

LAMPLIGHTER

28 Cheshvan
Parshas
Toldos
1166
21 November
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah portion of Toldos begins by relating that "Abraham fathered Isaac." The commentator, Rashi, notes: "The cynics of that generation were saying that 'Avimelech fathered Isaac.' What did G-d do? He caused Isaac's countenance to be like Abraham's. Everybody then testified that 'Abraham fathered Isaac.'

Was it so strange that Isaac should look like Abraham? It is the most natural thing in the world for a child to look like the parent. In fact, there would have to be a special reason for them not to look alike. Why, then, do our sages indicate that making Isaac look like Abraham was special?

Abraham and Isaac, father and son, were different in many critical areas. Abraham was totally dedicated to G-d out of love for Him, while Isaac was wholly devoted to G-d out of fear and awe of Him.

Since intellect is the cause and root of emotion, it follows that the reason Abraham and Isaac differed so radically in their emotional approach was because they differed intellectually as well.

Abraham and Isaac differed, too, in their manner of spiritual service. Abraham's service of G-d involved hospitality and making G-d known to the populace - revealing G-dliness from above downwards. Isaac's spiritual service was symbolized by his digging of wells, involving as it did removing the obstruction that concealed the wellsprings and revealing the well-water that flowed from below upwards.

A son will truly resemble his father when both father and son share similar personalities and are alike intellectually, emotionally, etc. Abraham and Isaac, however, possessed completely different personalities. Therefore, Abraham and Isaac should not have looked alike, they should have had totally different appearances - Abraham a kind countenance, Isaac a stern one.

Herein lies the "difficulty:" What could be done to these opposites - Abraham and Isaac - to ward off the scoffs of the cynics who said that Avimelech fathered Isaac?

In order for their words to have no credibility, G-d did something out of the ordinary. He changed the order of things and saw to it that Isaac looked like Abraham, so that all would testify that Abraham fathered Isaac.

Bearing in mind that Abraham is symbolic of kindness and Isaac of severity, we learn an important lesson from the fact that G-d made Isaac look like Abraham.

Whenever a Jew is faced with a decision regarding spiritual service, whether to serve with the attribute of kindness and benevolence or with the attribute of severity, he should choose to act kindly and benevolently.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

To Dig a Well

By Yanki Tauber

To dig a well, you need persistence. Pick a spot and stick with it. Don't stop boring when you hit a rocky stretch, and you won't be able to take your work home with you.

To dig a well, you need humility. If you're one of those creative types who needs to leave a personal imprint on everything he does, find another job. You're not creating the product-you're not even manufacturing it. It's there beneath the surface, ready and waiting. You're just there to remove the stuff that's in the way, so that it can well up, fresh and bubbling, of its own accord.

To dig a well, you need faith. Faith that beneath the sand and rock, beneath the slime and grime and dust and dirt, awaits that fresh and bubbling water, waiting for you to cut a path to it. Faith that if you pick a spot and stick with it, set aside your pretensions and simply commit to doing what needs doing, you will eventually hit a vein of fluid life.

Abraham and Isaac had much in common, of course. Abraham was the first Jew, and Isaac was his heir as the torch-carrier of the creed and morals of monotheism in a pagan world. Each faced similar challenges in the course of his life (decades of childlessness, famine, wife-nabbing, hostile tyrants, renegade sons . . .). But they were also as different as two personalities can be.

Abraham was constantly on the move; Isaac stayed put. Abraham was G-d's salesman, pitching his tent at the crossroads of caravan routes and inviting wayfarers in so that he could teach them and enlighten them. Isaac, on the other hand, was the silent, secluded type; he, too, had many disciples, but they were inspired by his piety and commitment rather than his charisma and activism. In the Kabbalah, Abraham personifies the attribute of chessed (benevolence, love), while Isaac embodies gevurah (rigor, awe, self-abnegation). In their daily lives, Abraham was a shepherd, Isaac a well-digger.

As Jews, we are Abraham's children. We traverse the world as G-d's salesmen, bringing the word and way of G-d to its inhabitants. We care for it as G-d's shepherds, commanded to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, educate the ignorant and redeem the oppressed. We transform it as G-d's artists and artisans, charged to remake the human mind and heart, remake society, remake creation.

But even as we journey and explore, even as we preach and teach and give and transform, we are also the children of Isaac. We also appreciate that at the core of every individual and every creation lies a pool of pure, life-giving waters. We understand that we do not create goodness, or manufacture it, or even bestow it. The goodness is there; we only unearth it. We are only the well-diggers.

Slice of LIFE

The Garbovskis were typical Russian Jews. They lived in the Ukraine near Kiev in a modest home with their two sons Vladimir and Igor, were about ignorant about Judaism as a Jew can be and they had a strong desire immigrate to Israel.

But they had differing ideas about how to do it.

Vladimir, always the idealist, didn't want to wait. He figured that with his degree in engineering he would surely succeed there and wanted to leave immediately. But Igor and his parents wanted to wait until there were sufficient funds and then move together.

But Vladimir wouldn't hear of it. One day he announced that he had purchased his ticket and would go alone... and before they knew it he was gone.

At first Vladimir phoned home once a week and was full of good news: He became a citizen and was living temporarily in one of the immigration centres. He was learning Hebrew and he had been promised a job as an engineer as soon as a position was available.

But a half a year later he didn't sound as enthusiastic: The engineering job never materialized, he was working 'temporarily' as a gardener and he had moved out of the Immigration Centre to a dingy apartment in the city of Ramla.

He sounded depressed. His parents suggested that he return home and Igor began pressuring him; come home and in a year or so we will all move together and help each other.

But Vladimir would have no part of it. In fact it made him angry; bad enough that the Israeli Government wasn't helping him, now his family was against him?!

He began calling home less frequently and his conversations were tense and often ended in quarrels.

Until Vladimir decided to stop calling altogether.

Igor tried to call him back, but the phone had been disconnected. He called the Israeli police and the immigration service but they were of no help.

He felt guilty; perhaps it was his fault; maybe he had been too forceful, too negative? Perhaps if he had been more friendly etc. etc. until finally he decided there was no other way to calm his conscience than to travel to Israel and

locate Vladimir himself. With a heavy heart his parents agreed and he was off.

Igor unlike his brother already knew Hebrew fairly well and in no time he settled in. He found himself an apartment in Tel Aviv got a successful job as an apartment broker to Russian immigrants and began looking for Vladimir.

But it wasn't so simple.

He went to the immigration centre but they had lost contact with him. Then he located the apartment in Ramla only to discover that Vladimir had moved out several months ago and all the landlord and neighbours could say was that he looked depressed.

He went to the company for which his brother had worked as a gardener and they told him that he had been fired. He had been a good worker for the first month or so but then he said it wasn't fair that an engineer should do such menial work and since then, three months ago, they hadn't seen him.

Igor contacted the police again, got on the radio, spoke on the Russian stations, put ads in the Russian newspapers with his brother's picture and even printed advertisements and put them on telephone poles in the streets. But nothing worked. And he began to suspect the worst.

After a year of fruitless searching in Israel suddenly an idea popped into his mind, maybe his brother moved to America. After all a lot of Russians that didn't make it in Israel went there. And, although Igor realized the irrationality of his thinking; if he couldn't find Vladimir in little Israel he certainly wouldn't succeed in the U.S.A., nevertheless he bought tickets and flew to Los Angeles... He wanted a vacation.

But as expected, despite a month of praiseworthy efforts he came up with nothing. So he decided to try in New York for a week or two and then if nothing turned up he would return to Israel.

But in New York he fared no better. He put ads in the Russian papers, even got his plea announced on a few Russian radio stations but with no results.

Then on Friday, three days before his return flight on Sunday night, he met someone in the hotel where he was staying told him what he was doing in the U.S. and his acquaintance replied, "Your brother? Why, if I was you I would go to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and ask for a blessing."

Igor had no idea what the man was talking about. "Rebbe? Lubavitch?" he replied, "No, I'm sure that my brother would never go any Rebbe. Vladimir wasn't religious at all."

But his acquaintance explained how this Lubavitcher Rebbe was known to help people in the most miraculous ways, especially Jews. He even told him a story or two and added that the Rebbe personally gives out one dollar bills, blessings and advice every Sunday from his headquarters in Brooklyn to anyone that comes.

Igor had heard stories of Chassidic Rebbes doing miracles but he was sure that they were fables or fairy tales. He couldn't believe that this fellow was telling the truth.

But then he thought to himself that he really had nothing to lose and was free Sunday morning. Not only that but according to his fellow the Rebbe was very friendly, and spoke Russian.

So that Sunday morning Igor found himself standing in a huge line of several thousand people that wound around a large red brick building in Brooklyn and an hour later he was face to face with the Rebbe.

Just as the man in the hotel said; the Rebbe was not austere at all, exactly the opposite, he seemed very warm and friendly. So Igor said in Russian, "I'm looking for my brother who has been lost for a year. Can you help me?"

The Rebbe smiled, gave him two dollars and said, "One is for you and the second give to charity and you will find your brother."

Igor took the dollars, said thank you and moments later was in the subway back to his hotel trying to understand what happened. He finally figured that it the dollars were probably some sort of good-luck, mystical thing. In any case he put them in his pocket, didn't give it much thought, packed his bags, rested for a few hours, went to the airport and forgot the whole thing.

When he arrived in Israel he already had a few meetings planned and he took a cab to Jerusalem directly from the airport.

Once in Jerusalem he got out of the cab and immediately five 'poor people' surrounded him for donations. Usually he would simply ignore them but suddenly he remembered the Rebbe's words, dug his hand into his pocket and begrudgingly gave the Rebbe's dollar to one of them thinking to himself, 'At least I'll see if that Rebbe's blessing was real'.

But he didn't have to wait long. The bum that he gave the dollar to had tears in his eyes.... He took a good look. It was none other than his Brother!!!

Needless to say both of them decided to learn more about Judaism and today are much more active Jews.

Adapted from HaGeula #348

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ISSUE 1166

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The belief in Moshiach is not simply a hope for a blissful and carefree state of utopia. Rather, it is a belief in a world realizing its G-d-given potential, in which we will be able to strive for greater spiritual heights.

Since the advent of Moshiach is the culmination of a process and the beginning of a new and higher dimension of Divine service, every effort we make now is part of the Messianic process. We experience the Messianic era today by living that kind of life today. (*Sefer HaSichot, 5751*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

This letter was addressed to Mr. Baruch Litvin.
B"H, 2 Sivan, 5709

Greetings and blessings,

I duly received your letter. Unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to answer you until now because of the preoccupation with my work preparing [texts] for printing. Among the publications are the *sichah* [talk] from Lag BaOmer, the *kuntreis* [booklet] for Shavuos, and [the booklet] *The Complete Story of Shavuos*. (I have directed that you be sent all of the above. *The Complete Story of Shavuos* is enclosed.)

I was happy to read your letter about the powerful and positive impression the description - in the *Memoirs* - of Benjamin Wolf and the other hidden [*tzaddikim*] made on the Jews in your *shul*.

You should have pointed out two lessons in particular that every one of us - and they - should learn from these stories:

- a. With regard to others: Whenever we meet another Jew, we must always remember that even though he appears to be a very simple person, and even perhaps on a lower level, [i.e.,] that he is not dutiful in his observance and the like, we can never be sure of who he is in truth and what his inner dimensions are. For there were always - and there are today - hidden [*tzaddikim*] among the Jewish people: many, many more than 36 of them. Therefore we have to look upon [every person] in a favorable light, being careful regarding his honor, and trying to do him a favor to whatever degree possible.
- b. With regard to oneself: Each one of us has hidden potentials, which - were he only to have a strong desire to use them - will enable him, with G-d's help, to reach the highest peaks. For when a Jew connects himself to G-d Who is infinite through the Torah and its mitzvos, he has the potential to break through all limitations. In this context, our Sages say: "A person is obligated to say: 'When will my deeds reach the deeds of my forefathers: Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.'"

How are your studies - both your own and those with others - proceeding? You no doubt participate in a communal study session?

I conclude with a wish for the upcoming Shavuos holiday: that we all receive the Torah with happiness and inner feeling; that it be a Torah of life for us. It should not be a Torah which we honor and we keep, but regard as distant so that it will not disturb our everyday life. Instead, it should be a Torah that directs us with regard to our - and everyone's - life.

With blessings for a happy holiday,
Rabbi Menachem Schneerson

CUSTOMS CORNER

Bless New Month

This Shabbat is Shabbat Mevarchim ("the Shabbat that blesses" the new month): a special prayer is recited blessing the Rosh Chodesh ("Head of the Month") of upcoming month of Kislev, which occurs tomorrow (Sunday).

Prior to the blessing, we announce the precise time of the molad, the "birth" of the new moon.

It is a Chabad custom to recite the entire book of Psalms before morning prayers, and to conduct *farbrengens* (Chassidic gatherings) in the course of the Shabbat.

Getting dressed

When life is sacred, nothing is trivial. Getting dressed is also a divine service, and so is done in a mindful way following meaningful protocols.

- Right comes before left-for sleeves, pant legs, socks, etc... That's because the right hand is a representation of kindness and giving, while the left represents judgment and withholding. In our lives, there is a place for that darker, left side-but only within the context of the brighter, right side. So we start by holding our clothes in the right hand, focussing our minds on the thought that all begins with the right, positive side.
- The exception to the above is tying your shoelaces: Since Tefillin are tied onto the left arm; we tie the left shoe first.
- All this is reversed when removing our clothes; we start with the left and then move to the right.

A WORD

from the Director

Every year at this time we read about one of the most famous sets of twins in history, Jacob and Esau. As any child can tell you, Jacob was the "good" one and Esau was the "bad" one, and the two brothers never got along with each other. But the Torah is not a history book; Torah means "teaching," it contains eternal lessons that are always relevant and have a direct impact on our daily lives.

On a deeper level, Jacob and Esau represent two ways of looking at the world, two different life styles that even modern man is forced to choose between. Esau's attitude was "carpe diem" - seize the day, with no thought for tomorrow. Jacob, by contrast, lived a more elevated existence, recognizing life's spiritual dimension.

According to Chasidic philosophy, every Jew is made up of two souls: an animal soul and a G-dly soul. Like Jacob and Esau, they too never get along, and are in constant conflict. The animal soul is interested only in the physical; like an animal that walks on four legs, its head is focused downward rather than up at the sky. The only thing that matters is the here and now. The G-dly soul, however, looks upward. Why am I here? What's the real purpose of my life?

As we learn from this week's Torah reading, the true birth right belongs to Jacob, and our function as Jews is to elevate the world by imbuing it with G-dliness. The battle will always be there, but it's a battle we can win by choosing wisely.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

After 12 long years, his exile of penury was finally over. Forced by debt to leave his family and his small inn, the Jew had worked in a distant town as a *melamed*, a teacher of young boys. Now, having painfully amassed 900 rubles, he was anxious to return home and resume his life.

Being a Chassid, the *melamed* first stopped in Berdichev, to secure the blessing of his Rebbe, the great *Tzadik*, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. After prayers, the *Tzadik* greeted the *melamed* warmly. Then, much to the *melamed*'s surprise, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak said, "If you would like, I will give you three words of advice. But for each, you must pay well. The first will cost you 300 rubles."

The *melamed* was shocked by the Rebbe's request, but his faith didn't waver. And after all, isn't it written, "Words of Torah are better than gold"? He laid the money on the table.

When a man doesn't know which way to turn, he should always go to the right!" the Rebbe said. "Now, for the next word of advice, you must pay another 300 rubles." R' Levi Yitzchak then added.

The *melamed* felt another tremor of shock at these words. What was the meaning of this costly advice? And another 300! But he couldn't refuse his Rebbe, and so, he counted out the money.

"An old husband with a young wife is half a death," said Reb Levi Yitzchak. "And if you wish to hear the last word, you must pay the same amount once again."

This final demand left the poor *melamed* paralysed. His years of struggle, his long awaited home-coming... With trembling fingers he opened his purse and spilled the contents on the table. But his sadness soon dissipated and was replaced by a strange feeling of joy. Come what may, he had obeyed his beloved Rebbe.

"Remember, my son, to believe only what you see with your own eyes. This is my final advice. Now, go in peace."

The bewildered Chassid began wandering the surrounding streets, when he heard the cry, "Catch the thieves. There's a price on their heads! Have they gone to the right or the left?" the pursuants asked the *melamed*.

After only a moment of hesitation, the *melamed* spoke up, "To the right!"

Later that afternoon, the *melamed* had 600 rubles in hand - his share of the reward for catching the thieves. Happily, he headed for home, but as it was nightfall, he decided to stay the night at an inn. The elderly innkeeper was about to admit him when a young woman appeared and sternly turned him away, saying, "We have no room, go elsewhere!"

"An old man with a young wife," the *melamed* thought to himself and he resolved to take his rest huddled in the courtyard of the inn. Around midnight, he was startled by a wagon from which alighted two men, one carrying a glinting sword.

Emboldened by his Rebbe's words, the *melamed* yelled, "Murderers, murderers, catch them!" The inn was roused, and the would-be killers fled into the darkness. The grateful old man, who had suspected a plot, rewarded the *melamed* with 300 rubles.

There was nothing left to do but to continue on his way. He arrived in his old town to find it unchanged. However, no one recognized him, so profoundly had his years of hardship altered his features. His inquiries about the innkeeper who had left many years ago to work as a *melamed* brought knowing looks from the townsfolk. "Yes," said one man, "we remember him. A fine family. But, sad to say, his wife has gone off the straight path."

That night the *melamed* stood outside his house. In the pale moonlight he saw a young man stealthily enter the house. Hours later he left as secretly as he had

come. And if it weren't for the echo of his Rebbe's words, he would have left his home again, but this time, forever.

The following day he returned, laden with gifts, and was greeted with a welcome he had pictured in his imagination so many times. Only now, his heart was wracked with pain.

When he and his wife were finally alone, the *melamed* turned to her and said, "The whole town is talking about you. Why, I have even seen with my own eyes..."

"Stop!" his wife pleaded. "Have you forgotten our youngest son? Didn't you notice that he is not here? The Duke seized him years ago as security on our loan. All of my weeping and begging were to no avail. But we have been blessed with a good child. Each night he comes to me, and I teach him a little bit - some Torah, some blessings. Very little, but he knows he is a Jew."

The *melamed* wept in wonder and awe at all that had transpired. For it was wonder enough, thought the *melamed*, that my Rebbe had the vision to see how the events would unfold, but he also had the wisdom to see into my heart. For had he not demanded so dear a price for his words, I do not think I would have been able to follow his advice. But the greatest wonder of all is that G-d enabled me, a simple Jew, to give up my entire fortune when I would have more easily surrendered my very life.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles

Biographic note:

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak (Deberamdiger) of Berditchev (1740-25 Tishrei 1809) is one of the most popular Rebbes in Chasidic history. He was a close disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch. He is best known for his love for every Jew and his active efforts to intercede for them against (seemingly) adverse heavenly decrees. Many of his teachings are contained in the posthumously published, *Kedushat Levi*.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And the children struggled within her (25:22)

Whenever she would pass a house of prayer or house of study, Jacob would struggle to come out ... and when she passed a house of idol-worship, Esau would struggle to come out. Also, they were struggling between themselves, fighting over the inheritance of the two worlds (i.e., the material world, and the "world to come"). (*Yalkut Shimoni; Rashi*)

Isaac loved Esau because [his] game was in his mouth (25:28)

Esau would deceive him with his mouth. He would inquire of him: "Father, how does one tithe salt? Father, how does one tithe straw?" And Isaac would muse: "This son of mine, how diligent he is in the fulfilment of the commandments!" (*Midrash Tanchuma; Rashi*)

And G-d appeared to him, and said: "Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the Land" (26:2)

G-d said to him: "You are a burnt-offering without blemish; as a burnt offering becomes unfit if it passes out beyond the Temple enclosures, so will you become unfit if you go out of the Holy Land." (*Midrash Rabbah*)

And he called the name of it Sitna ("animosity") (26:21)

This comes to teach us that there is not a righteous man who does not have detractors. (*Midrash HaBiur*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 21 NOVEMBER 2014

BEGINS	ENDS
7:57MELBOURNE	9:02
7:46ADELAIDE	8:47
6:03BRISBANE	7:00
6:36DARWIN	7:29
6:02GOLD COAST	6:59
6:40PERTH	7:40
7:23SYDNEY	8:24
7:35CANBERRA	8:36
7:58LAUNCESTON	9:06
7:56AUCKLAND	8:59
8:07WELLINGTON	9:14
8:01HOBART	9:11
7:03BYRON BAY	8:00
6:33SINGAPORE	7:23



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS TOLDOS
28 CHESHVAN • 21 NOVEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:57 PM
	MINCHA:	8:05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:40 PM
SHABBOS:	TEHILLIM:	8:00 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:31 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF KISLEV	
	WILL BE ON SHABBOS AT	9:46 AM (17 chalakim)
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	7:55 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:02 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM
		MON-FRI: 8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	8:05 PM
	MAARIV:	9:00 PM