

LAMPLIGHTER

12 Tishrei
Parshas
Ha'azinu
1210

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

At the very end of this week's Torah portion, Haazinu, G-d commands Moses, saying, "On that selfsame day...go up the mountain Abarim, Mount Nebo...and die on the mountain." G-d was declaring His intention to take Moses and that "he who had power to protest--could come and protest."

Indeed the Children of Israel did not receive the news of Moses' imminent passing with equanimity, and decided to try to prevent it from happening. They wailed, "We will not relinquish the one who led us out of Egypt, split the sea, gave us meat and gave us the Torah!"

It would seem that the Jews were in open rebellion against G-d, yet, if we examine the situation further, we see that they really thought that preventing Moses' death was G-d's will!

The generation of Jews about to enter the Land of Israel were righteous and good individuals, as it states, "And you are the ones who cleave unto G-d." Why then did they think that by preventing Moses from ascending the mountain they could prevent his death, and, furthermore, that they would actually be doing a mitzva?

Their rationale was the following: According to the Torah itself, one must not be ungrateful for good which is done. Did not Moses do all these wonderful things for us, that we are not obligated to do everything possible for him? The command to go up the mountain was given to him--not to us! Perhaps in this way G-d was giving us an opportunity to intervene by not letting him leave us and go up the mountain to die. If we prevent his dying, then the decree that Moses pass away will be averted and then he will surely lead us into the Promised Land!

The Jews were therefore not rebelling against G-d, but had rather interpreted G-d's command to mean that they should actively intervene for Moses' sake. They thought they had been given the chance to avert the decree, as we find that this is often true in other instances.

In the case of Moses, however, this was not to take place, and he did indeed pass away. We must therefore conclude that his death was somehow beneficial for the Jewish People, as even their self-sacrifice and efforts to forestall it did not avail.

Our Sages explain that it was absolutely necessary that Moses not enter the Land of Israel. G-d foresaw that the Jews would one day be exiled from their Land, and if Moses had entered Israel, their subsequent exile would have been impossible.

Yet this very exile is also interpreted as a positive event. When, in later years, the Children of Israel did not heed the words of the Torah and incurred G-d's wrath, it was only "wood and stones" (the Holy Temple) which bore the brunt of G-d's anger. The Jewish People were afforded the opportunity to go into exile, where they could do teshuva and eventually be returned to their Land, speedily in our day.

Spirit and Matter

By Tali Loewenthal

Our lives tend to be divided between spirit and matter, the sacred and the everyday.

The dichotomy between spirit and matter, or Heaven and Earth, is also expressed at the beginning of this week's Torah reading, *Haazinu*, which takes the form of a long poem. Moses is the leader of the Jewish people, filled with love for them, yet also seeing with pain the long and tortuous history they would experience. He warns them about the mistakes they might make in their relationship with G-d. Speaking dramatically to the Jewish people, Moses begins by addressing Heaven and Earth. Rashi tells us that he was calling them as witnesses to his words of warning which follow.

Moses says, "Give ear, Heavens, and I will speak; listen, Earth, to the words of my mouth."

Hebrew is a deeply poetic language which makes it difficult to translate into English. It has nuances which the English sometimes cannot convey at all. The Sages comment that the word *haazinu*, translated as "give ear" (*ozen* means ear) suggests a close proximity. If someone is standing next to you, you can speak right into their ear. By contrast, the word translated as "listen" suggests a greater distance, as if calling to someone who is far away.

Moses uses the closer term when he addresses the Heavens, and the more distant term when speaking to the earth. The Sages point out that Moses was a very spiritual person, and, therefore, in his case the Heavens were very close. By contrast, as far as he was concerned, the earth and all material concerns were further away.

Now, what about us? Does the Torah reveal this aspect of Moses just to impress us with how holy he was, or is there a teaching which is also relevant for our lives?

There is a Chassidic idea that within each individual in the Jewish people there is a spark of Moses. This is our deepest aspect. In relation to this inner Moses, in our case too, the Heaven is closer than the Earth.

One moment. Isn't our task as human beings and as Jews to reveal G-dliness in the world? Surely we *have* to be immersed in the material concerns of daily life? The Chassidic answer is: "yes, but they do not have to get you down!" Indeed we are active in the world. But *at the same time* we have a close affinity with Heaven. Hence Moses' words are directly relevant for us too. We are active in the world but, in a deep sense, we are not limited by it.

This very idea is expressed in the approaching Sukkot festival. The *sukkah* represents our everyday home and everyday life. At the same time, it is a spiritual realm. One of the teachings of Sukkot is that yes, we are in a material world. But at every step we have the power to make it holy.

Slice of LIFE

About ten years ago a rich Israeli businessman named Ohad (fictitious) was on the top of the world. He was a self-made-man who loved himself, saying; "My talents and strength gave me all these riches (Deut. 8:17)," and he seemed to be right ... until Hungary.

One of the most grandiose building projects of all time in Israel, the Azreali business complex in Tel Aviv, was nearing its completion and Ohad was given an opportunity to purchase the entire top floor! It would cost him several tens of millions of dollars but he had the money, or could easily borrow what was lacking and it looked like a promising investment. He examined all sides of the deal with his lawyers, took a lot of advice and was about to say yes until one of his best friends came up with a better investment.

"What?" His friend exclaimed. "For the same money you can buy not just one floor but ten complete offices buildings in Hungary! And the economy there is on the rise! In just two years you can have your entire investment back, and after that, pure profits! Get in on it now before it's too late. It's a sure thing!"

To make a long and painful story short, Ohad took his friend's advice, dropped the Azrieli idea, invested all he had in Hungary and within a few months, he had lost it all. In just months every penny he had saved and slaved for was gone. Even after he liquidated all his assets and sold his house to pay his debts he still owed seventeen thousand shekels to the Israeli Revenue Service.

At first he even tried to deny it saying. "After all, that's business; right? Ups and downs! It will pass! Soon I'll be on the top again."

But reality began creeping up on him when he tried to get those 17,000 shekels. He soon discovered that his old friends weren't as friendly as before. Doors that he used to lock were now locked before him and people weren't returning his phone calls. With no collateral, the banks refused to loan him money on any terms. He was getting desperate when an old

friend returned one of his calls. "Ohad, how are you? I hear you're looking for a loan. Come up and see me, whatever you want I'll try to help."

But as irony would have it, this friend's office was nowhere other than the 49th floor of the Azrieli center. Ohad took the elevator to his friend's office, signed for the loan, put the bills in his inside coat pocket and exited the office to the corridor.

The door closed behind him and he was alone, it was quiet with only soft recorded music coming through the small ubiquitous speakers. Ohad began to realize the irony of it; this whole place could have been his. After a few minutes of strolling he noticed a set of stairs leading up to a large metal door, which he ascended and opened the door. A cold autumn wind blew into his face. It was the door leading to the roof. He went out.

From here he could see far into the distance; the Judean hills in one direction, the vast Mediterranean sea on the other. He just stood there, thinking and trying to enjoy the weather when suddenly a loud thud behind him broke his thoughts; a quick glance revealed that the wind slammed the door shut.

Ohad went to the door and tried to open it but it seemed to be locked. He began to pound on the door and when that didn't work, to kick at it. For sure someone would hear. But no one did. The wind was getting stronger and colder now and he wasn't really dressed for this. He still had a good hour before dark; people were probably still in their offices so he pounded, kicked and yelled but there was no response.

He had to work fast. He went to the edge of the building, peered over the small protective fence and began waving his arms and yelling to the people far below which was totally futile. There was no way that anyone would notice him from 49 floors below. But he had to remain calm. It was his only chance.

Suddenly he had an idea. He had 17,000 shekels in his pocket. For sure if he threw a 200 shekel note down people would look up to see where it was coming from and see him. He pulled out a stack of bills, removed one, looked over the fence

and threw it. He watched as it floated crazily in the wind and finally landed on the other side of the street. Someone stopped, bent down, picked it up and continued walking.

This time he took out five bills, 1,000 altogether and let them drop... but no one noticed them until they hit the ground, then they picked them up, looked around for more and kept going. In desperation, he took all the money from his pocket, tore the band that held it neatly in a pack and threw it below. With his last optimism he gazed as it scattered far below him. But he couldn't believe his eyes; not only did no one look up or hear his cries for help; they were all arguing down there about who saw which bill first!

Ohad's eyes filled with tears, suddenly he felt small, he needed help. He was sure that G-d would help him. A second ago he didn't even believe in the existence of G-d but now it was obvious to him, he wasn't alone.

He yelled out, "G-d! Help me!"

As he looked forlornly around the roof, he noticed a few small pebbles. He took a handful, said a prayer, threw it over the side and looked down again. Sure enough, people began cursing; looking up pointing and screaming at him. In just moments the door burst open, police with guns drawn stormed through, put handcuffs on him and took him to the station. He was saved.

It took some serious explaining. Luckily no one was really hurt from his pebbles and, of course, he lost the 17,000 shekel owed the taxes. But after a short while they accepted his story and let him out.

But he said that it was well worth it. For the first time in his life he got a good look at how foolish he had been; the people on the street taught him. They were just like him; all the time money was raining down they never looked up, only down for more. But as soon as they started feeling the pebbles, they looked up to see where it was coming from. Ohad never looked up when he had money; he felt he was G-d incarnate. But when he began to hurt he realized he needed help to change.

He began taking classes in Judaism and today is a totally observant Jew.

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ISSUE 1210

MOSHIACH MATTERS

"The voice of the herald brings good tidings and proclaims: The means and the time of redemption have been appointed! Arise those who are buried in the earth; awake and jubilate, those who dwell in the dust! When Moshiach will be established as king in Jerusalem, the populous city, the L-rd will be a tower of salvation to him."



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

B"H,
the first day of *Chol HaMoed Suktos*, 5705

Greetings and blessings,

We received your letter and the text of your lecture concerning the publications of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, at the appropriate time. We ask your forgiveness for the fact that because of the large burden of work - particularly at the beginning of the new school term - our reply was delayed until the present. Enclosed is a reply from the editorial board of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and the thanks of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch for the attention that you gave our work and us. I hope that you will use the power of your great influence to broaden the circle of those who study and read the publications of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch.

To conclude with a matter relevant to these days between Yom Kippur and Suktos: The *Maharil* writes: Directly after Yom Kippur, every person should be occupied with making his *sukkah*. For the days of *teshuvah* have been completed. On the first day where there is the possibility of sin, heaven forbid, he should first begin with [involvement in] a *mitzvah*. The germ of this concept is quoted by the *Rama* (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 624:5*).

There is a deep concept alluded to here. When a person has repented for his past conduct and he is concerned that he will not sin in the future, the advice given him is: Occupy yourself with a *sukkah*.

The following mistaken approaches are the most common causes for an upright person to sin:

- a) One thinks that the Torah and its *mitzvos* are relegated for specific times during the day and afterwards, he may do whatever he wants;
- b) One thinks that the Torah and its *mitzvos* are applicable only to one of a person's limbs: his head (according to the understanding of *Mussar*, that Torah [study] is sufficient) or the heart ("G-d desires the heart." [In this instance, one might error and think that] the actual observance of the *mitzvos* is only secondary and not fundamentally important).

When one focuses one's thought on the *mitzvah* of *sukkah*, the first *mitzvah* which follows the granting of atonement for our sins, one will see that one must dwell in the *sukkah* as one lives in one's home (*Sukkah 26a*). For the *mitzvah* is a person's dwelling. It encompasses his entire body from his feet until his head, including his garments and utensils as well.

With holiday blessings and blessings for a *g'mar tov*,
Rabbi Menachem Schneerson

CUSTOMS CORNER

Building the Sukkah

1. One should try to begin building the Sukkah immediately after Yom Kippur so that he goes one from one *mitzvah* to another.
2. One should try to personally be involved in the construction of his Sukkah. If one is unable to build a Sukkah on their own and has someone else do it for them, it is proper to have the one building it to at least leave off a small amount of S'chach for the owner of the Sukkah to put up by himself.
3. Although it is permitted for any person to place the S'chach, it is preferable to be stringent and have an adult Jewish male place it on the Sukkah.
4. If a Sukkah was set up with the S'chach from before 30 days before Suktos and it wasn't made for the purpose of the *mitzvah* of Suktos one must change or improve one thing (such as putting down S'chach) of an area at least 10cm by 10cm. However, if it was made within 30 days of Suktos or was made for the express purpose of Suktos it is fit even without any change. However, if the Sukkah was originally built for Suktos and stands unchanged year to year it requires some change the each year. This is only if the S'chach was put in advance but if just the walls were put up in advance and not the S'chach, there is no issue.

A WORD

from the Director

The thirteenth of Tishrei, is the Yahrzeit of the fourth Rebbe of Chabad, Rabbi Shmuel, known as the Rebbe Maharash.

There is a Chassidic aphorism known as L'chatchila Ariber. More than a saying, it is a way of life. The fourth Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel, put it this way:

"The world says that if you cannot bend down and pass under an obstacle, then you have no choice but to leap over it. However, I say L'chatchila Ariber! I say, do not even try to bend down and pass under it; always leap over it."

Once, the Rebbe Maharash was speaking with one of his chasidim, a simple businessman who was neither a great scholar nor one who meditated at length when praying. The Rebbe said to this chasid, "Elye, I envy you. You travel to various fairs; you meet many people. Sometimes, in the middle of a business transaction, you get into a warm discussion about something Jewish and you awaken the other fellow's interest in studying more about Judaism. This causes joy On High and G-d rewards such 'trade' with the blessings of children, health and sustenance; the larger the fair, the more work there is and the greater is the livelihood earned."

The Rebbe was not spouting platitudes, nor being patronizing. He truly envied this simple Jew who, through injecting Judaism into his business affairs, transcended the mundane.

The Rebbe Maharash's comment was not addressed to a Torah scholar, or a person who was well known for his contemplation during his G-dly service. No, the Rebbe Maharash was speaking with a simple Jew. The lesson of his words, therefore is even more powerful, for they apply to each and every Jew, from the simplest to the greatest.

We should continually increase our Jewish knowledge, day by day. But, we needn't wait until we are great Torah scholars before we imbue our lives and each activity within our day with a higher purpose. For we can arouse the envy of even the greatest tzadikim by just getting into a warm discussion about Jewish matters even in the middle of a business transaction!

As is befitting this season of rejoicing - the Suktos and Simchat Torah holidays which are quickly approaching -- and our fulfillment of this mission should be infused with joy.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz was a spiritual giant in his generation. At first his greatness was mostly unknown to his contemporaries, but he had no regrets; indeed, it suited him just fine. He spent his days and most of his nights in Torah study, prayer and meditation. Rarely was he interrupted.

But then, word began to spread, perhaps from fellow disciples of the Baal Shem Tov, that Rav Pinchas was very, very special. People began to visit him on a regular basis, seeking his guidance, requesting his support, asking for his prayers, and beseeching his blessing. The more he helped them, the more they came. The trickle to his door became a stream, and the stream became a night-and-day constant flood of increased knocks at his door and outpourings of personal stories and requests for help.

Rav Pinchas was bewildered. He felt he was no longer serving G-d properly, because he no longer had sufficient time to study, pray and meditate as he should. He didn't know what to do. He needed more privacy and less distraction, but how could he turn away dozens, and even hundreds, of people who genuinely felt that he could help them? How could he convince them to seek elsewhere, to others more willing and qualified than he?

Then he had an idea. He would pray for heavenly help in the matter. "Let G-d arrange it that people not be attracted to seek me out!" he thought. Let G-d make him be despicable in the eyes of his fellows!

"A tzaddik decrees and Heaven agrees," they say. Rav Pinchas prayed, and so it was. In a short time, no longer did people visit him. Not only that, on those occasions when he went to town, he was met with averted heads and a chilly atmosphere.

Rav Pinchas didn't mind at all. Indeed, he was delighted; now he had all the time he could desire for study, prayer and meditation. The old pattern was restored, and rarely was he interrupted. No one was coming to him to seek his guidance, request his prayers or beseech his blessing.

Then the Days of Awe—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur—passed, and there remained only four brief busy days to prepare for the Sukkot festival. Usually (or rather, every year until now), there had always been some *yeshivah* students or local townspeople who were only too glad to help the pious rabbi construct his *sukkah*. But this time, not a single soul arrived. No one liked him, so no one even thought to help him.

Not being handy in these matters, the rabbi didn't know what to do. Finally, having no choice, he was forced to hire a non-Jew to build his *sukkah* for him. But the gentile did not possess the tools that were needed, and Rav Pinchas could not get a single Jew in the neighborhood to lend him tools because they disliked him so much. In the end, his wife had to go to borrow them, and even that was difficult to accomplish due to the prevailing attitude towards her husband. With just a few hours remaining till the onset of the festival, they finally managed to complete a flimsy minimal structure.

As the sun slid between the forest branches and the *rebbeztin* lit the festive candles, Rav Pinchas hurried off to *shul*. He always made a point to attend the congregational prayers on the holidays; besides, he didn't want to miss the opportunity to acquire a guest for the festival meal, something so integral to the essence of the holiday.

In those days in Europe, people desiring an invitation to a meal would stand in the back of the *shul* upon the completion of the prayers. The householders would then invite them upon their way out, happy to so easily accomplish the mitzvah of hospitality. Rav Pinchas, unfortunately, did not find it so simple. Even those without a place to eat turned him down without a second thought. Eventually, everyone who needed a place and everyone who wanted a guest were satisfied, except for

the *tzaddik*, Rav Pinchas.

He trudged home alone, saddened and a bit shaken up at the realization that he might never have another guest, not even for the special festive meal of the first night of Sukkot. Alas, that too was part of the price of his freedom... It was worth it, wasn't it?

Pausing just inside the entrance to his *sukkah*, he began to chant the traditional invitation to the *ushpizin*, the "seven heavenly guests" who visit every Jewish *sukkah*. Although not many are privileged to actually see these exalted visitors, Rav Pinchas was definitely one of the select few who had this exalted experience on an annual basis. This year, he raised his eyes and saw the Patriarch Abraham, the first of the *ushpizin* and therefore the honored guest for the first night, standing outside the door of the *sukkah*, maintaining a distance.

Rav Pinchas cried out to him in anguish: "Father Abraham! Why do you not enter my *sukkah*? What is my sin?"

Replied the patriarch: "I am the embodiment of *chesed*, serving G-d through deeds of lovingkindness. Hospitality was my specialty. I will not join a festival table where there are no guests."

The crestfallen Rav Pinchas quickly reordered his priorities. He prayed that everything be restored to as it had been, and that he should find favor in the eyes of his fellow Jews exactly as before. Again, his prayer was answered. Within a few days, throngs of people were again finding their way to his door, seeking his guidance, asking his support, requesting his prayers and beseeching his blessing. No longer could he devote all, or even most, of his time to his Torah study, his prayer and his meditation. But thanks to his holy Sukkot guest, this was no longer seen as a problem.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

"...he, and Hoshea the son of Nun" (32:44).

Why was Joshua (Yehoshua) referred to here by his original name, Hoshea? To inform us that although he was being given a position of greatness as the successor of Moses, he did not become egotistical or overbearing. He remained the same as always. (*Rashi*)

Of the Rock that bore you were you unmindful; and you forgot the G-d who bore you (Deut. 32:10)

When G-d created man He gave him the gift of being "unmindful" - the ability to forget and allow time to heal the wounds which would befall him in this world. But, G-d claims, what did you do with this gift? You missed used it, and forgot about me! (*Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk*)

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; O earth, the words of my mouth (Deut. 32:1)

Our Sages stated: "The words of every individual who has fear of heaven will be obeyed." Moses, who possessed tremendous fear of heaven, first called upon the celestial spheres to listen to him. The lower, human realm would then follow and obey automatically. (*Rabbi Avraham Yaakov of Sadigora*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS HA'AZINU • 12 TISHREI • 25 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING: MINCHA: KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6.00 PM 6.05 PM 6.35 PM
SHABBOS	SHACHARIS: LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: MINCHA: SHABBOS ENDS:	10.00 AM 9.07 AM 5.55 PM 6.58 PM
SUN: EREV SUKKOS	SHACHARIS: CANDLE LIGHTING: MINCHA: MAARIV:	8.00 AM / 9.15 AM 6.02 PM 6.10 PM 6.50 PM
MON: 1 ST DAY SUKKOS	SHACHARIS: MINCHA: MAARIV: CANDLE LIGHTING:	10.00 AM 6.05 PM 6.50 PM after 7.00 PM
TUES: 2 ND DAY SUKKOS:	SHACHARIS: MINCHA: MAARIV: YOM TOV ENDS / MAARIV:	10.00 AM 6.05 PM 6.50 PM 7.01 PM
REST OF THE WEEK	SHACHARIS: MINCHA: MAARIV:	8.00 AM / 9.15 PM 6.10 PM 6.55 PM / 9.00 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 SEPTEMBER 2015

SHABBOS		FIRST DAY SUKKOT	SECOND DAY SUKKOT
Begins 25th	Ends 26th	Begins 27th	Ends 29th
6.00	6.58	MELBOURNE 6.02	7.00 7.01
5.56	6.52	ADELAIDE 5.57	6.54 6.54
5.27	6.20	BRISBANE 5.28	6.21 6.22
6.25	7.14	DARWIN 6.25	7.14 7.14
5.26	6.19	GOLD COAST 5.27	6.20 6.20
5.56	6.51	PERTH 5.58	6.53 6.53
5.35	6.31	SYDNEY 5.36	6.32 6.33
5.44	6.40	CANBERRA 5.45	6.42 6.43
5.53	6.53	LAUNCESTON 5.55	6.55 6.56
6.01	6.59	AUCKLAND 7.03	8.00 8.01
6.02	7.02	WELLINGTON 7.04	8.04 8.05
5.52	6.53	HOBART 5.54	6.56 6.57
5.25	6.18	BYRON BAY 5.26	6.19 6.20

*Light after time specified on the 28th from a pre-existing flame only

