

# LAMPLIGHTER

18 Tevet  
Parshas Shemos

1173

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The first time the Jewish people are referred to as G-d's "children" appears in this week's Torah portion, Shemos. "And you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus said the L-rd: My son, My firstborn, is Israel."

Not only are the Jewish people considered G-d's "sons," but also each and every Jew is a "firstborn," with all the weight and import that implies. (Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator, notes that the word "firstborn" is "an expression of greatness.")

There are times, however, that the Jewish people are described as G-d's "youngest son." Our Sages interpret the verse "For Israel is a child, and I loved him" as meaning that G-d loves the Jews precisely because they are "young" and small. In fact, our Rabbis use the metaphor of "a king who has many children, yet he loves the youngest one the best."

What, then, are we to learn from the use of the word "firstborn" in our Torah portion?

To explain:

It sometimes happens that a father loves his eldest son not simply because he is his child, but because the oldest child actually possesses good character traits, honours his father, is intelligent, etc. This type of love is based on a logical rationale; the greater the reason, the more the father will love the child.

By contrast, a father's love for his youngest child is independent of the child's actual qualities. When a young child honours his father, it isn't necessarily a sign of good character, as it is the nature of most young children to be obedient. Rather, the father loves him only because he is his son, with an essential and basic love that has nothing to do with other factors.

G-d's love for His children, the Jewish people, combines both of these elements: When Jews serve G-d as He wants them to, studying His Torah and performing His mitzvot, the level of love that pertains to an adult, mature son is revealed. This love is dependent on our actions.

At the same time, G-d continues to love His children even when their behaviour doesn't necessarily warrant it, which is the level of love a father has for his youngest child. In the deepest sense, G-d doesn't need any external reasons to love us. He loves us simply because we are His children.

In truth, both types of love complement each other. No matter how pious a Jew is or how much Torah he has learned, he should always consider himself a "little child" who obeys his Father with pure "acceptance of the yoke of heaven." This arouses G-d's essential love for the Jewish people.

Nonetheless, we should always be aware that we are G-d's "firstborn," and that G-d values our observance of Torah and mitzvot and loves us because of it. Furthermore, it is on the level of "firstborn" that our essential connection to G-d as a single entity with Him is ultimately revealed.

*Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Vol. 21*

## The Anatomy of a Leader

*By Naftali Silberberg*

Who was Moses? Why, indeed did G-d choose this unknown Israelite refugee from Midian to lead His people out of Egypt and be the conduit for the transmission of G-d's wisdom to this world? Many answers have been given based on anecdotes recounted in various midrashic sources regarding Moses' accomplishments in his pre-leadership years. We, however, will attempt to cull an answer from the information provided in the Bible itself.

After the Torah describes Moses' birth and rescue from the Nile (incidents wherein he didn't actively or knowingly participate), we are told only three episodes about Moses—all very telling; all sharing the same theme: 1) Moses slays an Egyptian who is beating an Israelite. 2) Moses attempts to prevent the escalation of a skirmish between two Israelites. 3) Moses physically intervenes upon witnessing the unjust harassment of Jethro's daughters by the local shepherds.

Here's a person who isn't afraid to stand up for what is right. He won't just "mind his own business" when confronted by blatant injustice. And he doesn't just express his opinion to anyone interested, he takes corrective action—even if these actions are unpopular and may incur others' wrathful vengeance.

Does this sound a little like the role of the main character in countless movies and novels? Well here's where Moses' story becomes unique: when G-d approaches Moses, asking him to lead the Israelite nation out of Egypt, Moses refuses. Moses humbly but unsuccessfully pleads with G-d to send another person as messenger—Aaron, the Messiah, or ANYONE... This seems to be an extremely counter-intuitive response. Considering Moses' background, we would expect him to gleefully jump at the opportunity to be the hero sent on a mission to save an oppressed nation from the hands of an evil tyrant.

But Moses was also the most humble man to ever live. There wasn't a shred of ego in all his heroic exploits and he had no desire for fame or glory. True, when there was an injustice which required immediate attention he was the first person to jump into the fray; but in this instance Moses felt that others were equally qualified for the task, and he therefore had no interest in the mission.

And this is precisely why he was chosen. One whose feats are motivated by ego is not a true leader. His preoccupation with writing his own chapter in the annals of history will cloud his priorities and won't allow him to give the proper attention and respect to his charges. The genuine leader possesses a rare mix of fearlessness and humility.

# Slice of LIFE

Rabbi Ben Tzion Raider, a Chabad Chassid who is a businessman from England once flew to Detroit Michigan for several business appointments.

After a long tiring day he took a taxi to the home of a friend of his that always hosted him when he came to Detroit, to eat something and go to sleep. But he was in for a surprise.

His friend, besides preparing a nice warm meal and comfortable room for him also invited some of his acquaintances, most of whom were non-observant Jews, for a pleasant evening with his Rabbi friend.

The evening was pleasant, despite the fact that much of it was on the verge of religious debate.

One fellow in particular seemed like he was trying to make trouble. He asked question after question about Tefillin; why we put them on, why must they be square, why black, why only in the day, why the left arm etc. etc.

Time really flew and before they knew it the discussion ended at two in the morning. Rabbi Raider decided to go against his feelings and judge the fellow that had been asking questions favourably. So he took him aside and simply asked him if he was interested in putting on Tefillin. And the answer surprised him.

"You see all these people that were here tonight?" The fellow answered rhetorically, "They are all going home to sleep. Right? But not me! I'm going to work! I own a bakery and I have to start baking in a half hour. So if you want to put Tefillin on me come there in four hours, at six thirty a.m. That's when we take a half-hour break in the baking and I can put them on."

Rabbi Raider, after an international journey and a full day of work was definitely not looking forward to waking up at six in the morning but he again put his feelings aside, and he did it!

The next morning he was there and to his surprise the 'baker' put the Tefillin on with the greatest of ease and expertise and even recited the prayer by memory; with feeling! When he removed them from his arm and head he explained:

"I used to put them on every day. But the last time I put them on was twenty years ago. I guess I was just too lazy. Still am! But you know what?! If you get me a pair I'll start putting them on again! What do you say to that?"

He explained that he really had no desire to buy a new pair and didn't even know where to go if he wanted to. Rabbi Raider said that he would try to get him a pair.

But it would have to wait. He wouldn't have time to buy them until he returned to England. Then in six weeks he was planning to return to Detroit and would try to bring them then.

"Really Rabbi, if I waited for twenty years I can certainly wait a few weeks." He replied, shook the Rabbi's hand and said good bye.

A few hours later Rabbi Raider was on his flight to England with a few hour stop off in New York. His plan was to pray the Morning Prayer with the Rebbe in his headquarters in 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, then briefly go to Manhattan to buy a few things for his family then return to 770 and pray the afternoon prayer before resuming his flight home.

He arrived in Brooklyn, finished praying, wrote a note to the Rebbe explaining what he was doing and briefly mentioned the fellow he met in Detroit. Then he handed the letter to the Rebbe's secretary and proceeded to Manhattan.

But when he returned in the early afternoon he was in for a surprise. He got a reply from the Rebbe! He opened the letter with trembling hands and it read:

"Do you think it is proper that a Jew who put on Tefillin yesterday for the first time in twenty years should wait another six weeks until you buy him another pair?"

Buy the Tefillin today and if you can arrange it that they reach him in Detroit today so he can put them on today it is good. But if not then you should return yourself to Detroit to give him the Tefillin in order that he can put them on in time, even if it means that you won't make it to England for Shabbat.

And when this Jew sees how much it was important to you that he shouldn't miss even one day of Tefillin it will be a very important commandment for him."

Rabbi Raider was startled. He had a planned family reunion waiting for him in England; for the first time his entire family would be meeting together and spending the entire Shabbat together, he had been looking forward to it for a long time....but the Rebbe was always right.

He had to figure out a way to send them there. But it wasn't so easy. First of all, all of the Judaica stores he tried said that Tefillin had to be ordered.

Then, when he did find a store that had one pair on hand it was only with the greatest difficulty that he convinced them to take an English check because he had almost no cash. Then he had to find an airline to take them and convince his host in Detroit to come to get them and agree to deliver them to the baker.

Miraculously he did it, and he even made his flight to England!

Six weeks later when he returned to Detroit he met the baker who thanked him profusely and told him with great pride and joy that since he received them he didn't miss a day putting them on.

Even one particular freezing-stormy day when he got into a traffic jam and was sure he wouldn't make it home in time to put on Tefillin....he weaved in and out of traffic and drove on the side of the road like a possessed man .... and made it!

"You know why I value this commandment so much?" he explained. "Because when I saw how important it was to you that I shouldn't miss even one day of Tefillin... it became a very important commandment for me."

Exactly the words of the Rebbe...

*Adapted from "The Beis Moshiach"*

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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 1173

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Redemption is not an event that happens at the end of our life on earth; it is a cumulative process that begins at the outset of our lives, and every act of goodness brings us one step closer to completing the process. Redemption means an end to darkness and confusion; it means a time of harmony.

*(Toward a Meaningful Life adapted by Simon Jacobson from the Rebbe's teachings)*



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

12 Kislev, 5725 (1964)

I received your letter in which you describe the state of your [physical] health, as well as your [sad and despairing] state of mind.

From what I can ascertain from your letter, I must emphasize that there are various aspects of your life for which you can be truly grateful to G-d.

Understandably, this does not mean that the tormented state in which you now find yourself is completely without basis. Nevertheless, a person must be able to see the complete picture [including all the good that has transpired in his life, and] not only the negative part.

It should not be difficult for a woman with a background like yours and possessing faith such as you do to contemplate G-d's benevolent providence, which He provides to each and every one individually. Moreover, G-d is the Essence of Goodness, and "It is in the nature of He who is good to do good."

When one ponders these thoughts, one must inevitably come to the same conclusion as did King David, the author of the Psalms, who declared: "G-d is with me; I shall not fear."

To the contrary, you have all the reasons to be joyous and glad of heart, particularly since a joyous attitude on your part will have a beneficial effect on your entire family. Merely, it is important for you to bear in mind, as mentioned above, that you indeed possess many things for which you should be grateful and which should cause you joy.

It happens quite often that an individual whose mood is similar to yours seeks to discover the basis for his [unhappy] frame of mind, thinking that the answer he comes up with is the true cause for all his problems [and unhappiness], when in truth the root cause may be something else entirely.

This is particularly true of a Jewish man or woman whose true joy is entrenched in living a full Jewish life, i.e., a life that is in complete harmony with the path of Torah and Mitzvos [commandments] given to us on Sinai and that made us into a holy nation. The particulars of how to live a Jewish life are meticulously detailed in the Shulchan Aruch [Code of Jewish Law], a book that spells out Jewish law and daily conduct.

If for one reason or another one's daily life is not in complete accord with the Jewish way of life as commanded by G-d, it is impossible for a Jew to be completely happy and content, inasmuch as something vital is missing from his life. It is possible that the person is unaware of this, for which reason he will search for the cause of his discontent and unhappiness in other areas.

On the other hand, when a Jew is steadfast in his outlook that he will live in complete harmony with the Jewish way of life, then he is capable of being completely happy and content.

The above is something that can be achieved by every Jew, although for some it may be easier than for others. This capacity surely exists since G-d, the Creator and Conductor of the world and the Commander of these commandments, also provides the person with the capacity to fulfill His commands.

Of course I am aware of the question of how it is that there are many individuals who are seemingly detached from the path of Torah and Mitzvos and nevertheless seem to be completely happy, and so on.

The answer is simple. No one really knows what is transpiring in the heart and mind of another individual. Additionally, a person can conceal his inner dissatisfaction and unhappiness, although sooner or later this must come to the fore.

It would be worthwhile for your husband to check his Tefillin, and before he puts them on each weekday morning he should give a small coin to tzedaka (charity). It would also be worthwhile that the mezuzahs in your home be checked to assure that they are kosher according to Jewish law. You as well should give a small coin to tzedaka prior to lighting candles.

I hope to hear from you good news.

*From Healthy in Body, Mind and Soul, compiled by Rabbi Sholom B. Wineberg, published by Sichos in English*

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### Shul

The sanctity of a synagogue or a house of study is very great, for they are also called sanctuaries of G-d. Accordingly, when a person approaches the entrance [to the synagogue], one should hesitate momentarily so that they do not enter suddenly, entering with awe and fear, as if they were walking in the presence of a king.

Also it is forbidden to engage in "idle talk" or to calculate accounts inside them. [The later does not apply] to accounts associated with a mitzvah - e.g., that of the charitable fund and the like. These buildings should be treated with respect, and swept and mopped.

Before one enters them, one should clean the mud off one's feet and check that there is no dirt on one's person or on one's clothes. It is permitted to spit inside. However, one should immediately rub out the spit with one's foot.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This Sunday is the 24th of Tevet, the yartzeit [passing] of the founder of Chabad Chasidism, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi. The Alter Rebbe, as he was known, was an outspoken critic of Napoleon in his campaign against Russia. While acknowledging that a victory by the French conqueror would greatly ease the plight of the Jews in the material sense, the Alter Rebbe recognized in Napoleon an even graver threat to their spirituality.*

*"Do not be intimidated, and pay no attention to the temporary victories of the enemy," he encouraged his fellow Jews in a letter, "for the ultimate victory will be the Russian Czar's."*

*The Alter Rebbe did not want to leave his home in Liadi, primarily because his presence there was reassuring to the Jewish community. Eventually, however, he was forced to flee into the Russian interior, together with some 300 Chasidic families and their Russian military escorts. They escaped shortly before Napoleon's forces arrived; the French Emperor himself came looking for the Alter Rebbe. But the Alter Rebbe had ordered that his house and all his belongings be burned, rather than fall into the hands of Napoleon.*

*For 140 days the Alter Rebbe and his group wandered about until they reached the town of Piena, where the local residents welcomed the weary travellers and their 60 wagons with open arms. As many of Piena's menfolk had gone off to war, there was ample lodging for everyone, which the generous people of Piena provided free of charge.*

*However the journey proved too much for the Alter Rebbe; he passed away shortly after on Shabbat the 24th of Tevet (December 1812). As his son and successor Rabbi Dov Ber wrote, "With a clear and tranquil mind, and cleaving wondrously to his Maker, he recited Havdala...and then after Shabbat he was united in a perfect bond with G-d."*

*May we soon be reunited with all the great tzadikim of all generations, with the complete Redemption.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

It was a beautiful autumn day. The fallen forest leaves covered the dirt road and crunched musically under the wheels of Reb Shlomo's carriage. The song of birds rang out from overhead foliage in the colourful Ukraine forest. But Reb Shlomo was angry and miserable. He mumbled madly to himself, and occasionally when he couldn't take it any longer, he pounded with his fist on the bench he was sitting like a madman, and shouted "Aaaachhhh! Why!? Why me!?! Why? Why!?!?" into the empty woods around him.

He once had such great plans. He was going to be a famous Rabbi or head of a Talmudic academy (Rosh Yeshiva). Everyone said that he was a genius in Torah learning. He could have been famous!

But it all dissolved before his eyes when his daughter went into some crazy trance and stayed there. She had been a normal intelligent girl of fifteen when suddenly five years ago she became unexplainably withdrawn, crawled behind the stove and refused to talk or even move.

Now she had to be fed, washed and cared for constantly, and to make matters worse his wife forced him to take care of her half of the day every day. She didn't trust anyone else.

Then they began seeing doctors. Reb Shlomo had money, so they spared no expenses. They travelled from town to town, country to country, took her to the greatest specialists in the world. But it didn't help. After wasting a lot of time, energy and money they realized that it was hopeless; only G-d could help, and it didn't look like He was going to do it soon.

Reb Shlomo became depressed. He couldn't concentrate enough to learn Torah, he was ashamed to be seen in public and he hated to be at home. But just as he thought that it could be no worse, one day a guest arrived at their house, noticed the girl, and innocently suggested that they take her to a great holy Jew that did great miracles called The Baal Shem Tov.

When Reb Shlomo heard that name he just winced, and tried to force a smile. But as soon as the guest left, he began nervously pacing the room and mumbling bitterly.

His wife didn't notice all this, she was lost in thought, and when she finally came out of her reverie and said, "What do you think Shlomo? Do you think it might help? I mean we've tried everything. I know what you think of him but I've heard the Baal Shem Tov is a true miracle ...."

"THIS IS THE END!!" he screamed. He stood still and pounded on the dining room table. "I will not have that name mentioned in my home! NOT, NOT!"

His wife looked at him blankly as he paused briefly, looked about like a trapped animal, then stared at her wildly and continued.

"The man is a charlatan! A pure soothsayer and idolater! Do you hear!? All those miracle stories are lies! I have it from the most impeccable sources. Who does he think he is, Elijah the prophet?! NO! I WILL NOT GIVE MY DAUGHTER TO IDOLATRY!" He pounded on the table with each of the last six words.

But his wife thought otherwise; "Well... I heard that all those stories are not true. That's what my sources say. And anyway.....it is our only chance. There simply is no alternative. At least gave it a try!" Finally when she pressed him to bring some proof for his words and then threatened him with divorce he had no choice but to bundle his daughter up, carry her into the carriage, hitch up the horses, and of course take a large sum of money for the "Tzadik" and set off.

And now here he was; driving through the miserable Ukrainian forest to Mezibush TOTALLY against his will ..... yelling to himself like a lunatic. After what seemed to be infinity, the town was finally in sight.

He stopped in the marketplace to ask directions and he noticed the joy and reverence in people's eyes when they mentioned the Baal Shem's name, but he ignored it and finally found the address.

He parked outside the window, left his daughter in the carriage, took his bag of money, went around to the front door and knocked. "Nu, so I'll lose a few thousand guilders" he thought to himself, "at least my wife will get this insane idea out of her head".

The door opened and he was invited in. He told one of the Chassidim there what he wanted, and was told to have a seat in the waiting room.

He considered just walking back outside and going home. He shuddered at the idea of speaking with this faker. He would lie to his wife, he would tell her that the Baal Shem Tov tried and failed. But minutes later was summoned enter and he found himself closing the door behind him standing before this legend. He wasn't impressed.

The Baal Shem Tov didn't look so special. His eyes had a certain unusual deepness, but certainly nothing to get excited about.

"Nu!" Reb Shlomo said with disdain as he took the moneybag out of his pocket, put it on the Baal Shem's table and opened the string revealing the golden coins. "Here's money. Here, take it! Now let's see if you can heal my daughter. She's in the carriage and she's really sick. Paralysed, mute Let's see what you can do."

The Baal Shem Tov took the bag, lifted it with all the money in it, looked Reb Shlomo in the eyes and said casually, "I don't need your money" as he turned in his seat and casually tossed the bag out the open window behind him into the street.

Rav Shlomo was astounded. Ten thousand guilders! Out the window! He was frozen.

Suddenly he heard the unmistakable voice of his daughter yelling, "Daddy! Daddy, come quick! There are golden coins in the street!"

Rav Shlomo ran to the window and saw the most astounding sight: his daughter had jumped out of the carriage and was gathering up the coins in her hat. "Daddy! Look at the money!" She yelled out again gleefully.

Without even saying a word of parting he dashed out the door ecstatic, around to the back of the house, and began helping his daughter.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

"She stretched out her hand and took it..." (Exodus. 2:5)

This verse refers to Pharaoh's daughter, who rescued Moses from the Nile. The word the Torah uses for "hand" is amata, because G-d made a miracle and caused her hand to stretch out many amot [cubits] to reach Moses. This teaches us an important lesson. Whenever we see a child in danger, whether physical or spiritual, we shouldn't stop to calculate whether or not we can rescue the child, but we must do our utmost to accomplish that goal, even if the situation appears helpless. If we since rely do all that is in our power, G-d will surely help us. (*Reb Bunim M'Pshischa*)

"And he spied an Egyptian beating a Hebrew" (Exodus. 2:11)

Moses could not tolerate injustice against any human being, whether non-Jew against Jew ("an Egyptian beating a Hebrew"), Jew against Jew ("two Hebrew men struggled together"), or non-Jew against non-Jew ("and the shepherds came and drove them away.") (*Toldot Yitzchak*)

"Remove your shoes from your feet..." (Exodus. 3:5)

G-d told Moshe to remove his shoes to teach him a lesson in sensitivity. One who walks barefoot can feel even the smallest pebble. In preparing Moshe to be the leader of the Jews, G-d was teaching him the importance of being sensitive to even minute details concerning his people. (*Midrash Rabba*)

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 8 JANUARY 2015

BEGINS	ENDS
8:28 .....MELBOURNE .....	9:32
8:15 .....ADELAIDE .....	9:17
6:30 .....BRISBANE .....	7:27
7:00 .....DARWIN .....	7:53
6:30 .....GOLD COAST .....	7:27
7:09 .....PERTH .....	8:09
7:52 .....SYDNEY .....	8:53
8:04 .....CANBERRA .....	9:06
8:30 .....LAUNCESTON .....	9:38
8:26 .....AUCKLAND .....	9:29
8:39 .....WELLINGTON .....	9:47
8:34 .....HOBART .....	9:44
7:30 .....BYRON BAY .....	8:28
6:55 .....SINGAPORE .....	7:47



### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD  
PARSHAS SHEMOS  
18 TEVET • 9 JANUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:28 PM
	MINCHA:	8:35 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9:10 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:49 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