

LAMPLIGHTER

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Parshas Re'eh

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Re'eh, speaks about a master's obligation to bestow gifts upon his servant when the latter's years of servitude are complete. "You shall furnish him liberally from your flocks, and of your threshing-floor, and of your wine press," the Torah states.

Maimonides classifies this obligation as falling under the category of charity - the gifts are in addition to the regular wages the master is required to pay.

Every facet of the Torah contains stores of wisdom for us to apply to our lives. The above verses are symbolic of the relationship between any two parties not on equal footing: The one on the higher level is always obligated to share his wealth and blessings with those who are less fortunate.

The terms "master" and "servant" may also be applied, in the spiritual sense, to the relationship between teacher and pupil. We see that this is not merely symbolic, as a student is required to serve his teacher in the same way a servant must attend his master. And a teacher's task is to instruct the pupil until the student grasps the concept on his own.

But what about concepts which are far beyond the ability of the student to comprehend, wisdom beyond the pupil's understanding? The commandment to bestow gifts above and beyond what is required applies here as well. A good teacher must ensure that his student acquires an appreciation of the deeper and more esoteric knowledge, in addition to the basic requirements of the syllabus. The teacher is obligated to share whatever knowledge he possesses with the student, who possesses less.

This principle also applies to the relationship between Jews who are more knowledgeable about Torah and mitzvot and those who are just beginning to learn about their heritage. It is not sufficient to impart only those Jewish concepts which are viewed as fundamental - the awesome depth and scope of Judaism must be shared as well.

A basic principle in Judaism is that G-d behaves towards man according to man's actions, measure for measure. When we share our wealth and bestow extra charity - both physical and spiritual - upon our fellow man, G-d responds in kind, granting us an abundance of His blessings.

For we are all G-d's servants, and He is the ultimate Master. The six thousand years of creation parallel the six years of servitude a servant must work; the seventh year parallels the freedom and redemption which follow - the Messianic Era and the Final Redemption.

By increasing our love for our fellow Jew and demonstrating that love with concrete actions, G-d will surely bestow an even greater measure of His infinite goodness upon us than ever before, with the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our days.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

The Tests of Life

By Yossy Goldman

Will the real prophet please stand up? There are false prophets out there; there always have been. Way back in the times of the Bible, the Torah was already warning us (in Deuteronomy Ch. 13) that we would encounter individuals who look like prophets. They might even seem to make miracles like prophets, but, in truth, they are false prophets.

Why then would G-d allow a false prophet to make a miracle or do wondrous things that are really impressive? The answer, says our Parshah, is that G-d is testing us. If we really and truly love G-d with all our heart and soul, then we won't be impressed by any fancy wonders or miracles. The acid test will always be: does this would-be prophet encourage us to follow G-d's laws, or to ignore them? And if this "prophet" is not faithful to the word of G-d, then he is no prophet, but an imposter.

If you thought that life's tests were over when you finished school, guess again. There are many tests in life, and they can be much more difficult than chemistry or physics. And there isn't that much homework we can do to prepare for these kinds of tests, either.

Poverty is a big test of faith. Even affluence can be a test that's tougher than we think. Failing health is no easy one, and tragedy is worse. Every individual faces his or her own unique tests and challenges. We might wish the other fellow's tests upon ourselves, but our tests are ours and ours alone to deal with. What tempts one person may not tempt the next. What is difficult for me might be simple for you, and vice versa. If we remember that the challenge of the moment is, in fact, a test, we might be better able to handle it and pass the test.

But we don't always realize that this may just be our very own personal, spiritual challenge, perhaps even the most important one of our entire existence. We don't necessarily appreciate that our souls might have come down to this world for the express purpose of passing these tests.

So we rationalize.

If there is a G-d in the world, where was He at Auschwitz?

If G-d didn't intend for me to take the money, why did the boss leave the cash register open?

If this relationship is wrong, why does it feel so right? This poor woman is locked in a loveless marriage. Isn't she entitled to a little happiness? Shouldn't I be there for her?

If G-d really wanted me to keep Shabbat, why is my biggest turnover on Saturday?

If a yarmulke was meant for me to wear, why am I bald? I can't even find any hair for the darned clip!

But if we accept the concept of a test of faith, then it becomes easier to deal with the challenges, as formidable as they may be.

When we pass life's tests, we discover that we do have that inner strength after all, that we really are believers who are profoundly connected to G-d, and that our commitment is true and genuine. In passing life's tests we become more confident in our own moral strength, and enriched and ennobled with a higher awareness of G-d. This is why we are stronger after conquering these hurdles than we were before we faced them.

We don't go looking for tests. Every morning in our prayers we ask G-d, "Lead us not to temptation." But if it does come our way, we must appreciate that it is critical to our success as moral human beings and as committed Jews that we face up to the challenge.

May we never be tested. But if we are, let us remember that it is a test. Please G-d, we will pass with flying colours.

Slice of LIFE

JET STRANDED IN KAZAKHSTAN

The pilot and co-pilot started the engines of the large El Al aircraft and performed all of the routine checks preparatory to take-off. Also in the cockpit was the flight chief and sitting behind him was his son, a young man completing secondary/high school and about to be drafted into the Israeli army. As this was an air-freight flight, it was permitted for the crew to bring along a family member.

The plane was on the return leg of a flight to the Far East. The take-off took place smoothly, as usual. Several hours later it landed, in order to refuel, at its regular stop in Alma Ata (Almaty), the former capital of Kazakhstan. The crew waited patiently in the plane for the fuelling process to be completed, in order to take off to home, to Israel.

But then one of the mechanics approached the flight chief. "There is a problem with the door of the plane," he reported, startling all those who heard him.

The chief went to inspect the door himself. Sure enough, there was a problem, and it was so rare that although it was described in the instruction manual, no one had ever heard of it actually occurring.

It meant they would have to remain in Alma Ata for an unknown amount of time.

The crew members took their personal belongings and went to relax in the hotel next to the airport where rooms had been arranged for them until the repairs would be finished. In the process another problem came to light. All the crew had visas for Kazakhstan, but not the son of the flight chief. It didn't occur to anyone that he would need one, and now the local officials were refusing to allow him to leave the airport.

The flight chief had to spend hours on the phone. He requested, pleaded, cajoled, until finally some high-ranking Israeli officials that he was able to involve were able to exert sufficient pressure to obtain for his son a temporary pass.

The chief and his son were at last able to go to the father's room at the hotel. They were completely exhausted. Nevertheless, "We have to tell *Eema* ('Mom') about the delay," the boy said.

"You are right. Because of all the complications, I never got around to calling her. Let's do it right now," responded his father and picked up the room phone and began the process of placing an international call.

At that point in her life, the chief's wife had already started drawing closer to Judaism. She attended regularly a weekly class in *Chasidut* being given in her *Moshav* by a woman from Kfar Chabad (near Tel Aviv). Her husband was careful to respect her new interest, but he himself had made no lifestyle changes at all.

When he told his wife about the unexpected and indefinite delay, she groaned in frustration. But then, almost right away, the significance of the location and date resonated in her and she called out excitedly, "Surely this is from Heaven! Today is the 20th of Menachem-Av on the Jewish calendar, which is the *hilula* (*yahrzeit*) date of **Rabbi Levi-Yitzchak Schneerson**, the father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and a great Kabbalist in his own right. And he is buried in Alma Ata!"

The flight chief was already accustomed to hearing tales from his wife about faith and Heavenly supervision. "So what do you want from me?" he asked in a weary, resigned voice.

She explained that the *yahrzeit* of a *tzadik* (pure, righteous Jew) is a day of great merit and opportunity. Therefore she would be so delighted if her husband and her son would go to the burial site and pray for whatever their hearts desired.

"Forget it," he responded quickly, "I'm much too exhausted for that."

Anyway, in his supervisory position, he needed to be on site. Already his mind was racing over all the problems that had emerged from the broken door and the delay. Meanwhile, the mechanics had reported that this was no simple repair.

After a succession of consultations of El Al's top mechanics at Ben Gurion Airport in Israel, they were forced to conclude that their best option might be to send a whole new substitute door. Every hour of delay was costing them a huge amount of money, as well as damages to their freight customers. Although it was frighteningly expensive to send a plane solely to carry a new door and a technical crew to install it, this was the most practical choice to cut their losses.

Immediately upon receiving confirmation of the decision, the flight chief notified all the crew members that they would have to wait for the special flight from Israel to arrive, and then for the installation of the new door.

As the crew grumbled to each other about how much longer they might have to be stuck there, they were interrupted by the flight chief's sudden - and astonishing - second announcement:

"I and my son are going to visit the grave of Rabbi Schneerson, the father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and a great Kabbalist. Does anyone else want to come along?"

He didn't really believe anyone else would want to, but surprisingly, the co-pilot stood up right away and said he would like to go too. His companions stared at him in astonishment.

"My mother has some sort of connection to Chabad," he explained sheepishly, "and a number of times already she has asked me to go to the grave of Rabbi Schneerson one of the times we land in Alma Ata. I haven't done so until now, so this is a good opportunity. We certainly have enough time on our hands."

After that, one after another stood up, until

[nearly] the whole crew signed up for the expedition. "Is there anything better to do when you are stranded in Kazakhstan?" they said to each other. They asked someone from the Israeli embassy in the capital for directions, but no one there knew. Finally one diplomat referred them to the local Chabad Centre. When they telephoned to enquire, the Chabad rabbi told them he would be happy to guide them to the burial site, and invited them to meet him at Chabad House of Alma Ata. So later that day, after the special flight from Israel arrived, they set out.

After a warm reception including drinks and refreshments, the Chabad rabbi escorted them to the gravesite, helped them to wrap *tefilin*, and distributed books of *Tehilim* (Psalms). The crew members each read a few chapters and then murmured their private prayers. When they left the site, they all declared it had been a special, uplifting experience.

The flight chief telephoned his wife as soon as he possibly could. He knew his report would delight her. And indeed, her reaction was saturated with happiness. She also declared with certitude that of course now that they had prayed at the great rabbi's gravesite, the fixing of the door problem will go quickly and smoothly, and very soon they will be in the air to Israel.

Her husband chuckled at the naiveté. He explained that the door problem was quite complicated, so the repair would still take a long time, and they would have to accustom themselves to wait with patience.

His wife replied with even more confidence that while she understands nothing about airplanes, she is convinced that the real reason this rare problem overtook them was in order that he, their son, and the crew would attend the holy site on this day of the *yahrzeit*.

"Heaven guided events to get you to go," she insisted, "Now that the goal has been achieved, there is no reason Above for you to have to be stuck there any longer. I'm positive about this."

The flight chief was sceptical - his usual reaction to his wife's faith-based outbursts. But she turned out to be right. Not long after they got back to the hotel, he received word that the door replacement had been accomplished much quicker than anyone had anticipated, and the technical team estimated that their work would be completed shortly.

Just a few brief minutes later, the crew was summoned to return to the airport, board the plane, and prepare for take-off. "The new door is one hundred percent" they assured the flight chief.

He glanced at his son and they both smiled. Said the father: "*Eema* may not know much about airplanes, but we have to admit that she does understand about Divine supervision."

[Source: Translated and adapted from the Hebrew weekly, *Sichat Shavua* #1335.]

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ISSUE 1133

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev once asked his Chasidim, "Why did Moshiach tell Rebbi Yehoshua ben Levi that he was coming 'today'? Isn't it written that G-d will send Elijah the Prophet before that awesome day arrives?" No one offered a response, so Rabbi Levi Yitzchok answered himself: "Elijah the Prophet is due to come in order to raise everyone out of their mundane concerns and prepare them for Moshiach. However, 'If you will listen to the voice of G-d' - that is, if we will wake up on our own - then Moshiach will be able to come today, immediately, without Elijah the Prophet having to come to forewarn us." (*Sifte Tzadikim B'haalotcha/Lma'an Yishme'u*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Elul, 5736 [August 27, 1976]
Brooklyn, N.Y.
To The Jewish Mothers and Daughters everywhere,
G-d bless you –

Blessing and Greeting:

In view of the recent events -- the hijacking and saving of the hostages held in Uganda; and the subsequent attempt of the terrorists to perpetrate a vicious reprisal, G-d forbid, in Kushta (Istanbul),

It should be understood that these events are an indication that Jews must, at the earliest possible, strengthen all aspects of their security and defences -- first and foremost in their spiritual life, which is the channel to receive G-d's blessings also in the physical aspect, namely, to know the right ways and means that have to be undertaken in the natural order of things, and to fully succeed in these efforts, in accordance with the Divine promise, "G-d, your G-d, will bless you in all that you do" -- to be protected and secured from enemies, and to be spared any undesirable happenings, G-d forbid.

The above events remind each and all of our Jewish brethren in general, and Jewish mothers and daughters in particular -- since every married Jewish woman is called *Akeres Habayis*, "Foundation of the Home," and those not yet married are to be *Akeres Habayis*, for which they must prepare themselves from tender age -- the following:

The present situation calls for the protection of every Jewish home. True protection is that which only G-d provides, as it is written, "G-d guards the city." To ensure this Divine guardianship, the home has to be conducted in all aspects according to G-d's will.

Then the home is also an abode for the *Shechinah* (G-d's Presence), in accordance with His promise, "I will dwell among them."

In addition to this, G-d has given our people a special gift wherewith to protect the home, namely, the *Mitzvah of Mezuzah*. Our Sages declare explicitly that "the home is protected by it (the *Mezuzah*)."

Moreover, this protection embraces the members of the household also when they go out of the house, as it is written, "G-d will guard your going and your coming from now and forever." It is further explained in our holy sources that the Divine Name (*Shin-Dalet-Yud*) written on the back of the sacred *Mezuzah* parchment spells out the words, "*Shomer Dalsos Yisrael* -- Guardian of Jewish Doors."

Let it also be remembered that inasmuch as all Jews constitute one body, and are bound up with one another, every *Mezuzah* is a Divine protection not only for the individual home, with everybody and everything in it, but each additional kosher *Mezuzah* that is affixed on a doorpost of any Jewish home, anywhere, adds to the protection of all our people everywhere.

And considering -- as mentioned above -- that every Jewish housewife is an *Akeres Habayis*, and every Jewish girl a future *Akeres Habayis*, they have a special *Zechus* (merit) and responsibility in the matter of *Mezuzah*, to see to it that not only a kosher *Mezuzah* be affixed on every doorpost in their home that is required to have a *Mezuzah*, but that the same be done by their Jewish neighbours and friends, and in all Jewish homes.

I hope and pray that you will do this with inspiration and joy, which, in addition to increasing the *Hatzlocho* [success] in this effort, will also inspire many others to do likewise, and the *Zechus Horabim* [the merit you brought to the many] will further stand you in good stead.

The present time is particularly auspicious for this endeavour, as for endeavours in all matters of goodness and holiness, since we are in the beginning of the month of *Elul* -- the month of spiritual stocktaking, to complete the deficiencies of the outgoing year and to prepare for the New Year, that it be a good and blessed year for each and all of us and for our Jewish people as a whole.

With esteem and blessing of *Kesivo veChasimo Tovah*,

CUSTOMS CORNER

Meat & Milk

One of the important aspects of observing kosher is keeping milk and meat properly separated. This prohibition is derived from the verse, "Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk."

The following prohibitions were added by the rabbis:

- Torah law only prohibits the cooking (and eating) of the meat of a domesticated animal in milk. The rabbis added that one may also not cook (or eat) the meat of a kosher wild animal or bird with milk.
- Torah Law only prohibits the consumption of meat that was cooked with milk. The rabbis added that one may not eat meat and milk together even if they were not cooked together.
- In addition, the rabbis instituted that one must wait a certain amount of time between eating meat and milk.
- The rabbis also decreed that two acquaintances may not share a table if one is eating dairy products and the other is eating meat products.

Pieces of bread that were on the table during a meat meal shouldn't be consumed with dairy products, and vice versa.

A WORD

from the Director

This week's Torah portion, Re'ei opens with one of the foundations of the Jewish religion - free choice. G-d says to the Jewish people, "Look, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: the blessing, that you will hearken to G-d's commandments...; and the curse, if you will not hearken to G-d's commandments..." (Deut. 11:26-28).

Why did G-d create the world so as to necessitate blessings and curses? Why did G-d create something to stand in the way of good, to make it difficult for us to do what is appropriate and right?

Evil alternatives exist to allow for free choice. If there was only good in this world - no chance for a person to behave in a questionable manner - he couldn't freely choose to do good; he would be forced to do good for lack of alternatives, by default. In order to have options, there has to be at least two different routes.

Then, a person can use the free choice to choose the correct path.

Freedom to choose one path of action over another is a fundamental principle of Judaism. It is at the very core of the advantages of a human over other created beings. Other creatures don't have this option of free choice; their actions are based on natural instincts and environmental training. Only man has such an advantage.

The concept of reward and punishment revolves around choice. If there is no choice, there is no room for reward and punishment. A person can receive a reward for his good deeds because he has free choice.

It is therefore understood that the existence of the opportunity to do "bad" is not to make a person evil, but the opposite. Wrong exists only to allow a person to choose right.

The opportunity to do bad, therefore, wasn't created to prevent a person from accomplishing what he needs to. In fact, it is to push the person toward the correct path, a path to be travelled on in the midst of freedom of choice and desire.

Knowing that "bad" exists only to encourage us toward the good, also gives us the ability and strength not to be intimidated or overwhelmed by the bad.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S NOT DUE

There was a wealthy man in the town of Kovno named Shraga-Feivel Frank. A prominent businessman from Alek-sot once approached him for a substantial loan, naming a date by which he expected to repay it. R' Shraga Feivel cheerfully lent him the money.

After some time passed, the loan was due, but the man did not come to repay it; R' Shraga Feivel said nothing about it, as was his wont in such cases. However, at one point he himself needed a certain sum of money, and his wife Golda recalled that this businessman owed them a large debt. She approached him and requested that he repay the loan, which she was certain he was then able to do, telling him that they needed the money.

The man refused her request, answering with such impertinence that the insulted woman returned home very upset. With much effort her husband calmed her down, but the incident was far from over.

Some time later the businessman appeared at the Frank home, but not with the money he owed. Instead, he told R' Shraga Feivel that he wished to borrow more money, which he promised to pay back together with the first sum by a certain date. Taken aback by this brazen request, R' Shraga Feivel told the man he would have to consider the matter before replying, and would inform him later of his decision.

When Mrs. Frank heard of the man's temerity, she asked her husband incredulously, "How can you even consider such a thing after he was so unreliable the first time, and behaved with such ingratitude and impudence! I am sure you'll never see this money either."

"My dear wife," replied R' Shraga Feivel, "are we then any better than this man? Every year on Rosh Hashana we ask G-d to forgive our sins and accept our prayers. We always say earnestly, 'G-d, this year we'll be good!' But we backslide and sin again the next year. Then how can we come to ask Him once again to forgive us? What happened this past year - didn't we come to Him last year with the same request and the same promise?"

"But now I can really say it! This Jew borrowed money and also promised to pay it back, but instead of repaying me he asked to borrow more - and I will give it to him! I will now have some merit in the eyes of G-d, that He should do the same for me, measure for measure, just as I have done for this man."

In the face of such logic, Golda could only bow her head in agreement to extend the loan.

Source: Adapted from "Gut Voch" (Mesorah) by Avrohom Barash.

DOUBTING THE YOUNG RABBI

Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the first-Rebbe-to-be of Chabad, was still young when he became *Maggid* (the rabbi who gives sermons) in Liozna in 1783. Although no one questioned his Torah knowledge, some were unsure of how such a young man would deal with some of the *halachic* and communal situations that challenged even seasoned Rabbis.

Shortly after he became *Maggid*, however, all these doubts were solved after the following story took place.

At a wedding Rabbi Shneur Zalman was invited to participate in, he asked rhetorically, "Why is there an orchestra at the wedding?" Answering his own question, he said, "In order to play music." Continuing, he asked, "And why do

the two families buy certain items? Obviously to help the young couple set up their home."

After mentioning a few other points, he said, "And why is the Rabbi invited? Because he has to ask certain questions that no one else would."

With that, he turned to the *kallah* (bride) and asked, "Were you previously married?"

Shocked at his question, she quietly replied, "Yes, for a short time. My first husband tragically died days after the wedding."

"Did he have any brothers?" asked R. Shneur Zalman.

"Yes, he had one who was extremely young."

"Did he do *chalitza** with you after he became *bar mitzvah* age?" prodded the rabbi.

"No, he was too young at the time. Then I moved away from the town and so did his family, and we lost all contact."

"In that case," concluded R. Shneur Zalman, "the wedding can't take place yet and everyone can go home."

Awed by his obvious Divine inspiration, the townspeople were reassured that Rabbi Shneur Zalman's greatness could be relied upon in all areas. Once the story became widely known, his fame and the respect for him grew throughout the entire region.

**chalitza*: See Deut. 24:5-10 (a ceremony, releasing a man from having to marry his childless dead brother's widow).

Source: Adapted from "The Alter Rebbe: Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi" (Kehot) by Sholom D. Avstion.

Biographical note:

Rabbi Shneur Zalman [18 Elul 1745 - 24 Tevet 1812], one of the main disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, is the founder of the Chabad-Chasidic movement. He is the author of *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* and *Tanya* as well as many other major works in both Jewish law and the mystical teachings.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And you shall slaughter of your cattle and flocks which G-d has given you, as I have commanded you (12:21)

Here we have explicit proof for the Torah SheBaal Peh ("Oral Torah"), as we see how the "Written Torah" refers to it. (*Maimonides*)

For you are a holy people to the L-rd your G-d

G-d gives physical form to the spiritual; the Jew makes spiritual the physical. (*Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov*)

If there will be among you a needy person, from one of your brothers in one of your cities... (15:7)

The poor of your city take precedence over the poor of a different city. (*Rashi*)

Open, open your hand to him... (15:8)

Rabbi Elazar would give a coin to a pauper, and only then would he pray. (*Talmud, Bava Batra 10a*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 22 AUGUST 2014



BEGINS		ENDS
5:32	MELBOURNE	6:30
5:31	ADELAIDE	6:26
5:11	BRISBANE	6:05
6:25	DARWIN	7:15
5:09	GOLD COAST	6:03
5:35	PERTH	6:31
5:11	SYDNEY	6:08
5:18	CANBERRA	6:15
5:18	LAUNCESTON	6:19
5:34	AUCKLAND	6:31
5:27	WELLINGTON	6:28
5:15	HOBART	6:17
5:08	BYRON BAY	6:02
6:54	SINGAPORE	7:43

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS RE'EH
26 AV • 22 AUGUST

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:32 PM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:10 PM
SHABBOS:	TEHILLIM:	8:00 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:38 AM
	MOLAD WILL BE AT	7:43 AND 14 CHALAKIM PM
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:30 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	MON-FRI: 8:00 AM
	MAARIV:	5:40 PM
		6:30 PM