d the whole "seven" of our natural abilities, He will grant us the revelations of holiness indicated by the number eight.

The revelations in the Sanctuary which occurred on the eighth day were only possible after the Jews did all that was required of them during the first seven. Even though G-dliness, as it exists above nature, is infinitely higher than what we can attain through our own deeds alone, G-d supplied the rest after we did our part.

And this power every Jew has - the ability to relate to G-d even as He exists above natural law.

Afraid? Good!

By Levi Avtzon

In the process of the Tabernacle's inaugural, the Torah describes an interesting scene: The time had arrived for the newly appointed high priest, Aaron, to bring his first offering to G-d - but he stood on the side, reluctant to assume his duties.

His brother, Moses, came over to him and said: "Aaron! Why are you fearful? *L'kach nivcharta*-you were chosen for this!"

The holy Baal Shem Tov, founder of the chassidic movement, took these two words, "*l'kach nivcharta*," and shined a deeper light into them:

It was at that moment, when Moses saw his brother Aaron's hesitation to accept the highest position, that he finally understood why his brother was chosen. *L'kach nivcharta* - it is for this - i.e., because of your humility and fear of heaven - that you were chosen. It was precisely because Aaron did not seek power or prestige that he was chosen to be high priest.

Now try telling that to our wannabee politicians... "I'm the best for the job!" "My experience demonstrates that I can tackle any issue!" "You can have 100% confidence in my ability to weather any storm..." Where's the realization of - and hence apprehension in the face of - the responsibility that leadership requires?

Isn't it ironic that while we are bombarded by speech after speech from self-idolizing hopefuls, polls show that 75% of Americans believe that there is a glaring lack of leadership in our country?

Rabbi Sholom DovBer, the fifth rebbe in the Chabad-Lubavitch dynasty, once advised one of his chassidim to become a *shochet* (ritual slaughterer). The chassid was reluctant: "But Rebbe, I'm afraid! It's a huge responsibility!" (Due to the immense responsibility involved, the job of *shochet* is traditionally reserved for individuals of outstanding piety and integrity.)

The Rebbe smiled, and said: "Who then should I appoint as a *shochet*? Someone who is not afraid?"

Of course one must have the skills to execute the tasks that leadership demands, but humility and sterling character constitute the meat of the soup.

Slice of LIFE

A Strange Estate Sale Transaction

By Zalman Goldstein

It was a sunny February Friday morning in Monsey, NY, and a friend invited me to attend an estate sale. I'd never been to an estate sale, and I wasn't even sure exactly what it was, but for some reason I decided to go along.

"Here's to new experiences," I thought, and hopped into his car.

We arrived at the advertised address - a small attached home. We parked in front and went inside.

The house was small and cosy. People were milling about picking up knick-knacks and asking for prices. "A dollar-fifty for this, four dollars for that," said a good-natured middle-aged man.

Turns out the owner is an elderly woman, and her children were handling the logistics of the sale, haggling and making small talk with the slow moving crowd filing through the house.

As I walked deeper inside, I spotted the dining room piled high with items for sale. In the middle were a ceramic Matzah dish and two brass candlesticks. I didn't pay much attention to them at the time. Not really interested, I thought.

As I perused, I began to feel some sadness; all these items comprised 50-60 years of memories. Now those memories were laid out for all to see and buy. But the family seemed cheerful enough which helped me feel better about the whole thing.

Eventually we each found something to buy, if just to make the owners happy. On the way out, the older woman, the owner of the house wished us "Good Shabbos." We wished her the same and left.

Driving away, the image of the candlesticks for sale on that dining room table stayed in my mind. Why am I still thinking about them? I wondered. Soon I felt more clarity: I had completely missed an opportunity!

It was close to noon, time to pick up the kids from school. As I drove, the candlesticks spoke louder. Those candlesticks had a plan. I wasn't going to let them down this time.

I stopped at the bakery and picked up a fresh Challah. I picked up the children and told them about our mission. I stopped off at home to pick up two candles and the accompanying glass holders that sit atop candlesticks, and a Shabbat Table Companion book.

We headed back to the estate sale, hoping the candlesticks hadn't been bought in the meantime.

The plan was now in full motion. I was excited, as were the kids. We parked in the same spot, piled out of the van and filed inside.

Whew! The candlesticks were still there!

I searched for the older woman and asked her if the candlesticks were for sale.

"Yes," she replied, asking her son to give us a price.

"Eight dollars for the pair," he said.

"Deal," I said while pulling out my wallet and giving him the money.

The mother went to the table, took the candlesticks and put them in my hands.

"Here!"

I held them, my kids watching my every move. I then looked her softly in the eye and spoke.

"Do you know why I came all the way back and bought these candlesticks?"

"No."

"I came back together with my children to buy them from you so we can give them back to you. We want these candlesticks to stay in your dining room, continuing to illuminate your home every Friday and Holiday night."

Tears welled up in her eyes. Mine soon followed.

Our daughter Hindy gave her the bag with the candles and glass holders.

Moishy gave her the Challah.

Chana gave her the Shabbat Table Companion.

The woman's son came over to see what was happening, the daughter following close behind.

Their mother told them what we'd done.

There were hugs and tears between them. Even the strangers rummaging through the estate items stopped to stare as if overcome by the outpouring of G-dly light radiating from the Jewish souls of this beautiful family.

The mother finally spoke and told us her Hebrew name is Tziporah and she went to Hebrew school as a child but not much followed.

She warmly accepted our gift and assured us that she "already knows the brachot (blessings)."

On our way out, her son said to me, "Just as you offered mom a gift, we want to give you a gift -- here, please take the eight dollars back. What you've given us today is worth so much more than a few dollars."

I politely declined and asked instead that they share the merit of the mitzvah of lighting Shabbat and Holiday candles with my family.

"Agreed!" he said. The mom and daughter also nodded their heads.

We left as we came, but now we travelled on spiritual clouds. We felt part of something bigger; something raw and deep profoundly connecting our Jewish souls. It was this feeling that kept us warm on that winter day as we prepared for Shabbat.

But most of all, I feel fortunate that our children got to experience our unique "transaction." I hope the experience has taught them to look for opportunity even when it isn't apparent at first glance.

This story happened in 2012.

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ISSUE 1131

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Rambam (in Hilchos Melachim, Chapter 11) writes, "One who does not believe in Moshiach, or await his arrival, is a denier of the books of prophets and the five books of Moses, for they are filled with references about Moshiach."

A perspective: The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains the above passage of the Rambam in a revolutionary way: Not only are there *many* passages in the Torah that speak about Moshiach, rather, *every* passage in Torah speaks about Moshiach. The only differences between the passages are whether they speak openly about Moshiach, or whether one has to check the commentaries in order to find the connection.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d
2 Adar II, 5719 [March 12, 1959]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

The general message of *Shemittah* is the abrogation of the notion of dualism of matter and spirit. The Torah teaches us, on the contrary, that there must be no separation between the spiritual and the material; that there is no area in either nature or in human life from which G-d can be excluded.

This is the deeper significance of the Divine Unity which we Jews proclaim daily (in the *Shema*) and which are enjoined to teach to our children. The basis of true Jewish education is to instill into the children this faith, conviction and feeling in G-d's Unity.

And a more specific point:

The "*Shemittah*" aspect in human life applies especially to the earliest period of man's development, i.e. to his infancy and youth, where the laws of nature apparently play a most conspicuous part. From birth the infant is catered for primarily physically, and some parents, unfortunately, got the idea that is all that matters. And when the child reaches the age of education, some misguided parents think that a minimum-Torah-education is the maximum that can be expected of them. Yet, they forget that we Jews are not subject to the laws of nature in the same ways others, for by attaching ourselves to G-d we can defy the laws of nature.

Applying the message of *Shemittah* - the Torah teaches us that even in this period of infancy we must bring holiness into his life, by taking great care regarding the *Kashrus* of his feeding etc., and by giving the infant and child a truly kosher Jewish education he will not only prosper spiritually, but also physically.

You, instructors and leaders of the Release Hour and other child educational activities, who come in contact with children of such misguided parents, must be surely filled with great compassion for them. It is your great privilege and duty to be those who are to instill into them true *Yiddishkeit* in such a way as not only to provide a temporary remedy, but to fulfill the ultimate objective of your organization - to lead them to their true and full happiness by bringing them under the wings of a complete and Torah-true education. When this is done sincerely and resolutely, the success goes even further, as it is written (end of Malachi) "And he shall bring back the hearts of parents' toward' children" - which Rashi explains - "through the children," "by telling the children to go to their parents and urge them to abide by the ways of G-d."

May G-d grant that through such dedicated work, the other part of the prophecy mentioned there will be fulfilled, namely: "Behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet," to herald the True and Complete Redemption, speedily in our time.

With blessing,
(Excerpt from a letter)

CUSTOMS CORNER

The Torah gives two signs that determine if a fish is kosher-fins and scales. In order for a fish to be kosher, it must have both of these signs.

- Definition of Scales: In order to render a fish kosher, the scales must be visible to the naked eye and they must be easy to remove from the skin of the fish, either by hand or with an instrument. If a fish is not completely covered in scales - it only has several scales - it is still considered kosher.

Certain fish have scales while in the water, but they shed their scales when caught and brought to dry land. These fish are considered kosher.

- Partial List of Kosher Fish: Albacore, Bass, Cod, Flounder, Grouper, Perch, Salmon, Snapper, snapper, Trout, Whitefish, Many (but not all) Tuna, Mackerel, Pike, Carp, Herring, Tilapia, Many species of sardines.
- Partial List of Non-Kosher Fish: Catfish, Eels, Freshwater cod, Shark, Swordfish, Sturgeon, Seafood.

It is not necessary to slaughter fish in a ritual manner; hence, if a fish dies in the water, it may be eaten. It is however forbidden to eat a fish while it's alive.

A WORD

from the Director

A parking sign lets drivers know that the space is meant to be used for parking cars. A storefront with toys on its entrance explains what we can expect to find in this store.

It's not the signs that make things into what they are. The signs simply describe what is already there. The signs, symbols, and labels all around us give information about the item or place to which they are attached.

Parshas Shemini tells us about the signs of kosher animals. Kosher animals have two signs: they have split hooves and they chew their cud. Kosher fish have fins and scales.

It is not the signs that make the animal kosher. HaShem created these animals with a kosher nature. The signs merely tell us that they are kosher.

When we eat the meat of any animal, its nature becomes part of us, and it affects the way we think. Have you heard people say "you are what you eat?"

The meat of kosher animals is fit for a Jew to eat, because of its kosher nature. When we eat this food, it affects us in the proper way. So HaShem gave those animals signs to inform us that they are kosher.

Other animals were created with non-kosher natures. This means that their meat will not affect us in a good way. Of course, HaShem did not give them kosher signs.

Let us take a closer look at these signs. Kosher animals have split hooves, which mean that their feet are divided.

We can divide our activities throughout the day into two lists. One list could include davening, studying, making berachos, giving tzedakah, and helping others. The other list could include eating, playing, reading, talking, and getting dressed.

Though they are different types of activities, we should not separate these two lists from each other. Instead, they should be like two parts of a single hoof. Can you imagine a split hoof with each part looking as if it belonged to a different animal?

Just as we daven, study and do activities from List 1 like a Jew should, we must also do the activities in List 2 like a Jew should. The games we play, the books we read, and the clothes we wear should all belong to one kosher lifestyle.

This is not always easy. Because when we talk, read, or play, we are busy with what we are doing and we don't always think about how to do it in a holy way.

Here's where the second kosher sign chewing the cud teaches us an important lesson. Animals take time to chew their cud. They bring up their food over and over again. This teaches us to take time, to think things over, and plan to do things in a way which is kosher fit for a Jew.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED

Once...

WINE MORE VALUABLE THAN MONEY

There was once a poor melamed (teacher) who was a follower of Rabbi Yechezkel Landau of Prague. Unable to provide a dowry for his daughter, he decided to look for a job in Hungary. He found a teaching position in a small village, where most of the town's income came from the production of wine. The teacher stayed there for several years, until he saved up what he hoped was enough money.

At the same time that he was ready to leave, a wealthy wine merchant from Prague had just arrived in town to buy wine for Passover. He agreed to take the teacher back to Prague, provided he supervised the wine barrels along the way (to make sure they weren't tampered with, which would render them not kosher). The teacher was grateful for the offer and they set out.

That Friday afternoon they stopped at an inn. The teacher, who was carrying a large bundle of money and was afraid to entrust it to just anyone, decided to hide it among the wine barrels for the duration of the Shabbat, after which he would retrieve it on Saturday night, when Shabbat ended. Satisfied that his money was secure, he went off to prepare for the holy Shabbat.

The following evening he was shocked to discover that the bundle was gone. It did not take him long to figure out that the only person who could have stolen it was the wine merchant, who must have seen him hiding the money and was unable to withstand the temptation.

Although his first impulse was to directly confront him, he decided to appeal to the man's conscience instead.

Explaining that he had worked hard to provide a dowry for his daughter, the teacher asked the merchant if he had perhaps hidden the money in a more secure location. But the merchant made a show of being insulted by the very idea. He denied the theft, and even blamed the teacher for having been foolish enough to leave his money where it was unsafe.

When the teacher came right out and begged, the merchant threatened to leave him and continue on to Prague by himself if he did not stop "all that nonsense." He was perfectly willing, however, to make a donation toward the girl's wedding expenses.

"I'm not looking for charity," the teacher replied. "If you didn't take my money, I apologize." Seeing that there was nothing to gain by pursuing the matter, he resolved to consult with Rabbi Landau upon returning to Prague.

After listening to the teacher's sad tale, Rabbi Yechezkel Landau promised to intervene. The wine merchant, he revealed, was due to arrive shortly to ask for his rabbinical approval that the wine was "kosher for Passover." In the meantime, he suggested that the teacher go into an adjoining room and rest.

A few minutes later the wine merchant showed up at the Rabbi's house. "As in years past," he explained, "I have just returned from Hungary with a

large quantity of wine for Passover. I can assure you that it was completely supervised throughout all stages of its production, from the crushing of the grapes until its arrival in Prague in sealed barrels. And as one of your own disciples acted as supervisor, may I assume that you will approve it?"

"Yes, well," the Rabbi hesitated, "there seems to be a slight problem ..."

"What kind of problem?" the merchant asked nervously.

"Your supervisor has told me that he hid some money among the barrels and it disappeared."

"But surely you don't suspect me of having stolen it!" the merchant said.

"G-d forbid that I would accuse you," the Rabbi assured him. "But if you didn't take it, or let us say 'borrow,' then someone else did. And if a stranger had access to the wine, well, then there's no way to ensure that it wasn't tampered with. In a case like this, I just couldn't vouch for it..."

The merchant paled when he realized that the money he would lose from the potential sale of the wine was far more than the amount he had stolen. He immediately admitted the theft and promised to make restitution.

But the Rabbi wasn't finished. "It's more complicated than that. If you stole on Shabbat, the kashrut of the wine is still in question."

The merchant insisted that the theft had occurred before sundown, but the Rabbi refused to believe him.

"How do I know that you aren't admitting to something you didn't do, and are willing to pay the teacher to receive my authorization?"

At that point the merchant broke down in tears and declared that he was willing to swear he spoke the truth. "I will do anything you say," he cried.

"All right," the Rabbi replied. "I can see that you are sincere. However, this is what you must do: In addition to returning the money, you must make a large contribution towards the girl's dowry. This will partially atone for your transgression and the aggravation you caused an innocent man. Provided, of course, that he is willing to forgive you."

Needless to say, both parties were more than happy with the decision. And the wine merchant learned a valuable lesson.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And it came to pass on the eighth day (9:1)

The number seven represents the cycle of creation; the number eight represents the "circumference" --that which lies beyond the perimeter of time and space. This is why the Divine Presence came to dwell in the Israelite camp on the eighth day. This is also alluded to in the saying of our sages (Talmud, Erchin 13b) that "The lyre of Moshiach has eight strings." (*Keli Yakar; Shaloh*)

And Aaron was silent (10:3)

Because Aaron was silent, he was rewarded that G-d spoke exclusively to him. (*Midrash Rabbah*)

In youth, one learns to talk; in maturity, one learns to be silent. This is man's problem: that he learns to talk before he learns to be silent. (*Rabbi Nachman of Breslav*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 21 MARCH 2014

BEGINS		ENDS
7:12	MELBOURNE	8:09
7:09	ADELAIDE	8:03
5:41	BRISBANE	6:33
6:40	DARWIN	7:28
5:40	GOLD COAST	6:31
6:10	PERTH	7:03
6:49	SYDNEY	7:42
6:57	CANBERRA	7:52
7:06	LAUNCESTON	8:03
7:15	AUCKLAND	8:10
7:15	WELLINGTON	8:12
7:05	HOBART	8:03
6:39	BYRON BAY	7:31
6:57	SINGAPORE	7:46



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS SHEMINI
19 ADAR II • 21 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:12 PM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7:50 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:25 AM
	MINCHA:	7:15 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:09 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	MON-FRI: 8:00 AM
	MAARIV:	MON-THURS: 7:15 PM
		8:00 PM