

# LAMPLIGHTER

24 Cheshvan  
Parshas  
Chayei Sarah  
**1216**  
6 November  
5776/2015

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The end of this week's Torah portion, Chayei Sara, tells of the passing of Abraham and the order of succession of his descendants: "And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac." Isaac, Abraham's only son from his beloved wife Sara, was chosen to continue the new path he had forged in the service of G-d. The children of Abraham's concubines, however, received only a token of their father's wealth: "But to the sons of the concubines...Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son. "Isaac was designated his father's heir, despite being younger than Ishmael and the others.

This week's Haftara contains a similar incident that occurred toward the end of King David's life. When Adoniyahu, David's eldest son, sought to usurp his father's throne, Batsheva reminded David of the oath he had made that Solomon, the younger son, would reign. King David agreed to honor the oath and Batsheva declared, "May my lord, the King David, live forever!"

What is the significance of both these choices? When Abraham designated Isaac his heir, he thereby bestowed upon him the special relationship he enjoyed with G-d, the essential "chosenness" he would pass on to his children after him. Abraham's choice of Isaac allowed every Jew to acquire that same eternal bond with G-d as his birthright, an immutable bond that can never be severed.

Similarly, Batsheva's declaration, "May my lord, the King David, live forever!" is an expression of G-d's promise that "the kingship will never be cut off from the progeny of David." Dominion over the Jewish people belongs solely to the descendants of King David through his son Solomon, ultimately one of whom is King Moshiach.

The common thread between these two incidents is the underlying principle that the actions of an immutable G-d are eternal and unchanging. Just as G-d Himself experiences no change, so too are His choices fixed and immutable. Batsheva's declaration, "May my lord, the King David, live forever!" will find ultimate fulfillment when King Moshiach arises and ushers in the Final Redemption.

Indeed, we find that the wholeness of the Jewish people is connected to the concept of kingship, for it was only after King David's descendants were chosen to rule that the Jewish nation was at peace, the Holy Temple was built in Jerusalem and G-d's Divine Presence dwelt in the Holy Temple. Likewise, the Final Redemption of the Jewish people will only commence when the ultimate King of the House of David arises, to initiate the Ingathering of the Exiles and build the final and indestructible Third Holy Temple, speedily in our day.

*Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher*

## What's On Your Business Card?

*By Levi Avtzon*

Meet the main protagonist of this week's Torah portion: Eliezer. A majority of the reading discusses his venture to find a wife for Isaac, his boss's son. The Torah describes in relative length the drama of the Torah's first recorded matchmaking effort.

Throughout the narrative, Eliezer encounters miracles in abundance: obstacles disappear from his path, and his prayers are answered instantly. Nevertheless, what is striking is that his ego remains in check; not once in the story does the Torah even mention his name, instead referring to him as "the servant of Abraham."

Later, when he finds The Girl, he sets up an official meeting with her parents in order to ask for her hand in marriage. They ask him to speak.

What are the first words that exit his mouth? Eved Avraham anochi. "I am Abraham's servant." And then he goes on to lavish praise on his boss.

No name, no identity, no "Harvard Grad '86, Yale '89, fed the starving in Albania in '97, joined the March for the Homeless 2000, top executive in a Fortune 500 company, board member at the local JCC, plays golf to support the local Hadassah chapter, and has a wonderful relationship with his three exes..."

He could have boasted about the fact that he was "in" with one of the most powerful and perhaps the most popular man alive. He could have sung his own accomplishments and credentials. He could have just said, "I am Abraham's right hand man, and I even provide the gossip columnists with tons of material about him, of course under anonymity..."

But nothing of that. It is not about him; it never was about him.

The Midrash tells a fascinating tidbit about Eliezer. He had a daughter, whom he deeply wished would marry Isaac. When he broached the subject to his boss, Abraham responded: "I am blessed and you are cursed [Eliezer was a descendant of Canaan, who was cursed by Noah]. And the blessed don't marry the cursed."

Imagine hearing such words from your boss... Chances are you would tender your resignation papers that afternoon, then open a competing business next door...

Not Eliezer. Not only didn't he quit, but he actually went on the mission to find Isaac a wife! Could you believe that? He didn't say, "Oh please, I'll do any other job, but this mission is a bit too sensitive for me..." He went with his whole heart.

And when asked for his identity, he stands up and proclaims, "I am Abraham's servant!"

It never was about him or his business card. It was about fulfilling the wishes of his master.

If only we could take this lesson to heart...

After all, don't we all have a Master?

# Slice of LIFE

## The Rebbe's Blessings

By Tzvi Jacobs

Esther and I were married for 2 1/2 years before we had our first baby. It often happens that couples have to wait a while, and our story would be more dramatic if we were married for 10 years or more without being able to have children. Still, our story is unusual.

We had heard many stories and even had friends who had trouble either conceiving or carrying a baby to term, and after receiving a blessing and sometimes also advice from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, they had at least one baby. With those stories in mind, I went to Crown Heights in September, 1988. It was a pleasant Sunday afternoon and hundreds of people were in a long line waiting to see the Rebbe.

A black limousine pulled up in front of the house, and I overheard that some politicians from New York were arriving. An official escorted them straight in to receive a blessing and seek the Rebbe's advice on an important political issue.

The line didn't move for about 30 minutes. I became unsure if I should ask the Rebbe for a blessing. Should I make the Rebbe, who had been fasting and standing all day and would continue to do so until he met and blessed the final person who got in line, stand and fast for even five seconds longer?

As I looked back at the rapidly growing line, I spotted one of my Yeshiva teachers. "Should I ask the Rebbe for a blessing for a baby?" I asked.

"Sure you should ask," he answered me, erasing all my doubts.

The line started moving. My heart started beating harder. The Rebbe is an

awesome figure. He is a man, but people say the Rebbe has the superhuman ability to see into anyone's soul, even someone on the other side of the globe who has never seen or even heard about the Rebbe.

Finally, I made it into the Rebbe's home. The line was moving quickly. It was my turn. "Blessing for baby," I blurted out nervously.

"Amen. In a good and auspicious time," the Rebbe said. He spoke with a clear, strong voice while handing me a second dollar bill.

By December Esther was suspicious. She went to the doctor and the results were positive. We were pregnant. We were ecstatic. But about a week later, the nurse told us the fetal proteins level was high and they wanted to do an amniocentesis to find out more and, if need be, G-d forbid, recommend an abortion. But Judaism does not allow for abortions for such reasons. The doctor's staff was pushing for the amniocentesis, but we called back and said, "No thanks."

Only then did I find out that high fetal protein was indicative of Down's syndrome. I didn't tell Esther immediately what I had found out.

The following evening we went to Crown Heights for a friend's wedding and I broke down and told Esther. We were both crying.

The "siren" sounded meaning that the Rebbe was going to say a short public discourse after which the Rebbe gave out dollars for people to give to charity. We got into the line. I couldn't say anything to the Rebbe. I tried to believe that all this was a test from G-d and that it was really a big blessing. I would have to write a letter to the Rebbe. Esther had gone through the women's line and was already waiting for me in the car.

"The Rebbe said, 'Mazal tov' to me," Esther said. "How did he know that I'm pregnant?"

"I thought the Rebbe says 'mazal

tov' only after a baby is born," I said.

"I know. I was starting to doubt that I heard him right. And then when I got into the car I saw was the back cover of this magazine."

It was a picture of a pregnant woman headlined, "Saying mazal tov is not enough." The advertisement then explained that a pregnant woman should have the "shir hama'alos" card in the delivery room, as a protection against any harm to the mother or newborn baby. It's a custom from Kabala and strongly encouraged by the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

"Everything is going to be all right, Esti," I said. The Rebbe saying "mazal tov" calmed us down a lot. We just had normal worries and fears throughout the rest of the pregnancy. On Sunday night, May 9, Esther went into labor. At about 20 past midnight we drove to the Morristown hospital and went straight to maternity. At 12:55 a.m. the nurse called out, "Congratulations! It's a girl. A beautiful baby girl."

By the way, you can be sure that when we went into that delivery room, we had our "shir hama'alos--saying 'mazal tov' is not enough" cards--one for the mother, one for the baby, and a spare for the expectant father.

Esther was so happy and thankful to be a mother--and to have such a healthy, adorable baby--that she wrote a thank-you note to the Rebbe about four months after Chaya Mushka Bracha was born. While writing the letter, Esther saw a friend walk past. She was still childless. So Esther added a note at the end of her letter: "May the Rebbe please give Leah bas Sara a blessing to have a baby."

Our Sages teach that when you pray for someone else, G-d blesses the one who prayed for his fellow first. Three months later both Esther and her friend were expecting. Our Nechama Dina was born within two weeks of Leah's baby.

I hope that this one little story gives you some insight into who the Rebbe is.

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Editor: Ovadya Rogalsky & Tzali Reicher  
P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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ISSUE 1216

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

On the verse, "Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it," Rashi writes: "Take heed to remember the Sabbath day constantly, so that if you encounter something special [such as a delicacy, in the course of the week], set it aside for Shabbat." The same applies to the future Redemption. Even when we are still in the weekdays of the exile, we should constantly keep in mind and prepare for the Redemption, for the day which is described as "entirely Shabbat and repose for life everlasting." (The Rebbe, 11 Sivan, 5744-1984, From Exile to Redemption)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Beginning of Marcheshvan, 5734 (1973)

Note: This letter was written three weeks after the Yom Kippur War. This year 5776 is a Hakhel year.

... The month of Tishrei ushers in the new year.

In particular, it is the festivals of this month that provide the resources - spiritual powers and material means - to accomplish the above [to fulfill the imperative, "All your actions should be for the sake of heaven," and "Know Him in all your ways."

Inasmuch as all matters of the Torah are meaningful in all their details, how much more so such a comprehensive matter relating to Tishrei.

It is significant that all the festivals of the month of Tishrei are "sealed" with the Season of our Rejoicing and Simchas Torah.

This pointedly re-emphasizes the explicit commandment, "Serve G-d with joy," - with true joy derived from G-d's Torah and G-d's precepts that "rejoice the heart."

What has been said above regarding the meaningfulness of all details in Torah, applies, of course, also to the time element.

For although each year the month of Tishrei sets the tone and provides benefits for the entire year, each new year also introduces additional new elements pertaining to it, and each year brings its own distinctive teaching.

Thus the special teaching of the current year is related to its distinctive features which set it apart from the six years which preceded it and the six years which follow, in that it is the year of Hakhel [gathering]: "Gather together all the people, men women and children."

To be sure, this mitzva - in its plain and actual form - is confined to the Holy Land, "the land which...always [including the time of exile] G-d's eyes are on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year," and to the time of the Holy Temple. However, the spiritual aspects and content of all mitzvot are eternal, being part of our eternal Torah.

The general character of the mitzvah (commandment) of Hakhel calls for the implementation of its contents and purpose, not on an individual basis, but in the manner of Hakhel, i.e. congregationally and collectively, with multitudes of participants, and with special emphasis on congregating the young, including boys and girls of tender age, and for the purpose specified in the Torah, "That they should heed to do all the words of this Torah."

Specifically:

That they should heed," also in the sense of eager anticipation and longing; "to do" - in actual practice, not being content with merely a "good heart," "good intention," or "good resolution," but in actual deed; "all the words of the Torah" - a person should not think that since his merits outweigh his demerits, and by a substantial margin, he has already done his duty, for one is required to fulfill all the words of "this Torah" - as if "pointing a finger" demonstratively and emphatically that this is the Torah exactly as it was given to Moses at Sinai, the Written Torah together with its interpretation, the Oral Torah, free from any, G-d forbid, distortion, misinterpretation, compromise, etc.

The significance of the said Hakhel concept has been accentuated by the events that began on the Holy Day (Yom Kippur) in this Hakhel-Year, directed against our men, women and children as a Holy Congregation.

But the togetherness of our people in the spirit of Hakhel will stand our people in good stead, as it did in the past, in fulfillment of the prophetic promise: "The L-rd of Hosts shall shield them" - His people, the "unique and united people on earth"; "He redeemed them, elevated them, and exalted them all the days of the world."

And as Jews gather together to increasingly implement the Hakhel objective, they should heed all the words of Torah, spreading the light of Torah and mitzvot in an ever growing measure. Thus, they dispel the darkness of the exile and thereby (through Torah and mitzvot in daily life) bring closer the coming of our Righteous Moshiach and our true and complete Redemption: "And the earth will be filled with (G-d's) glory."

This is an appropriate time to call attention again, to the appeal for Torah and tzedakah (charity) in every day practice, in light of the prophet's words: "Zion shall be redeemed through Mishpot (Torah) and its returnees through charity."

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### Kippah

1. One should not walk (or travel) 4 Amot without a Kippah. Nowadays, the Kippah serves as an identification of religious Jews and so it is important to wear it in order to show that one fears Heaven.
2. It is a proper and praiseworthy practice to wear a Kippah even when one walks less than 4 Amot or one stands or sits for the time it takes to walk 4 Amot, whether one is outside or indoors.
3. One is not allowed to make brachot without a Kippah, but if by accident (for example, the kippah fell off and one did not notice) one made a bracha without a Kippah, the bracha is acceptable after the fact. Others believe one is required to repeat the bracha.
4. One is allowed to greet a Jew who is not wearing a Kippah even if he will respond "Shalom" which has the status of Hashem's name.
5. Riding in a moving car, train, or plane is considered like walking.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*The name of this week's Parshah is Chayei Sarah ("the life of Sarah"). Though the name of an entity expresses its fundamental content, in this instance, the connection between Sarah's life and the events related in the parshah is difficult to understand. All those events occurred after Sarah's death.*

*Nevertheless, since, as our Sages declared, "Since his descendants are alive, he is considered as if he is alive," we can understand that the fullest expression of Sarah's life took place after she departed from this world. The heritage of good and holiness which she had established was perpetuated through the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivkah. When was Yitzchok satisfied with his bride? When "he brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother." Our Sages interpret this as meaning that Rivkah resembled Sarah. All the spiritual services which Sarah fulfilled were carried out by Rivkah. Hence, this marriage reflects the ultimate expression of "Sarah's life."*

*In particular, the expression used by the Torah in describing Sarah's age, "one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years," is significant. Each of the specified numbers corresponds to a specific power of the soul. Afterwards, the verse concludes "the years of Sarah's life," which our Sages interpret to mean that "all are equal for the good." This reflects how all the soul's powers are unified into a single point, brought together through the essence of the soul, which is above all division. Nevertheless, this essential point of soul permeates through all the soul's powers and unites them.*

*This essence is the Moshiach, the saviour, in each of us. Through it, we are connected to Moshiach and automatically to all Jews. This conduct is one that comes easier for some and harder for others. True expression of the essence of the soul is a boundless accomplishment resulting from ultimate devotion.*

*Through revealing the aspect of Moshiach which relates to him, each individual hastens the actual coming of Moshiach as alluded to in the Rambam's statement that with one mitzvah, each Jew has the potential to tip the balance of the entire world and bring complete salvation.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

The two neighbours, both of whom were wealthy landowners, had managed to live in peace and harmony until one day one of them decided to do some improvements on his land.

When the second man heard about the work his curiosity was aroused. He saddled one of his fine horses and went out to the outer boundary of his land to see what his neighbour was up to -- and what he saw made his blood boil. His neighbour's workers were busily digging up a tract of land that was part of his property, and they were doing it openly and in complete disregard of the law!

The second man, whose name was David, spotted his neighbour standing to one side as he oversaw the work. David gave an angry crack of the whip, which sent his horse into a gallop, and within seconds he was at his neighbour's side.

The neighbour was startled by the sight of the galloping horse that seemed to be charging right at him. As he quickly jumped out of the horse's path, he started to yell at the reckless horseman. But he was even more startled when he realized who the rider was.

"David," the neighbour said. "Why did you charge at me like that?"

"What got into me?" David angrily replied. "What got into you?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," said the neighbour.

"Oh, really," David snarled. "I suppose these are not your workers."

"They are my workers," replied the neighbour, still perplexed.

"How could you give them permission to dig up my land?" demanded David.

"You are mistaken, my friend," said the neighbour, "this land is mine."

"You are the one who is mistaken," said David. "It's mine."

The two men continued to argue along this line for quite some time, and the longer they argued the more heated the argument became. When the first neighbour's overseer saw that things were getting out of hand and the landowners were about to come to blows, he stepped forward.

"Gentlemen, arguing will not resolve the issue," said the overseer. "This is a legal dispute. Only a rabbi can decide who the land belongs to."

The two landowners recognized the wisdom of the overseer's words, and they both made an effort to calm down. However, when they tried to decide which rabbi to turn to, they once again began to get into a fight. Each man wanted to go to his own rabbi and refused to agree to present the case before the rabbi of the other.

"Gentlemen," volunteered the overseer a second time, "why not go to Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin. Surely neither one of you doubts his honesty and fairness."

Since Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin was, without question, one of the leading rabbis of the generation, the two landowners readily agreed to the overseer's suggestion. And as they were both anxious to settle the matter, they set out for Volozhin at once. When they stood before Rabbi Chaim they each presented their claims to ownership of the property in dispute. Rabbi Chaim listened to the words of each man intently, and then he sat in silent thought for several minutes.

"There is something about this case that still confuses me," Rabbi Chaim said softly.

"Perhaps if I see the land in question, I will better understand your claims." The two landowners were more than happy to escort Rabbi Chaim to the field. Now that the land lay before them, Rabbi Chaim asked each man to once again present his case. After both men had finished speaking, Rabbi Chaim suddenly bent down and put his ear to the ground.

The two men didn't know what to make of this strange behavior, and so they glanced uneasily at each other. Because neither one of the men wanted to show disrespect to the distinguished rabbi, each one was hoping that the other would have the courage to ask Rabbi Chaim what he was doing. Finally, David could contain his curiosity no longer and so he spoke up.

"Rabbi Chaim," he called out, "what are you listening to down there?"

"I have given the two of you the opportunity to state your claims to this piece of land," Rabbi Chaim replied, still keeping his ear to the ground. "Now I would like to hear what the ground has to say for itself."

The two men looked at each other and started to laugh. "Rabbi, does the ground really talk?" asked David.

"Not only does this ground talk," replied Rabbi Chaim, "but it also laughs. Do you know why it is laughing?" The two landowners shook their heads.

"The ground finds it amusing that the two of you are having such a heated argument over whom it belongs to," said Rabbi Chaim.

"It is telling me, 'This one says I belong to him, and that one says I belong to him. But the truth is that eventually -- when they reach the age of 120 -- they will both belong to me.'"

Rabbi Chaim stood up and turned to the men, who had by now stopped laughing and were regarding the land with a sober eye.

"My friends, life is too short and too precious to be spent in arguing and harboring ill feelings toward one other," Rabbi Chaim said quietly. "Perhaps we can find some way to resolve this dispute through peaceful compromise."

Rabbi Chaim's words hit their mark and the two landowners wholeheartedly agreed to make peace and abide by whatever decision the rabbi reached.

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### CANDLE LIGHTING: 6 NOVEMBER 2015



BEGINS		ENDS
7.41	MELBOURNE	8.43
7.31	ADELAIDE	8.31
5.51	BRISBANE	6.47
6.30	DARWIN	7.22
5.51	GOLD COAST	6.47
6.27	PERTH	7.25
7.09	SYDNEY	8.08
7.20	CANBERRA	8.29
7.40	LAUNCESTON	8.45
7.40	AUCKLAND	8.42
7.49	WELLINGTON	8.54
7.43	HOBART	8.49
6.51	BYRON BAY	7.47

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH • 24 CHESHVAN • 6 NOVEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7.41 PM
	MINCHA:	7.50 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8.20 PM
SHABBOS	TEHILLIM:	8.00 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.35 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF KISLEV WILL BE	
	ON Wednesday November 11, 2015 AT 6.35(11 chalakim) PM	
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	7.40 AM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8.43 PM
WEEKDAYS	SHACHARIS	SUN-FRI: 8.00 AM / 9.15 AM
	MINCHA:	7.50 PM
	MAARIV:	8.40 PM