

LAMPLIGHTER

11 Tevet
Parshas Vayechi

1172

2 January
5775/2015

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

With this week's Torah portion, Vayechi, we conclude the Book of Genesis. "So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old...and he was put into a coffin in Egypt" is its final verse.

This conclusion to the entire Book is somewhat surprising, in light of the principle that "one should always end on a positive note." Why couldn't Genesis have concluded a few verses back, when we learn that Joseph lived a long life and merited to see grandchildren and great-grandchildren?

Why couldn't the description of Joseph's death have waited until the Book of Exodus?

We must therefore conclude that Joseph's passing is somehow related to the theme of Genesis itself.

The primary difference between Genesis and the other four Books of Moses is that Genesis relates the early history of our Forefathers and the twelve tribes - the preparation for our existence as a distinct nation - whereas the other four books contain a narrative of our history as a people.

The Book of Genesis begins with an account of the creation of the world.

The Sage, Rabbi Yitzchak, explained that although the Torah should have begun with a practical commandment, G-d chose to commence with the Creation to refute the arguments of the Gentiles, who would one day claim that the Jews had stolen the land of Israel from the nations who lived there prior to its conquest.

To counter their assertion, the Jews will say, "The entire world belongs to G-d; He created it and divided it as He saw fit. It was His will to give it to them, and it was His will to take it from them and give it to us."

Surely G-d did not change the entire order of His Torah just to supply an answer to the arguments of the Gentiles. The comments of Rabbi Yitzchak must therefore contain a more fundamental teaching for the Jewish people as a whole.

The nations of the world are cognizant of the Jew's special mission. Their claim, however, is that precisely because Jews are different; they should limit themselves to the spiritual service of G-d and not tie themselves down to a physical land.

Because Jews are a nation like no other, they have no right to claim ownership of a homeland. To the non-Jew, the spiritual and physical realms are incongruous and incompatible.

"The entire world belongs to G-d," the Jew explains - the mundane as well as the spiritual. Both require sanctification through the light of holiness - the sacred mission of the Jew.

With this concept the Book of Genesis begins, and on this note it concludes. Joseph's coffin remained in Egypt to strengthen and inspire the Children of Israel during their exile there. Joseph is symbolic of the ability of the Jewish people to overcome even the most difficult of obstacles, imbuing even the lowliest physical matter with holiness and bringing the long-awaited Redemption.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 30

Six Kinds of Perfection

By Yanki Tauber

"Have I got the perfect guy for you!" Perfection is what we're after when we search for a marriage partner, a physician or a babysitter. Those who have lived long enough will tell us that the only place to seek perfection is in the quest to perfect oneself. But what is "perfection"? Does it have any objective meaning beyond "what I want" (or think I want)?

This week we conclude -- in the annual Torah reading cycle -- the book of Genesis, also called by our sages "the book of the righteous." Genesis is the story of a series of perfect individuals: Adam (made "in the image of G-d"), Noah (whom the Torah calls "a righteous man"), Abraham (described as "G-d's beloved"), Isaac (the "perfect offering"), Jacob (the ultimate "whole person") and Joseph ("the righteous"). What kind of perfection do these personalities exemplify?

Adam was the original model, the "handiwork of G-d." You can't get more perfect than that. So perfect was he, that he couldn't stand it, and went looking for imperfection -- for something to repair, something to achieve, something to do. Still, it's a good thing that we, as a race, started off perfect, if only so that we should understand where our yen for perfection comes from, and that we can, in fact, attain it.

Noah's was a by-the-book perfection. His entire generation was corrupt, but he "walked with G-d". He even tried to get them to improve their ways -- not because it mattered to him what became of them, but because G-d said that that was the right thing to do. He was given precise instructions on how to build the ark, what to put in it, when to go in, and when to get out. Which he did. His was a selfish perfection, the sole aim of which is to be perfect.

Abraham's perfection was the perfection of love. For Abraham, to eat a meal was to share it with every hungry wayfarer; to discover a truth was to teach it to the world. Outward reaching and all-embracing, Abraham's perfection had the self as its centre, the entire world as its sphere.

Isaac found perfection in selflessness. Since every human activity or experience is imperfect; perfection lies in the endeavour to reunite with the divine "nothingness" that is one's source. When one is nothing, one is one with the ultimate All.

Jacob achieved perfection through harmony. Through the balance of love and awe, through the melding of assertiveness and self-effacement. He knew the secret of synthesis: that to love indiscriminately is to embrace also evil, but to recoil from engagement is to abandon much that is good; that to assert the self is to turn one's back on G-d, but to eradicate the self is to counteract the Divine purpose. Jacob's life was a tightrope stretched taut from Hebron to Charan to Egypt, belonging to neither yet a stranger to neither, integrating the best of each into the wholeness of his life.

Joseph's perfection was the perfection of challenge. Indeed, can a thing be perfect unless it has been tested, unless it has been stretched to its limits and beyond? Joseph's righteousness was not the righteousness of a meditating shepherd in a tranquil meadow, or a scholar secluded in the "tents of study." It was a righteousness that was taken to prisons and palaces of Egypt, to clash with commerce and politics, to lock horns with wealth and depravity -- and persevere.

Six people, six prototypes. Six ways to be perfect.

Slice of LIFE

This story started on a Shabbat which was a few days before Chanukah in the year 1973 in Brooklyn. The Lubavitcher Rebbe was speaking to a group of almost a thousand Chassidim who were standing crowded on makeshift bleachers of tables and chairs to see this holy Jew and hear every word he spoke.

The speeches were long, deep and interesting and were separated by joyous song and occasional 'L'Chaims'. Then suddenly the Rebbe announced something and everyone fell silent to hear.

"Where is Glick from London?!" He repeated his call again. People began looking around, asking each other if they had seen him. Again the Rebbe announced "Where is Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Glick?"

But he was nowhere to be found. In fact Rabbi Glick wasn't even there! He was in Spain, and the Rebbe knew it!!

But only a month later did it become clear what had happened.

Rabbi Glick was a successful businessman and his whole life had been devoted to business, until he met the Lubavitcher Rebbe ten years ago. At this first meeting the Rebbe said to him:

"You manufacture light bulbs, correct? A bulb lights only when one turns it on. Similarly, everywhere you happen to be you must illuminate and 'turn on' Jewish souls."

Since then his life's goal became 'turning on Jews' and all his business endeavours were devoted to spreading Judaism where and whenever possible.

Back to our story; that Shabbat while the Rebbe was asking about him in Brooklyn, Rabbi Glick was stuck in the city of Majorca, together with his wife in Spain.

His plan three days earlier had been to travel from Barcelona, where he was doing business to Madrid and then to Lisbon, Portugal for other business meetings. But the next day the phone in his hotel room rang; it was one of the Rebbe's secretaries. The Rebbe wanted him to travel to the isle of Majorca and 'turn on' the Jews there.

Because the message did not sound urgent, Rabbi Glick thought that he could put off Majorca until after he finished the circuit he had planned - but it wasn't so.

When he and his wife arrived in the

Barcelona airport for their Madrid flight on Thursday they discovered that mysteriously all the flights to Madrid had been cancelled. So, seeing this as a sign from above, they bought two tickets to Majorca and boarded the next flight. Instead of spending Chanukah in Madrid and Portugal they would be in Majorca.

Only moments after the plane took off they began to understand why the Rebbe sent them. The skies suddenly blackened and severe storm winds began tossing the plane back and forth, up and down like a toothpick. The end was near! The passengers, even grown men, began screaming and weeping hysterically like children and pandemonium reigned.

But he and especially his wife were calm. They were sure that if the Rebbe sent them, there was ABSOLUTELY nothing to worry about, and their calmness was the only thing that kept everyone sane.

When they miraculously landed in Majorca the stewardesses, passengers and even the pilots could not thank the Glicks enough. And then they discovered why all Madrid flights had been cancelled; the Prime Minister of Spain had been assassinated by a terrorist bomb, Madrid had been closed off and the country was in an upheaval. They immediately headed for the largest hotel.

No sooner had they arrived there they received another call from the Rebbe's office. It was Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, on the other end. The Rebbe had just finished writing two very long and interesting 'general letters' to be sent to all his Chassidim and he wanted Rabbi Glick to copy them, have both translated into Spanish and then read them on Shabbat evening to all the Jews in the Hotel he was staying.

Rabbi Glick knew that this would be no small task. First of all, he was very tired from his trying journey and, it would take a long time to properly copy the letters from dictation over the phone (these were the days before fax machines). Secondly, who knows if he could find a translator who would be willing and able to do the job and then actually translate such a thing? Thirdly, who knows if the people in the hotel were Jews? And even so, if they would be willing to listen to such a long religious letter from an unknown Rabbi in New York!

But a Chassid follows orders joyously! That night Rabbi Glick didn't sleep. He

copied the letters from over the phone, found a translator and early the next morning it was ready.

That evening was Shabbat Chanukah. After the meal in the hotel dining room, Rabbi Glick, who had discovered that most of the guests were Jewish (!), stood on one of the chairs, yelled out a cheerful "Good Shabbos everyone!" made a L'Chaim and announced, in broken Spanish, that he had stayed up the entire previous night preparing a special treat for everyone - a letter from the Lubavitcher Rebbe!! And now he wanted to read it to them.... In Spanish.

To his pleasant surprise the people were interested. Some of them had been on that flight from Barcelona and the word got around that he was a different sort of Rabbi.

He handed out the letters and then sat with the guests for several hours reading and discussing each idea late into the Shabbat night. The impression it made on them was awesome! Many announced they would begin to do commandments and some actually began to dance and sing with joy (with Rabbi Glick's impetus).

That Shabbat made the rest of the week's work easy. The news of that miraculous Shabbat went before them and when he and his wife contacted other Jews in Majorca from a list that they were given, everyone responded favourably. Jews that had become almost completely estranged from Judaism suddenly became interested.

Even the wealthiest Jew (and perhaps most assimilated) on the island not only took on himself to begin to put on Tefillin daily but actually ordered a huge Chanukah Menorah to be immediately installed on the top of his penthouse where the entire island would see it burn for the remaining nights of the holiday!

Several weeks later, after they returned home, Rabbi Glick and his wife received a long letter of thanks from the Lubavitcher Rebbe in English (so as to advertise it more widely) that promised; "This success will serve as an inspiration and encouragement for even greater successes in the future!"

And shortly thereafter, Rabbi Hodokov the Rebbe's personal secretary called him and explained why the Rebbe had strangely called his name that Shabbat.

"The Rebbe told me to call you now and tell you that he knew you weren't in the room when he called your name. He just wanted to give you powers to succeed in your Chanukah mission in Europe. The Rebbe was with you all the time."

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

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

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

The Lamplighter contains words from sacred writings. Please do not deface or discard.

ISSUE 1172

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Happy is he who does not tire of awaiting redemption and who makes certain that he and his children increase their Torah learning and their observance of the precepts so they will not be ashamed when Moshiach comes. (*The Chofetz Chaim on Awaiting Moshiach*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

7th of Cheshvan, 5737 [1977]

To All Participants in the Celebration Dinner of the Lubavitch Foundation in Glasgow, Scotland

...As has often been emphasized, the education of young children is very much like the cultivation of a tender seedling, where even a slight change at an early stage can have a decisive effect when the seedling matures into a fruit-bearing tree. How much more so when the change is a basic one and a durable one. In the case of young children, the proper care, or lack of it, especially in the present day and age, is, of course, of vital consequence which cannot be overemphasized.

We are witness to two phenomena which are apparently contradictory, yet both contribute to the favorable climate for the advancement of Torah education.

On the one hand we have seen an appalling alienation of recent years of many of our Jewish youth from their spiritual heritage, and even from any affinity to their Jewish people, which in some extreme cases, has led them to self-hate, and to joining forces with the enemies of our people.

On the other hand, there is a genuine search and a soulful desire among many other of our youth for the truth and for a sense of belonging. In this determination, they are ready to face challenges and hardships, to the extent of sacrificing careers and the pursuit of material goods.

Given the right direction and help, these young people readily dedicate themselves to Torah with a total commitment which is nourished by their realization of having found at last true inner peace a self-fulfillment.

In light of the above, every effort in behalf of Torah education is assured of success, especially when it is made with a sense of dedication and, to use the well-known expression of our Sages, with "words coming from the heart" which are certain to penetrate the heart and be effective.

Indeed, this has been our invariable experience, which has been most gratifying and rewarding in all countries and cities where Lubavitch has been engaged in all phases of Jewish education, and not least in your city of Glasgow.

With the consistent and devoted cooperation of all friends of Torah education; with personal identity with this cause in the realization that, as our Sages defend it, our Jewish people are one body, one organism; and stimulated by past achievements--your efforts will be rewarded beyond expectation. This will also be a source of Divine blessings--in every respect, materially and spiritually--for each and all of you, your families and the community at large.

Wishing you much hatzlacha [success],

CUSTOMS CORNER

Preparing for Prayer continued

It is customary and appropriate to give Tzedaka before prayer, one of the reasons given is; that before each prayer service one should resolve to fulfil the mitzvah to "love your fellow as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), having the intention to love every single Jew as oneself, making their prayer more desirable before G-d.

In light of the above-mentioned, it is also a custom by many to verbalise this by saying the "Hareini Mekabel" before he begins to pray, thus verbally accepting upon himself this Mitzvah. The text: "ha-ray-ni m'kabel ah-lai mitzvah ah-say shel v'a-hav-ta l'ray-ah-cha ka-mo-cha" [I hereby take upon myself the mitzvah of "You shall love your fellow as yourself"].

A WORD

from the Director

A story is told of the Tzemach Tzedek, who was to become the third Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch. As a young child he was studying the Torah portion of Vayechi, this week's Torah portion, and had just learned that "Jacob lived in the land of Egypt 17 years." The teacher explained that from this verse we learn that the 17 years Jacob spent in Egypt were the best years of his life. The Tzemach Tzedek asked his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Chabad, how it was possible that Jacob could have lived his best years in such a place as Egypt?

The Alter Rebbe replied: "We have been taught in the previous Torah portion (Vayigash) that Jacob had sent his son Judah ahead of him to establish a yeshiva in Goshen. Therefore, since learning Torah brings a Jew closer to G-d, it is possible for a Jew to truly live even in a place like Egypt and that those years can even be considered 'good' years."

This story has an eternal message for every one of us:

"Egypt" is the prototype of all the exiles our people have experienced during our long history. The Hebrew word for Egypt is "Mitzrayim," which is connected with "metzarim" - constraints. Egypt thus indicates all situations in which a Jew finds himself constrained and limited in the development of his true Jewish spirit. If it were not for the Torah, the Jewish spirit would languish and lose vigour and vitality in the darkness of exile, whether external or internal. It is the Torah and mitzvot that illuminate Jewish life and provide the strength and vitality to overcome all constraints and hindrances, enabling every Jew - man, woman and child - to live a bright and meaningful life even in the midst of outside darkness.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Once, about two hundred years ago in Poland, a great Talmudic scholar, whom we'll call Reb Shmuel, needed money. This man was a paradigm of holiness and erudition. His every waking moment was spent learning the Torah and delving into its G-dly wisdom and the last thing on his mind was money. But two things made him change his mind; his daughter and his wife.

His daughter was of marriageable age; and his wife wouldn't let him forget it. It meant he had to provide a dowry, a house, a wedding etc. and she didn't give him a moment's rest until he did something about it.

But the poor fellow had only three unmarketable talents; learning Torah, teaching Torah and ignoring the world. So he asked around for advice and the most practical piece he got was; go to a Chassidic Tzadik and ask for a blessing.

He wasn't a Chassid, he didn't believe in Rebbes, he didn't want to do anything except sit and learn Torah in peace but his back was against the wall.

So against his better judgment, but with no other choice, he went to one of the towns where the Chassidim lived, asked where to find a Tzadik and was directed to the home of Rabbi Meir of Premishlan.

He entered, was escorted to the Rebbe's study, closed the door behind him and poured out his heart; he needed money for his daughter... or maybe a rich groom. The Rebbe looked at him with a clever eye, took out a long stemmed smoking pipe and said.

"See this? It's my pipe and I need a pipe cleaner." He pulled out a long thin metal rod and continued. "See? This is my old one and it's about to break, can't use it any more. Do me a favour. Go find a blacksmith and, here, take this and show it to him and ask him to make me a new one. Here's money to pay him. Do me a favour, I want to help you but I can't think without my pipe."

Poor Reb Shmuel took the dirty rod and the money and, without thinking too much shook his head in agreement, tried to smile and left the room.

"What am I doing this for?!" He thought as he walked down the street away from the Tzadik's house. "This is insane! I'm a Torah scholar! I'm no servant! And this rod smells terrible!" But he was trapped! He couldn't go home, he couldn't run away ignore the world and learn Torah like always, so he asked the first man that passed where he could find a blacksmith.

But it wasn't so easy. There were plenty of smiths around but none of them wanted to take the job: too small, too delicate, too old-fashioned.... No one used smoked such pipes nowadays.

Finally, after hours of searching, he was directed to a dilapidated shack far from the city where he found an old smithy that greeted him warmly and joyously agreed to make the pipe cleaner he requested. He was familiar with such things and was willing to begin work immediately.

At first Reb Shmuel was cursing every minute he had to sit with this uncouth gentile and miss precious Torah learning. But as he watched the smith work he became more and more interested until each blow of the hammer and each change in shape of the red hot bar excited him.

The smith began talking. He explained how when he was young and strong people would flock to his shack and he was busy all day. But then tragedy struck. A fire burned down his house and consumed his wife and daughter and he really never recovered from the blow.

Then other blacksmiths, younger and stronger than him, opened shops in the town and people stopped coming to him in fact he hadn't had a customer for months, maybe more.

Reb Shmuel began to really like this old fellow. In fact he saw that he was a real human being... maybe even a lot more than he himself. They began talking and the conversation continued until almost evening and finally when the smith gave him the finished product he refused to accept payment.

"I don't need money." The smith said. "What I need is a friend. And you are a friend. Why, I have a lot of money. See?" And with this he stood, grabbed both sides of the anvil before him, took a deep breath, his face became red as a beet and gave a mighty heave. "See? Here's my money! Saved it all from the good days. Don't know what I'll do with it. Got no family, no friends, except you. Tell me ... will you come back and we can talk some more tomorrow?"

Reb Shmuel stuck out his hand and said, "I'll do it! I really enjoyed talking to you! G-d willing I'll come back tomorrow."

The smith put the anvil back in place, they shook hands and the Rabbi returned to the town, took a room in a hotel and went to sleep. It was too late to go to the Rebbe with the pipe cleaner... he'd go tomorrow.

But the next day, after he finished his morning prayers and was on his way to the Rebbe's home he noticed a big commotion in the street. He approached to find that The old smithy had passed away that evening and they were trying to sell his tools and his shack to pay for the funeral, but no one wanted to buy any of his antiquated junk.

Reb Shmuel was shocked! The smithy, his friend, was dead?! He turned briefly aside as tears filled his eyes then suddenly remembered the money under that anvil! He dried his eyes, blew his nose, and asked how much money they needed and, to the amazement of everyone, promptly paid in full and got a receipt.

As calmly as he could, he made his way to the smithy's shack, somehow managed to move the anvil a bit, took out the money stuffed it in his pockets and in his shirt and made his way to Rebbe Meir of Premishlan's home.

"Here is your pipe-cleaner" he said to the Rebbe and was about to say that he didn't need the blessing; G-d provided the money. But suddenly he saw in the Rebbe's eyes and realized that he knew.

"I knew that money was there." Said the Rebbe "It was just waiting for the right person to take it, Hashem sent you."

Reb Shmuel learned three lessons; from the money he learned that G-d is better than we think. From the Rebbe; that Tzadikim are better than we think. And from the smithy, that people are better than we think.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger (Gen. 48:14)


It was precisely because Ephraim was the younger that Jacob placed his stronger hand upon his head to bless him. For young people always require more attention, supervision and encouragement than older people. (*Techiyat Yisrael*)

And let my name be named on them, and the name of my father's Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 48:16)

Jacob was afraid that the younger generation (especially Joseph's children, who were born and bred in Egypt and accustomed to the wealth of the royal palace) would assimilate among their Egyptian neighbours. To prevent this from happening, he insisted that his grandchildren keep their original Jewish names. Changing one's name is the first step toward assimilation. (*Imrei Chein*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 2 JANUARY 2015

BEGINS	ENDS
8:27MELBOURNE	9:32
8:15ADELAIDE	9:17
6:29BRISBANE	7:26
6:58DARWIN	7:51
6:28GOLD COAST	7:26
7:08PERTH	8:08
7:52SYDNEY	8:53
8:04CANBERRA	9:07
8:30LAUNCESTON	9:39
8:26AUCKLAND	9:30
8:39WELLINGTON	9:48
8:35HOBART	9:46
7:29BYRON BAY	8:27
6:52SINGAPORE	7:44



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS VAYECHI
11 TEVET • 2 JANUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:26 PM
	MINCHA:	8:35 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9:10 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:43 AM
	MINCHA:	8:25 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:32 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8:00 AM
	SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	8:35 PM
	MAARIV:	9:25 PM