

# LAMPLIGHTER

7 Cheshvan  
Parshas Lech Lecha

1163

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

After his monumental victory over the four kings in this week's Torah portion, Lech Lecha, G-d promises our forefather Abraham: "Fear not, Abram...your reward shall be exceedingly great." Rashi, the great Torah commentator, explains that Abraham was worried that the victory was the entire reward for his righteousness. "Do not worry," G-d assured him, "Your reward will be exceedingly great."

G-d's promise of further reward seems odd. For we are told that Abraham served the Creator out of love, for its own sake, untinged by ulterior motives, even the promise of spiritual gain. Maimonides explained this type of service as: "(One who) engages in Torah and mitzvot...not for the sake of the good it brings, but...because it is truth." This type of service, Maimonides continues, was best characterized by Abraham, "who only served G-d with love."

Why, then, was Abraham so concerned with his reward that G-d had to personally reassure him? Similarly, in our Torah portion, G-d urges Abraham to leave the country of his birth, promising that "I will make your name great." Surely Abraham was uninterested in personal glory!

Abraham considered himself "dust and ashes"--merely a tool to be utilized by G-d for whatever purpose He saw fit. Abraham's only goal in life was to sanctify G-d's name, to bring as many people as he could to recognize the Creator of the world. The mention of Abraham's name caused G-d's name to be sanctified; personal recognition and renown were of no consequence to Abraham himself. G-d's promise served to reassure Abraham that his efforts to that end would be met with success.

Abraham's concern with reward may also be understood in the same light. Abraham was interested in material compensation only insofar as it served to show others that the worship of G-d is something to be desired, bringing benefit to those who serve Him. Tangible reward for righteousness would offer inducement to those with whom Abraham came into contact and endeavored to influence.

For this reason, Abraham worried that a lack of tangible reward might be misconstrued as weakness, G-d forbid, on the part of the Creator. If people saw a righteous man such as Abraham lacking, how could they be convinced that his path was just?

This also explains why a Jew is encouraged to keep the Torah's commandments even if his motivation is purely personal, falling short of the ideal of "for its own sake": Although the body may be interested solely in physical reward, the Jewish soul rejoices when material blessing causes G-d's name to be publicly sanctified, just as in the case of our Patriarch Abraham.

*Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

## Rags to Riches

*By Tali Loewenthal*

A common theme in Jewish life is the "rags to riches" story. A person is born and brought up in modest surroundings, with simple parents. The story then might continue in a number of ways. One is that he leaves school at sixteen, becomes a barrow boy in the market and some years later is the chairman of a large business corporation. Another is that from his local school he wins a scholarship to Oxbridge and eventually becomes a famous scientist.

This pattern of leaving one's background in order to conquer new frontiers has many variations. It is intriguing the way that although, of course, this is not restricted to Jews, nonetheless it is a typically Jewish story.

Perhaps this is all because the same pattern is seen in the life of first Jew, Abraham, the hero of this week's Torah reading (Genesis 12-17). G-d tells him "Go for yourself, from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you."

The Sages explain that this is really the basis of life for the Jewish people as a whole, the descendants of Abraham and Sarah. Of course, economic advance is only one example. In more general terms we move out of our past, step by step, into a new and unbounded future, defined only as "the Land which I - meaning G-d Himself - will show you."

What did Abraham leave behind? Three different aspects of his origin. The first was his "land." The Sages explain this does not mean simply a geographical area. The term "land" suggests also the basic, earthly ground of one's character. In order to advance, this basic nature often has to be transcended, especially if one is seeking spiritual goals.

The second term, "your birthplace," suggests all the limitations of one's environment. We Jews are undeniably affected by the cultures in which we live. Sometimes the typical rags to riches story describes a person becoming thoroughly a part of that culture in a very successful way: from barrow boy to the House of Lords. Yet at this point there is the challenge to transcend the limitations of prevailing culture and to be able to be oneself, as a Jewish man or woman, maintaining Jewish values. As a number of people have achieved, one will be able to eat kosher food with Royalty.

The third phrase is "your father's house". This can be understood quite literally as home background and early education. While in most rags to riches stories there is an important debt to something that was gained at home and in school, even more so is there a leap beyond. This is yet more obvious when considered in spiritual terms. The path of Jewish discovery leads to exciting new territories of the spirit, quite different from anything one has experienced before: for example, the joy of Torah study.

Thus each one of us is Abraham or Sarah, leaving our natural limitations behind and advancing to the Land which G-d Himself will show us. This means the physical Land of Israel, and also every kind of new domain to which G-d leads us. There we can truly discover the untold wealth of what it means to be a Jew.

# Slice of LIFE

David Solomon was what you would call a self-made man. He lived in Manhattan and had built himself up from almost nothing with his own 'two hands'. Today was a multi-millionaire with several factories, had substantial holdings on Wall Street and knew exactly how loud money 'talks'.

Of course there was no place in his life for Judaism and no time for anything except business and family.

However the centre of his life was his eighteen year old daughter. She was the apple of his eye. Her picture was on his desk and every wall of his office. He dreamed of the day that she would marry and he would see grandchildren. He even had a special fund saved up to buy her a new house and whatever she needed. And that day would soon be here.

He was sitting in his office when the phone rang. "Mr. Solomon?" asked an official sounding voice on the other end of the line.

"Yes."

"Have you got a daughter by the name of Sarah Solomon?"

Again he answered yes.

"This is a police officer speaking from County hospital. You'd better get down here fast, Mr. Solomon. Your daughter has been in a pretty severe automobile accident."

Mr. Solomon asked a few questions to make sure it wasn't a prank, slammed the phone down grabbed his keys and raced out of the office.

It was a nightmare. She was in critical condition - in a coma. Wires and instruments were attached to every part of her body. The doctors said that it was impossible to operate until her condition stabilized.

He stood there weeping. What could he do? His wife arrived and she too burst out in tears.

The next few days were almost without sleep. They waited in the hall for some news from the doctors. Perhaps she opened her eyes? Perhaps there would be some improvement?

But the only message of hope he received was his father's suggestion that he consult with the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

"He's the only one that can help" his father said. "I have friends that he did big miracles for. If anyone can help you he can. Just go, get an appointment and get to see him."

David's emotions began flipping. At first he was excited; there was hope! But then he became disappointed in himself. What? I, David Solomon, a normal, successful American businessman going to Rabbis? And who ever heard of Rabbis doing miracles? Rabbis give speeches and are, at best, communal leaders....what do Rabbis have to do with healing people.

But maybe this was something different? After all, this was a respected Jewish Rabbi. He even heard that he was a great leader, a serious person. He was uncertain.

Then suddenly he was afraid. "I don't do any commandments. I don't even own a yarmulke! How can I go to this Rabbi? I'll be so ashamed."

But then his confidence returned. He remembered his money. "I'll give a big donation and the Rabbi will certainly hear what I have to say."

David got directions, jumped in his car and drove down to the Rebbe's headquarters in Brooklyn to arrange a private meeting (called 'Yechidut'). There he learned that usually people had to wait for even months but because of the urgency that evening he was given precedence and that evening, many hours later, he was standing before the Rebbe in the Rebbe's office room.

"Rebbe!" He began to cry. "My daughter had a terrible accident. She is in critical condition. Rebbe, can you save her? Here, here is a check for fifty thousand dollars for your institutions!"

The Rebbe just looked at him without seeming to notice the check and said. "If you want to save your daughter you must begin to observe Shabbos."

"Shabbos? You mean not drive or turn on lights and those things on Saturday? Rebbe," he replied "I can't promise such a thing. I'm a very busy man and I'm not a religious Jew. Here!" he took out his check book put it on the Rebbe's desk and began writing, "Here. One hundred thousand dollars! Please, Rebbe, please

add this to the first check. Just save my daughter."

The Rebbe looked at him even more intently and said. "Mr. Solomon I am here to help you. That money might help my institutions but if you want to help your daughter keep Shabbos."

"Rebbe, here!" Said Solomon as he signed his name to another check and placed it before the Rebbe. "It's an open check. Write what you want. Take what you need, just save her!!" He was really crying now, looking deeply into the Rebbe's eyes for some hope.

"G-d is responsible for her healing." the Rebbe replied. "You must appeal to Him. I can only help with prayer but you must also do your part". "At least keep Shabbos. Then your daughter will be healthy and you will even see grandchildren from her."

Mr. Solomon gathered up his checks. Said he would think about it, shook the Rebbe's hand and left closing the door after him. He waited around for a while outside the door hoping that the Rebbe would call him back. But he didn't and Solomon returned to the hospital empty handed.

That night he couldn't sleep. The meeting with the Rebbe made a deep impression on him. The Rebbe's face danced before his eyes saying "I am here to help you, not to help my projects. Keep Shabbos". It was the first time in his life he met a man that was not interested in his own personal profit.

Meanwhile Sarah's condition deteriorated.

"Nu" He said to his wife. This Shabbos we won't drive or turn on any lights. I mean we'll be staying in the hospital anyway so we have nowhere to go. I think I remember how my father used to make Kiddush; we can at least begin to do what Rabbi Schneerson said."

That Sunday there was some improvement and the next Sunday she opened her eyes for the first time in a month.

Mr. Solomon became a 'Shomer Shabbos' Jew and his daughter Sarah not only became completely healed, she eventually got married and had several children. Just as the Rebbe had said.

*[Adapted from Ohrtemimim.org]*

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Editor: Isaac Hilel  
P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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ISSUE 1163

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

A Chasid persistently asked his Rebbe to tell him why the Moshiach has not come and why the Redemption promised by the Prophets and Sages has not been fulfilled. The Rebbe answered: "It is written, 'Why has the son of Jesse not come, either today or yesterday?' The answer lies in the question itself: Why has he not come? Because we are today just as we were yesterday."



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Greeting and Blessing:

I have been informed of the loss which has been sustained by your business enterprise, the earnings of which were earmarked for the Lubavitch House activities, and that this unfortunate occurrence has considerably upset you.

While such a reaction is quite understandable, it is necessary not to lose sight of the real Torah perspective. For, as in the case of every occurrence and every matter, the Torah contains an answer and a definite view. Indeed, it has often been emphasized that the Torah is eternal, and not only in regard to the Mitzvot, but also in regard to the various narratives in the Torah. And while the events and episodes mentioned in the Torah were connected with certain persons, and certain circumstances, in time and place, nevertheless their message is eternal and valid for all times and all places, with particular relevance also to each and every one of us individually.

I have in mind the earliest trials and tests which the first Jew, our Father Abraham, had to undergo, at a time when he was one and only in his generation, as it is written, "One was Abraham." When G-d said to Abraham *Lech I'cha*, ordering him to leave his land, his birthplace, and father's house, it was very difficult for him to do so, even to separate himself from one of the three attachments, not to mention all three together. Then Abraham was told to go to an unknown to him land (Canaan, later to become Eretz Yisroel), where, he was promised, he would become great, and a source of blessing for all. Yet, no sooner did he arrive there, than a famine broke out in that particular land with such severity, that he had to leave at once and go to Egypt, which undoubtedly was with G-d's approval. Under these circumstances, one might have expected that Abraham could very seriously question Divine Providence, which seemed so inconsistent and contradictory. All the more so in view of what is written in Pirkei d'Rabbi Elazar that the famine affected only the land of Canaan and did not extend to any other land, which was clearly intended to test him. Yet, Abraham not only did not complain, but did everything with joy and gladness of heart, taking his whole family with him, etc. Of course, it all turned out only as a test of his *Bitachon* [trust] in G-d, for soon afterwards Abraham was richly rewarded, and he returned to Canaan richly laden with cattle, silver and gold, as the Torah tells us. In reference to this experience of Abraham, the Midrash states that everything experienced by Abraham also happened to his children.

In light of the above, you ought to consider yourself very privileged to have the *Zechut* [merit] to be considered worthy of *Nisyonot* (tests) similar to the above, and the similarity surely requires no elaboration. I am confident that very soon you, too, will see the happy end of this test, and be richly rewarded with "silver and gold" also in the plain sense of the word. All the more so since the profits of this business enterprise have been dedicated to a holy cause.

Inasmuch as we will soon celebrate Yom Tov Pesach, the Festival of our Liberation, may G-d grant that you should be liberated also from all distracting thoughts, and be able to continue your sacred work in matters of Torah and holiness in general, and the activities of Lubavitch and Kosher Chinuch in particular, and do so with joy and gladness of heart.

Wishing you and yours a Kosher and happy Pesach,  
With blessing,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### Prayers for Rain

In the Land of Israel, prayers for rain (i.e., adding the words *v'ten tal u'matar* to the appropriate blessing in the Amidah prayer) commence on Cheshvan 7 (see "Today in Jewish History" above). Outside of the Holy Land, the date for the rain prayer is determined by the local needs. In the U.S., Europe, Russia and other northern countries, it is recited beginning on the 60th day after the autumnal equinox -- on December 4th or 5th.)

### Sanctification of the Moon

Once a month, as the moon waxes in the sky, we recite a special blessing called *Kiddush Levanah*, "the sanctification of the moon," praising the Creator for His wondrous work we call astronomy.

*Kiddush Levanah* is recited after nightfall, usually on Saturday night. The blessing is concluded with songs and dancing, because our nation is likened to the moon-as it waxes and wanes, so have we throughout history. When we bless the moon, we renew our trust that very soon, the light of G-d's presence will fill all the earth and our people will be redeemed from exile.

Though *Kiddush Levanah* can be recited as early as three days after the moon's rebirth, the kabbalah tells us it is best to wait a full week, till the seventh of the month. Once 15 days have passed, the moon begins to wane once more and the season for saying the blessing has passed.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*One Motzo'ei Shabbos (Saturday night), Rabbi Shalom Ber of Lubavitch, (the fifth Chabad Rebbe), commented on the Torah portion which we read this Shabbat, Lech Lecha:*

*"In the early years of his leadership, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad, declared publicly, 'One must live with the times.' From his brother, Rabbi Yehuda Leib, the older Chassidim discovered that the Rebbe meant one must live with the Torah portion of the week. One should not only learn the weekly portion but live it.*

*"Bereishit is a cheerful portion, even though its ending is not all that pleasant. Noach has the Flood, but the week ends on a happy note with the birth of our father Abraham. The really joyous week is that of Lech Lecha. We live every day of the week with Abraham, the first to dedicate his very life to spreading G-dliness in the world. And Abraham bequeathed his self-sacrifice as an inheritance to all Jews."*

*Spreading G-dliness and teaching others about the One G-d was what made Abraham so unique. For, others before him had recognized that there was only one G-d. Adam and his descendants acknowledged the Creator, Noah and his generation, too, believed in one G-d. We are taught that Abraham's grandson, Jacob, had studied about G-d in a "yeshiva" established by Shem – one of Noah's sons. So, Abraham's realization that there is One Supreme Being was not novel. His distinctiveness lay in the fact that he taught those around him, the majority of his generation who had fallen into the error of believing in many gods.*

*As Rabbi Shalom Ber taught, through Abraham's self-sacrifice, we, his children, inherited the strength to spread G-dliness in the world.*

*J. I. Guterlich*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Shraga was a simple wagon driver. He eked out his meagre living by taking people from one town to another. When the weather was nice, the horses were feeling good and he had a customer it was easy for him to be happy but if not Shraga would look for something to be happy about.

But today he was miserable!

When he set out the morning sky was clear and the cool autumn air was fresh and crisp but about an hour away from home suddenly the temperature dropped, clouds blackened the sky and in no time the pouring rain and freezing winds cut through his clothes and made it almost impossible to move.

He whipped the horses. He was freezing and drenched to the bone. It looked like it would rain forever and the horses were barely making progress. In another few hours it would be night. Who knows if he would make it home alive?

Then, suddenly, through the wind and rain he noticed someone standing at the side of the road up to his ankles in mud, waiving furiously and trying to shout through the howling wind. He stopped and yelled to the man to get in the wagon.

It was a Jew! What was he doing on the road in the middle of nowhere? They huddled together and two hours later they miraculously reached Shraga's home, put on dry clothes and were sitting by the stove sipping hot soup.

The traveller turned out to be none other than the famous Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sossov, the Holy Sossover Rebbe. He too had set off in the morning to visit his elderly parents and got caught in the storm.

"Well" the Rebbe said, "now that you saved my life I want to give you a blessing of riches and fame. What do you own? Do you have anything of value?"

"Fame? Blessing? Thank you Rabbi! Wow! Thank you!! Err, anything of value? Not much." Shraga shrugged his shoulders and replied. "Except for...well maybe my horses. I mean no one would buy my wagon or my house or anything else. I guess the only things worth anything are my horses."

"Nu" Answered the Rebbe matter-of-factly, "one will be for Purim and one for Passover. Now I must be gone. Thank you again and G-d bless you!"

He shook Shraga's hand and left, closing the door behind him and leaving poor Shraga more confused than happy. "Wonder what he meant by that?" he said to his wife.

A few months later, just before Purim one of the horses suddenly died. With no other choice and with a heavy heart he sold the meat to the local butcher, the skin to the tanner and made enough money to celebrate the holiday in style and even invite a few guests!

Then, a week before Passover another tragedy struck; the second horse died as well! Again he had no choice but to mournfully sell its carcass which gave him enough money to make a Passover holiday fit for a king. Now he understood what the Rebbe meant! 'One for Purim and one for Passover', but he wished the Rebbe hadn't said it. The holidays were wonderful but now he was left with no horses and no source of income. What would he do?

He asked around in the streets and in the Synagogue if anyone knew how he could make a few Kopeks to feed his family with no luck. There was simply no work.

But Shraga did not lose hope. He talked it over with his wife and decided to go wandering. G-d would certainly help. One thing for sure, he would starve sitting at home. He packed his Tallit, Tefillin and a loaf of bread and set off early the next morning to wherever his feet would take him.

After a few days he happened at an inn and sat down to rest his weary bones when suddenly he heard two fellows sitting in the corner talking in loud tones.

"What are we going to do?" said one of them slapping the table in frustration. "Every manager we bring he fires! The man is insane!! This makes the fifth manager in two months. Next thing he'll fire us! What are we going to do?!" The other fellow just kept letting out moans and grunts, shrugging his shoulders and throwing up his hands in despair.

Shraga immediately stood up and walked over to them. "Excuse me. I just came in from the road and, well, I couldn't help overhearing what you were saying. What type of a manager are you looking for?"

The two men looked at Shraga, then at one another in disbelief and one of them answered.

"The Poritz (squire) needs a manager for his lands." "We are two of his tenant farmers," The other interrupted and then the first one resumed. "He owns all the farmland in these parts and for some reason he assigned us to find him a manager. Were you ever a manager that is... could you do such a thing?"

Shraga agreed, they took him to meet the Poritz and, for some reason the cruel maniac took a liking to him and gave him the job immediately.

Believe it or not Shraga succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. He seemed to always be making the right decisions and saying the right things at the right time. And most important the Poritz loved him!

Every few months he gave Shraga more and more responsibility until simple Shraga became a wealthy and influential benefactor helping everyone in the entire area, in fact even the Poritz himself became more charitable and easy-going.

But if Shraga's horses wouldn't have died he would have remained a wagon driver.

### Biographical note:

Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sossov (1745-4 Shvat 1807) was the leading disciple of *Reb Shmelke of Nicholsburg*. He also received from the *Maggid of Mezritch* and from *Elimelech of Lyzhinsk*. Subsequently a Rebbe in his own right with many followers, he was famous primarily for his love of his fellow Jews and his creative musical talent. His teachings are contained in the books, *Likutei RaMal, Toras ReMaL Hashalem, and Chidushei RaMal*.

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

"Go forth from your land and from your birthplace" (Genesis 12:1)

Generally people don't get proper recognition in the place they grow up in, for everyone is used to them, especially those who are frequently with them like family and friends. G-d wanted to glorify Avraham, therefore commanding him to leave his land and birthplace. (*Yavin Shemu'ah*)

"Go forth: lit. Go to you, for your benefit and for your good" (Genesis 12:1 Rashi)

The question arises seemingly "and for your good" appears redundant after saying "for your benefit". The answer is simple one; often not everything that man finds benefit in is really for his good. (*Rabbi Chanoch of Alexander*)

"And Abram went, as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him" (Genesis 12:4)

When a Jew decides to do a mitzvah - "as the Lord had spoken to him" immediately the Yetzer Hara joins him and starts to lead him astray - "and Lot went with him". The solution to this is to take advice from Avraham which said (Ibid 13:9) "if you go left, I will go right, and if you go right, I will go left" to distance from him as far as possible. (*Rabbi Moshe of Kobrin*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 31 OCTOBER 2014

BEGINS		ENDS
7:34	MELBOURNE	8:35
7:25	ADELAIDE	8:24
5:47	BRISBANE	6:42
6:28	DARWIN	7:19
5:46	GOLD COAST	6:42
6:22	PERTH	7:19
7:03	SYDNEY	8:02
7:14	CANBERRA	8:13
7:32	LAUNCESTON	8:36
7:34	AUCKLAND	8:34
7:41	WELLINGTON	8:45
7:34	HOBART	8:39
6:46	BYRON BAY	7:42
6:33	SINGAPORE	7:22



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS LECH LECHA  
7 CHESHVAN • 31 OCTOBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:34 PM
	MINCHA:	7:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:15 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:38 AM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:35 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	7:45 PM
	MAARIV:	8:35 PM