

LAMPLIGHTER

12 Sivan
Parshas
Naso
1193
30 May
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah reading, Naso, contains the portion of the Sotah—a wife whose behaviour is indiscreet. A deeper examination of the concept reveals the symbolism behind the Torah's words, alluding to G-d as Husband, and the Jews as His wife.

On the verse, "If the wife of any man goes aside," our Sages comment: "One does not commit a sin unless the 'spirit of folly' has entered him."

The Hebrew word for "folly" is related to the word that means straying from the path.

With this statement our Sages sought to explain the seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon of a Jew who commits a sin.

How can such a contradictory state of affairs occur? Is not every Jew, by virtue of his G-dly soul, connected to G-d on the very deepest level? How then can he possibly allow himself to commit a transgression which separates him from his Source Above?

The answer to this is the "spirit of folly," an outside, external force that temporarily gains control and obscures the Jew's faith.

Because of this "spirit of folly," the Jew cannot perceive the true consequence of his actions—the disconnection from G-d that his sin actually causes. Were he properly aware of this at all times, the Jew could never bring himself to disobey the commandment of G-d under any circumstances.

What exactly is this "spirit of folly"?

Nothing but the desire for physical gratification, which causes a lessening in spiritual perception.

Consequently, a person imagines that nothing will happen if he commits the sin, and that he will remain just as connected to G-d as he was before. His desire for gratification blinds him to the fact that even the tiniest of infractions is detrimental to his bond with G-d.

The reverse side of this principle is that even when a Jew does sin, G-d forbid, it does not mean that the Jew himself is bad; rather, every Jew is inherently good, and his innermost desire is to obey G-d's will. It is the "spirit of folly" that is to blame, an outside factor that is incongruent with the Jew's true nature.

In the symbolic sense, G-d is referred to as the "Husband" of the Jewish people.

A Jew who commits a sin is likened to a wife whose indiscreet conduct arouses the suspicion of her husband.

The sota has not committed a sin with certainty; she has merely behaved in a manner which raises doubts. And just as the sota is rewarded when she is found to be innocent—"but if she is pure she shall conceive seed"—so too does G-d promise that every Jew will ultimately repent and return to Him, for the Jew's inner essence always remains untouched by sin.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 2

Self-Made Man?

By Yossy Goldman

"He is a self-made man who worships his creator." Who said it? About whom? It doesn't really matter as long as we make sure the description doesn't fit us.

This week's *parshah* details the offerings of the princes (*nessi'im*) of the twelve tribes at the time the *Mishkan*, the portable Sanctuary in the wilderness, was completed. Previously, towards the end of the Book of Exodus, we had read that Moses blessed the people when they finished their work. What blessing did he give them? Our sages relate that he blessed them: *May it be G-d's will that the Shechinah, the Divine Presence, should come to rest upon the work of your hands.* He also blessed them with the phrase that would become part of Psalm 90, *May the pleasantness of my L-rd, our G-d, be upon us... May He establish for us the work of our hands.*

Why pray now? Surely the time for prayer was *before* the sanctuary was built. Then it might have been needed to inspire the people to bring in their offerings and contributions, to execute the huge amount of work that was required to create this new sacred structure. But now the work is done, everything is in place. Why pray now?

The answer is that Moses understood that building G-d's sanctuary is not in our hands alone. Sure, we can erect a structure. That's the easy part. The question is: will G-d see fit to live there, to make it His home? For this, a special prayer was called for. We needed a blessing upon the work our hands.

How often people imagine that they do it themselves -- all by themselves? How many boast that they are "self-made men"? So anyone who didn't have a rich father before him is a self-made man? Do you really believe that your success is all your own doing? Your hard work, your business acumen, your clever trading technique--these are the secrets of your success?

And where did all that wisdom and ability come from? The skills and talents we possess are G-d-given gifts we should acknowledge and be grateful for. And that's not humility. It's reality. You were born with that natural talent and flair. Give credit to your Creator.

A friend was once laid up with a bad back. What happened? He picked up a little bicycle for his 5-year old. A tiny nonsense but it left him flat on his back for weeks.

I remember some years ago catching some kind of "bug" and losing my voice for quite a while. There I was, the rabbi, the preacher, the speaker and the radio personality -- the man of words whose entire profession is built around his ability to say the right thing for every occasion -- and suddenly I'm rendered absolutely speechless. Overnight, I was made useless and unproductive -- all by a tiny germ.

To get sick takes a minute, to get well can take weeks and months. We all need to remember our frailties and limitations. No matter how strong, clever or talented we may be, we are all subject to higher forces. Nobody can do it alone. There is no such thing as a self-made man.

And so Moses reminds us all that even when our work is done, we still need that blessing from Above. Even when we work hard, concoct the most intricate business schemes, or present the most wonderful proposals, ultimately our success needs a prayer. We need to recognize the hand of G-d in our lives and, hopefully, in our success. Let us do our work as best as we can and then let us not forget to ask Him to bless the work of our hands.

Slice of LIFE

In 1967, a young Lubavitcher Chassid from Australia travelled to New York to spend Shavuot with the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Brooklyn. He arrived a few days before the festival, just a short time after the outbreak of the Six Day War when the Rebbe had inaugurated the campaign to encourage all Jewish males to wrap Tefillin.

Our young Australian decided one day after morning prayers to accompany some of his peers in the new Tefillin campaign. At the last moment, before entering the waiting car, he decided to duck into the nearby grocery store to get some food to take along as he hadn't eaten anything yet that day. He grabbed a random selection of baked goods from the first shelf he saw, paid for them, and ran to the waiting car.

As they drove, he pulled out his bag to take something to eat and offered his companions some as well. Suddenly they all burst into laughter. Among the baked goods were hamantaschen! "Hamantaschen now! On the eve of Shavuot?"

The cakes and cookies disappeared quickly. Only the hamantaschen remained. How could they possibly still be edible?

After three quarters of an hour they reached their destination: a large hospital in Manhattan. There, they split into pairs and assigned themselves different wards to visit. In each one there were many Jews. They invited each Jewish man to wrap Tefillin, and most of them agreed to do so.

As the end of the time approached, the Australian and his partner went into one more room, and found that another pair of their friends was already in the room. In the room were two Jewish men. One of them accepted the offer of Tefillin right away, but the other firmly refused. He even broke into a rage, exclaiming, "I am as connected to G-d as you are."

The students tried to calm the elderly man with gentle words, but he refused to

be pacified. Indeed, their words only seemed to make him angrier. His fierce objection to the idea of performing the mitzva of Tefillin aroused their curiosity. After all, here was a man clearly very advanced in years, sick in bed in a hospital, with the name of G-d coming easily to his lips; it didn't make sense that he should refuse so adamantly to don the Tefillin. Even his roommate tried to persuade him to do it, but he wouldn't listen.

After a while they were ready to give up. Anyway, it was time to leave. Then one of them addressed the old man again, this time offering him a piece of fruit. "Here, eat this. At least you will get to recite a blessing."

The man turned his face to the wall, ignoring them. But then he suddenly swivelled in their direction and said sarcastically, "Fruit you present me? Bring me a hamantaschen and then I'll put on your precious Tefillin."

They couldn't believe their ears. As if at a signal, three pairs of eyes swung towards the visitor from Australia. A broad smile stretched across his face. Gazing fondly at the elderly patient, he replied to him, "If in order to put on Tefillin you require hamantaschen, so okay, we'll get you some hamantaschen!"

The old man stared back incredulously. "Hamantaschen now? I don't believe it!"

The other three boys said whatever they could think of to keep the ornery patient occupied. In the meantime, the Australian had already zoomed out of the room and was making his way to the hospital's parking lot.

With a broad smile, the young man took out the little package of hamantaschen from his bag, the presumably stale Purim pastries that just a short while ago had been scorned by all.

As he made his way back up the steps he wondered to himself how long a time had gone by since this elderly Jew had last wrapped Tefillin.

Re-entering the room, he went over to the patient's bed and extended to him the hamantaschen. The old man's eyes filled with tears. "Unbelievable. Simply unbelievable. Hamantaschen after Passover? Right before Shavuot? Who would have thought...?" He stretched out his hand and gingerly lifted one to his mouth. One of the yeshiva boys helped him to say the correct blessing. He closed his eyes and chewed slowly.

After, without a word being said, he rolled up the sleeve of his left arm to fulfil his side of the deal that, strangely, he himself had "proposed." When the Tefillin were on, he began to cry silently; tears were streaming down his cheeks. Nor was he the only one - there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

The young Chasidim drove back to Lubavitch World Headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn. They were filled with wonder at the extraordinary combination of events that had meshed together. The whole way back in the car they couldn't stop discussing it. Clearly everything had been arranged directly from heaven!

Before returning to Australia, the young man was able to have a private audience with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He told the Rebbe the entire story. (In fact, it is from this Australian Chassid, who wishes to remain anonymous, that we know this story). The Rebbe smiled and replied, "Nu, if that is what it takes, let someone bring him hamantaschen every day."

Translated and adapted from Sicha HaShavua by Yerachmiel Tilles, co-founder and associate director of Ascent-of-Safed, and editor of Ascent Quarterly and the AscentOfSafed.com and

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ISSUE 1193

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Lubavitcher Rebbe once wrote to one of his Chasidim: "When will you finally begin to do your part in disseminating the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov outward? Moshiach is waiting for the activities of each and every one of us in order that what Moshiach answered the Baal Shem Tov be fulfilled, that then he would come to redeem us from the exile, which is an exile both for the body and for the soul." (*Igrot Kodesh, Vol. 3*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

The following letter was written to Mr. Ernest and Mrs. Erna Weill. Erna Weill was a world-renowned sculptor.

11th of Teveth, 5720 [1960]

Greeting and Blessing:

I duly received your letter of December 21st with the enclosed reproduction of Mrs. Weill's sculptures, which are returned herewith as requested.

Although the art of sculpture is not in my domain, I, nevertheless, take the liberty of making the following observations in connection with the subject matter of our discussion when you were here, namely, with regard to the Baal-Shem-Tov.

To be sure, an artist has the prerogative of certain so-called artistic license, and may use his imagination in a work of art representing a person according to his mind, especially where no authentic likeness exists, as in the case of the Baal-Shem-Tov, for the pictures purportedly representing the Baal-Shem-Tov are not his likeness but of another one of the Baale-Shem. However, I can safely assume that in your sculpture you wished to represent in a symbolic way the ideological person, namely, the founder of the Chassidic movement. Hence, as we have touched upon the subject, though not quite adequately, it should be borne in mind that the soul of Chassidism is ecstasy and inspiration, and the ability to see even in simple material objects the Divine "Spark" and the Divine "Light" which is their true reality. Such ideas would be reflected, as might well be imagined, in rather refined facial features, which express a longing for the sublime together with profound inner spiritual strength, coupled with serenity and gentleness. Thus, one would imagine the Baal-Shem-Tov to be of a patriarchal type, with a flowing beard and, perhaps, disheveled locks of the head, crowning highly refined facial features, etc. I would also like to emphasize another feature which is characteristic for the teachings of Chassidism, namely, the interest in and tender care of the Jewish child, which could be personified in the Baal-Shem-Tov holding the hand of a small child. Incidentally, it is well-known that the Baal-Shem-Tov's first activities, even before he revealed himself, was as a teacher of very young children. Of course, the sculpture may be intended only to reproduce his head or bust, without accompanying figures.

I have no doubt that you had your own reasons for choosing to personify the Baal-Shem-Tov in your particular way, and I would like to know your motivations.

In connection with the above, I am enclosing a copy of my recent message, in which there is a reference to the work of the Baal-Shem-Tov.

I send you my prayerful wishes that the change in direction relating to your work, of which we spoke, should come about in a much easier and more gratifying way than you might expect at first.

Hoping to hear good news from you,
With blessing,

CUSTOMS CORNER

Why are three steps taken backward and forward before the silent Amidah prayer?

We take three steps backward to make sure that the four cubits around us are unoccupied. We take three steps forward for numerous reasons, among them: when a servant approaches a king, he does so with short, hesitant steps to display respect; when the priest was ready to mount the altar with the sacrifice it was necessary for him to take three steps to do so.

A WORD

from the Director

Shabbos adds an element of completion to the days of the previous week. Therefore, this Shabbos is the completion of the holiday of Shavuos, the holiday which celebrates the giving of our holy Torah.

We also see a connection between this week's Torah portion, Naso, and the holiday of Shavuos. The word "Naso" means "to lift up," and the Torah portion begins with the commandment to "lift up the heads." The Rebbe explains that this alludes to the ability of Torah study to elevate our intellectual faculties, and also that the act of fulfilling the mitzvot can be further elevated through Torah study.

How should we approach our Torah study?

The Torah, itself, states, "On this day, the children of Israel came to Mount Sinai." It should have said "on that day." But using the phrase "on this day" teaches us that we regard the Torah as if it were just given to us "on this day," that we should learn Torah with joy and enthusiasm, as if we have just received it.

The giving of the Torah is also connected to this week's chapter of Pirkei Avot, which begins, "Moses received the Torah from Sinai and conveyed it..." This verse teaches us how the Torah was first brought down to this world and continues to be passed from one generation to the next.

The chapter then goes on to state how the Torah continually influences the world at large, with the verse, "The world stands on three things, on Torah, on Divine Service, and on deeds of kindness." The ultimate purpose of the world is to make it a dwelling place for G-d. It is through these three things - Torah study, serving G-d, and acts of kindness - that this will occur.

We hope and pray that we will soon be blessed with the coming of Moshiach, who will lead us into a world that is truly a dwelling place for G-d.

J. I. Guttentag

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Zevulun, a wealthy Jewish merchant, lived in Babylonia. His son, Naftali, was gifted with a brilliant mind. When he became old enough, Zevulun sent him to Jerusalem to study under the guidance of one of the great sages of Israel.

Soon after Naftali began studying with the great scholar Rabbi Eliezer, misfortune befell his father in Babylonia. Rather than interrupt his son's studies, Zevulun used the strength and time he had left to settle his affairs. He made out his will in a manner worthy of a man of his wisdom and piety. He gave a large part to charitable institutions. The remaining possessions, gold, silver, jewels, estates, ships and merchandise, he left to his old slave, Samura. The only clause in the will was that Samura had to permit Naftali to select one object from all his possessions for himself.

After Zevulun's passing, his friends were shocked to find out the contents of the will. In vain they searched for the motive of Zevulun's disregard for his young son whom he had loved so much, and who was diligently studying Torah with his father's approval. This was certainly not the proper reward for the youth. While Naftali concentrated on his studies, ignorant of the double misfortune that had befallen him, the old slave Samura inherited Zevulun's wealth and property.

As for Samura, instead of living a life of extravagance and luxury with his newly acquired wealth, he spent his time making cautious investment and furtherance of the business.

One day, a man knocked at the door of Naftali's study. To his surprise, there stood a fellow Babylonian who gave him a letter. "I have been asked to wait for your signature and reply," he said.

Naftali opened the sealed message and was shaken when he read the news of his beloved father's passing. If his dear father was destined to die, at least he, his only son, could have made his last hours happier with his presence. "Why wasn't I notified?" he cried to himself. When Naftali recovered somewhat from the shock, he continued to read the long letter from his father's friend. Imagine his surprise when he found out about Zevulun's will. He cared not so much about the lost wealth, as he did about the possibility that he had precipitated such an estrangement from his father.

While he was mourning his double loss, his great teacher, Rabbi Eliezer, entered the room to comfort him. Silently, he sat down by the side of his heartbroken pupil. Naftali showed the great sage the letter.

Rabbi Eliezer took his time reading every word of the letter. Having finished, he put it aside and thought for a while. Then, to Naftali's surprise, a happy smile lit up the scholar's face, and his wise, old eyes beamed at his student.

"Blessed is G-d who gives wisdom and understanding to His servants," he exclaimed. "My son, be happy and joyful. Your father's love and care reaches even beyond the grave. Know that the very will which you thought had deprived you of your father's love and possessions,

proves his infinite concern for you. In his wisdom, he protected and made safe his huge wealth for you."

Naftali did not immediately grasp what had given Rabbi Eliezer this idea. But when his teacher asked him to who - according to Jewish law - belonged the possessions of a slave, Naftali understood. "To his master, of course," replied Naftali.

"During your absence, servants and managers might easily have done great harm to your inheritance," began Rabbi Eliezer. "Knowing Samura's capabilities and good character, your wise father made him temporary heir, so that he take proper care of the business until your return. Then, as provided by the clause in the will, you would choose the slave as the one object that you select for yourself. Automatically, all of Samura's possessions will be yours, according to the law."

Thirty days later, Naftali arrived in Babylonia and legally succeeded to the huge wealth of his father by selecting Samura as his inheritance. In appreciation of the good slave's services, he freed him and made him manager and adviser, with full powers to carry on, as if the business were his own. They remained good friends and successful business partners. Thus, Zevulun's wise will had, indeed, completely cared for and protected his beloved son beyond his grave.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

When a man or a woman pronounce the special vow of a nazir...to abstain from wine and strong drink...no razor shall pass over his head...he shall not come near a dead body... all the days of his abstinence is he holy to G-d (Num. 6:2-8)

The laws of a Nazarite teach us a most significant principle about our belief in the coming of Moshiach: Torah law decrees that if one declares on a weekday, "I undertake to become a Nazarite on the day that Moshiach will come," he is bound by it from that very moment. This clearly shows that Moshiach can arrive at any moment, as we say in our daily prayers, "Every day we hope for Your salvation." (*Peninei HaGeula*)

The L-rd bless you and guard you. The L-rd make His countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you. The L-rd turn his countenance toward you and grant you peace (Num. 6:24-26)

The priestly blessing is in the singular tense, directed to each and every individual Jew. For the most important blessing they can receive is unity, that they join together as one person with one heart. (*Olelot Efraim*)

This special blessing was uttered by the priests in the Holy Temple and continues to be invoked by Kohanim in synagogues today, but with one significant difference: In the Holy Temple, the Kohanim would actually pronounce G-d's ineffable Name, indicative of the sublime level of holiness that was brought down by their blessing, whereas today we are forbidden to do so. When Moshiach comes Kohanim will return to their former practice, at which time the power of the blessing itself will be even greater than during the time of the Holy Temple. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Parshat Mishpatim, 5752-1992*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 29 MAY 2015

BEGINS	ENDS
4.53MELBOURNE	5.53
4.55ADELAIDE	5.54
4.44BRISBANE	5.39
6.10DARWIN	7.01
4.41GOLD COAST	5.37
5.03PERTH	6.00
4.38SYDNEY	5.35
4.43CANBERRA	5.41
4.34LAUNCESTON	5.37
4.56AUCKLAND	5.56
4.44WELLINGTON	5.47
4.29HOBART	5.33
4.39BYRON BAY	5.35
6.49SINGAPORE	7.41



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS NASO • 11 SIVAN • 29 MAY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:53 PM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:30 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:51 AM
	MINCHA:	4:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:53 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	8:00 AM
		9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	MAARIV:	6:45 PM & 9:00 PM