

# LAMPLIGHTER

6 Teves  
Parshas  
Vayigash  
1222

18 December  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Vayigash, Joseph, viceroy of Egypt, dramatically reveals his true identity to his incredulous brothers. Joseph reassures them that the entire sequence of events, beginning with his being sold into slavery to his eventual rise to power, was the hand of G-d guiding him from above. "It was not you who sent me here, but G-d," he tells his brothers. Joseph then asks them to carry the following message back to their father, Jacob: "G-d has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me (to Egypt); do not tarry."

At first glance, Joseph's choice of words seems odd. If Joseph's intent was merely to convince Jacob to undertake the lengthy journey, why would he imagine that his elderly father would be swayed by the news that his son now occupied a high political office?

Rather, Jacob knew that the Jewish people were destined to go into exile in Egypt. When informed of Joseph's rise to power, he understood that this was an integral part of that process. Once that stage was reached it was time for Jacob to follow and the next phase to begin.

Many years before, G-d had explained the objective of the exile in Egypt: "Afterwards (after the exile), they will emerge with great wealth," G-d promised Abraham. Under Joseph's tenure, Egypt was transformed into a wealthy nation. In exchange for the food he had so cleverly stockpiled, Joseph collected much of the world's riches—all done in order for the Jews to eventually depart Egypt "with great wealth." Indeed, the accumulation of wealth was one of the prime reasons behind the entire 210-year exile.

Yet the concept of "great wealth" must be understood on a deeper level as well, not only in the literal sense. The material riches accumulated by the Jewish people were only a reflection of the great spiritual wealth with which they left Egypt. For the Jews were sent into exile for the purpose of extracting and refining the sparks of holiness hidden within the most morally degraded and degenerate place on earth - Egypt. Those sparks of purity, once freed from their prison within Egypt's "49 gates of impurity," were the ultimate riches derived by the Jews during their exile.

The accumulation of "wealth" is likewise the purpose of our present exile as well - extracting the good from the material world and transforming it into holiness by utilizing physical objects for the purpose of Torah and mitzvot.

This process is now complete. Over the thousands of years of exile, the Jewish people have uncovered and elevated all of these sparks of holiness, dispersed throughout the four corners of the earth. According to Divine plan, the time has therefore come for G-d to fulfill His promise and send Moshiach, NOW!

*Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

## True Leadership

*By Mendel Kalmerson*

Tears.

Usually a sign of weakness. Of unchecked emotion. Some would say they reflect a lack of control.

It's no secret that a man's biggest nightmare is to be caught crying. Men don't cry. Not real men at least.

Controlling emotion has been seen since time immemorial as a sign of strength.

Tears.

So real. So human. So normal. They express sincerity at times.

Compassion at others.

A gentle person cries. A sensitive person cries.

Tears express genuineness: When it hurts we cry. When we are touched we cry. In pain and in joy we cry. On a wedding day we cry. When a baby is born we cry. When a loved one passes on we cry. In real moments we cry.

Tears, then, express the realest and truest part of us. They reflect our core that is usually concealed and rarely revealed.

To cry, then, is not a sign of weakness. Perhaps to build walls around our emotion is.

I never cease to be fascinated when reading a particular narrative in the Torah towards the end of the Book of Genesis.

Quoted are some of the verses that mention a recurring behavior of Joseph Prince of Egypt:

"He turned away from them (his brothers) and wept" (Genesis 42:24).

"Joseph rushed because his compassion for his brother had been stirred and he wanted to weep; so he went into the room and wept there" (ibid. 43:30).

"Joseph could not endure the presence of all who stood before him...He gave [forth] his voice in weeping" (ibid. 45:1).

"He fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept...he then kissed all his brothers and wept upon them" (ibid. 14-15).

"Joseph harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father...and he wept on his neck excessively" (ibid. 46:29).

"Joseph wept when they spoke to him" (ibid 50:17).

Joseph is portrayed here as a bundle of emotion with tears his constant companion. It takes little or nothing to get him bawling.

And so I ask:

Is this the same Joseph who found favour in the eyes of Pharaoh and his ministers to the degree that he was appointed viceroy of the mighty Egypt?

Is this the leader whose name was known throughout the land and in whose hands lay the economic and political future of that ancient world?

How did Joseph remain revered and respected by all as a mighty ruler despite his apparent inability to contain his emotions?

I'd like to suggest - and perhaps this is what the Torah is alluding to by mentioning this interesting recurrence - that it was not despite his emotional expression, rather because of it, that he appealed so strongly to the Egyptian people as a beloved ruler.

They saw not weakness in his tears but strength. They saw not a deficit but a quality.

A true leader doesn't build a wall of cold formality and bureaucracy around himself. He does not get carried away with himself and world politics leaving the needs and sensitivities of his people behind.

A true leader remains compassionate and warm. A true leader resonates with the heartbeat of his people.

This is what defines a true leader.

Joseph had every reason to be hardened. His youth was most traumatic, filled with pain and suffering. From being despised by his brothers, sold into captivity, the centre of a national scandal, spending years in prison, his was not the journey of a normal child. Notwithstanding his difficult past, his emotional disposition proved that he was still in touch with his human side.

This is what made him appeal to his people.

It is time to reevaluate and redefine the meaning of leadership. The world needs true leaders today more than ever.

Proper ones. Like Joseph, Prince of Egypt.

# Slice of LIFE

They had plenty of reason to be depressed. They were supposed to be in another town helping in a seminar on Judaism and now they were stuck a hundred miles away with almost nothing to eat.

It happened like this. Rabbi Akiva Wagner, a well-known educator and Torah scholar arranged a small Shabbat seminar for Jews who wanted to know more about the Chassidic approach to Judaism.

Several people signed up and in order to make sure that everything ran smoothly he picked five young men from the student body of his Yeshiva (Torah academy) to help out.

The seminar was to be in a resort hotel in the mountains some two hour's drive from the city and because the place was not careful about the laws of kosher food Rabbi Wagner would have to bring it all from a caterer in Brooklyn.

So, six hours before Shabbat he loaded up his car with the catered food and drove out to the resort to get ready. The plan was that his pupils would load up a rented car with paper dishes and other sundry items and drive up two hours afterward to join him.

So they set out four hours before Shabbat with clear directions. But something went wrong.

Although they left with plenty of time before them, the young man driving, a fellow by the name of Mendy Chanin, somehow missed a turnoff and by the time he realized what happened there was only a half hour left before Shabbat! (Religious Jews do not drive on Shabbat).

He turned off the highway at the first public phone, called Rabbi Wagner for bearings and realized he was hopelessly lost. They had crossed the border into New Jersey and there was no chance they would make it to him before Shabbat.

The Rabbi told Mendy not to worry, he would manage without them and advised him to call his parents and ask them to search the phone book for the nearest Chabad House.

So Mendy did as he was told but the answer wasn't good; the nearest Chabad House was almost an hour's drive away.

So, with no choice and not wanting to spend the Shabbat in the car they jumped

back in, sped off down the highway and turned off at a sign that said 'Almuchi', which turned out to be an unknown village with a population of a few hundred in the middle of nowhere. But there was no time and they thanked G-d that they found something.

Their luck finally began to kick in; they immediately located a cheap hotel room and it had a miniscule food market next door! Two of them booked the room and carried the things in and the others went shopping. Miracle of miracles they even found some kosher food: Six cans of sardines, three bags of soup almonds and a bottle of vodka... and, don't forget, they already had PLENTY of paper dishes!

They raced back to the hotel with their goods, asked the man at the desk if there were any Jews or synagogues in the area... negative... and made it up to their room just in time to open the sardine cans, change clothes and pray the first prayer of the holy Shabbat.

Determined to keep positive they tried to forget where they were, where they were supposed to be (the seminar was probably limping without them) and pray with ... joy! They even started singing and clapping their hands! "Lecha Dodi, Likras Kala!"

Suddenly the room started shaking! Someone was pounding on their door so hard that the pictures on the walls were swinging back and forth and a booming voice screamed through the door, "What's going on in there?! What do you think this is?! Keep it down or I'll call the cops!"

They didn't dare open up. They just meekly finished the prayer, made Kiddush on vodka, ate their meagre cold meal and went to sleep.

The next morning their enthusiasm was running on empty. Stark reality hit them; they were losers! They had missed the turnoff, the seminar, praying with a congregation, hearing the Torah read, eating a normal meal. They couldn't even sing or be happy! Who knows, maybe the town was filled with anti-Semites and they couldn't even leave their room!

But Mendy announced that it couldn't be an accident....there is no such thing as accidents. And they weren't losers either: The Rebbe had said a Chassid makes the environment, and is not made by it. G-d is the King of the Universe. It must be that He put them to be there for a reason, a good reason they had an obligation to find.

So after they finished their prayers and

morning meal they decided to go out, split up and search for something. The others went in pairs but Mendy decided to go on his own.

He was walking aimlessly down some side street when suddenly a car came screeching to a halt next to him and a woman yelled out from her open window .... In YIDDISH!!!

"Vas tut a yid in Almuchi in Shabbos (What is a Jew doing in Almuchi on Shabbos?)."

Mendy was completely startled but smiled and yelled back,

"The Baal Shem Tov says that nothing happens by accident. I was sent here to give you the message of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the leader of our generation, that Moshiach is here and the redemption will occur any second. Every good deed we do, every commandment, every word of Torah, will bring it sooner."

The woman hesitated for a few seconds as though digesting what she heard. Then yelled out "Nu, would you like a ride?" And without waiting for an answer put the pedal to the metal and screeched away.

Shabbat ended, they paid for the hotel room and drove silently home in the night. No one said a word for the entire ride, none of them had any idea why Hashem wanted them to spend such a grey Shabbat and the entire episode was forgotten.... almost.

A year later Mendy Chanin met a friend from Sydney, Australia that he hadn't seen for several years named Yossi Konikov and they began to talk about the past, present and future.

Suddenly from nowhere Yossi said, "Listen, Mendy, here's a story! About a half a year ago some fellow from the U.S. came off the street to our Yeshiva in Sydney and started asking about Moshiach. He was completely not religious; in fact he didn't know anything about Judaism... but the only thing that bothered him was Moshiach.

Anyway he started coming to classes and in just a few months completely transformed to a different person, took on commandments and became serious about learning Torah and now he's one of the regular students.

So one day I had a conversation with him and asked him why he asked about Moshiach and he told me that one day his mother met a Chassid in some weird town in New Jersey called Almuchi and he told her about Moshiach."

Thunderstruck, Mendy smiled and told this story of incredible Divine Providence.

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

When the Torah lists Jacob's offspring, it counts the total number: "The number of individuals in Jacob's family who came to Egypt were 70..." The Midrash (Tanchuma) tells us that there are ten times where the Children of Israel are counted. The first time was when they went down to Egypt and the tenth time will be when the Redemption comes, as the prophet Jeremiah said, "The flock will again pass by the one who counts them." Who is "the one" whom G-d will appoint to count them? It will be Moshiach. (*Discover Moshiach*)

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



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

... I would like to point out something you are undoubtedly aware of, and that is your son's age. He is in transition from youth to maturity, a time of life that entails considerable strain. During this sensitive period of adolescence, it is particularly important not to do anything that might aggravate the strain.

This is particularly true in a country such as this ... where even mature adults are prey to [forces of negative cultural and street] influence, and it requires much willpower not to succumb; how much more so where a teenager is concerned.

In light of the above, it is obviously the sacred duty of every near and dear one, and especially of parents, to do all things possible to promote the teenager's peace of mind and thereby make his struggles easier and certainly to avoid anything which might weaken his willpower to resist the influences of the street, etc.

A further point: In the realm of faith, religion and feeling, every individual is a world unto himself. This is not the case in the realm of reason, where one can argue and convince and change the other person's mind. [In the former instances,] young people, especially, become attached to an ideal, particularly one that is expressed in actual behaviour.

It can be extremely difficult to get such a person to change his feelings and conduct, and any effort to change his true nature, when applied to a young person during this sensitive period of adolescence, has serious implications.

... In reference to your stating that you have always been a loner and do not feel close to anybody, from which you seem to conclude that once again [in your present situation] you may have to make up your mind all by yourself:

As you realize - and this is also obvious from your letter - being a loner is not healthy, and this obviously has added to your confusion, as you mention in your letter.

If one does not feel a particular closeness to one's family, it is at least necessary to find social contact with people of one's own age and background, more or less, since such people must have gone through life and experienced the same general situations, allowing, of course, for individual exceptions.

... In conclusion, I would again like to volunteer an observation, though this time in a different vein, that you should not be so downhearted, since it is not unusual for young people of your age to feel a sense of confusion, or even frustration.

One needs only to feel for those who refuse to accept a helping hand from near and dear ones, including parents. I do not mean to say that one must readily submit to parental dictatorship, but neither does this mean that one should always reject parental advice and help in the hope that eventually things will straighten out themselves.

Of course, living in a nurturing, well-ordered, and disciplined atmosphere, willing to accept certain matters on authority without questioning everything from A to Z until one has been personally able to delve into all these matters - which is impossible - would go a long way toward improving the situation.

*From Healthy in Body, Mind and Soul, vol. 3, compiled by Rabbi Sholom B. Wineberg, published by Sichos in English*

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### Why are blessings recited before partaking of food?

Reciting a short blessing before eating is the way that we ask permission of G-d to partake of the pleasures of His world. Through reciting a blessing we acknowledge that "the world and everything in it belongs to G-d." There are only six different blessings over the thousands of types of food we eat. The longest of the six has only 10 words in it. They can be found in any prayer book

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This coming week we commemorate the start of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. The siege resulted in the eventual destruction of the First Holy Temple nearly 2500 years ago. This day is commemorated as a public fast day.*

*The strength - both the obligation to fast and its positive influences - of the Tenth of Tevet stems from the fact that it commemorates the first of the tragedies associated with the destruction of the Holy Temple.*

*Thus this date begins the process of destruction. It is well known that the beginning of any process contains more power than the subsequent stages and for this reason, there is added power to the Tenth of Tevet. The positive influences of the Tenth of Tevet are connected to the fact that a fast day is a "day of will" when our prayers and Teshuva are more willingly accepted by G-d.*

*As we are taught that "the beginning is wedged in the end," and the ultimate "end" purpose of the destruction of the Holy Temples will be the rebuilding of the Third and Eternal Holy Temple, the Tenth of Tevet is an auspicious day to hasten the coming of the Redemption.*

*Of course, our most fervent prayer is that the Tenth of Tevet not be a day of mourning but be turned into a day of celebration and joy with the coming of Moshiach. Thus, by our immediate decision to increase our acts of goodness and kindness, our performance of mitzvot, study of Torah, and specifically the giving of charity, which brings the Redemption closer, we are showing G-d that our actions are in consonance with our heartfelt prayers. May the realization of those prayers happen in the immediate future.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Some two hundred and fifty years ago in the Ukrainian city of T'shish'nik lived Reb Berel; a devoted Chassid of the great Tzadik, Rabbi Mordechai of Chernobyl.

Reb Berel had a fairly large house and was respected by the entire community for his good heart and good deeds so it was understandable that whenever R' Mordechai came to T'shish'nik he stayed by his house.

Indeed, Reb Berel and his family waited for those visits impatiently the entire year, or even longer. His whole life was centred around his Rebbe. The Rebbe was his friend, his inspiration, his teacher, his leader his very soul. The Rebbe's teachings, his motions, his advice, his eyes, that is what kept Reb Berel happy and optimistic in the midst of the misery, tragedy and oppression surrounding the Jews from every side.

So we can imagine Reb Berel's joy when he heard that in one week's time the Rebbe would be arriving in T'shish'nik for a week's visit!!

Reb Berel and his family had spent the entire week cleaning and polishing every corner of the house, preparing food and books for the Rebbe's use. And sure enough, as every year, the big day came! The Rebbe's personal secretary came to Reb Berel's house to see if everything was ready.

But this time the secretary had a strange look on his face; something other than the usual enthusiasm and joy.

"Listen, Reb Berel!" the secretary said seriously as he took him to a table in the corner and sat down opposite him.

"Is something wrong?" Reb Berel asked, a look of bewilderment replacing the smile on his face.

"Well, it's like this" the secretary said leaning forward earnestly. "The Rebbe said he's not staying by your house."

"What!?" gasped Reb Berel, tears forming in his eyes "Why? What happened? Is everything...?"

"Everything is all right" said the secretary "But the Rebbe said that he's not staying here and he never wants to see your face again unless you bring him two thousand rubles." Reb Berel's mouth fell open and his eyes widened in horror as his head shook 'no' in disbelief. The secretary continued as he began standing up.

"The Rebbe says that he doesn't want you to attend his meals, to be in the Synagogue when he prays or even to watch him walk in the streets, nothing. In fact, he said he never wants to see you again, ever! Unless you bring the money..."

With this he shook poor Reb Berel's hand, who was sitting there like a stunned cow whispering to himself, "two thousand", shrugged his shoulders as to say he wished he could help and left.

Reb Berel was swooning. He meekly called to his wife and when she came running into the room and heard the news she held her head in her hands and fell, almost fainted, into the seat opposite him.

Two thousand rubles was a fortune!!

After a short reckoning they realized that even if they sold everything including their house and took out loans they would barely reach one third the amount. Usually they would go to the Rebbe with their problems! But now!! OY!! Why had the Tzadik left them? Why was he being so severe? They searched and searched their deeds of the past month, the past year, the past ten years for as far back as they could remember, but they couldn't figure it out.

Their only recourse was prayer.

They both grabbed books of Psalms and began pouring out their souls, reading and rereading aloud most of that night and the entire next day, then the next day and the next, over and over again; weeping and pleading with broken hearts to HaShem that He have mercy and send them the money.

But the week ended and nothing happened: No money, no Tzadik and no hope. They were alone.

Then, just as they thought it couldn't be worse, it got worse! An entire battalion of barbaric Russian soldiers who had just returned from some sort of successful raid swept into town and took over the houses; twenty five soldiers were assigned to Berel's house. He had to vacate his own bed as well as provide food and lodging for them on punishment of death.

In just moments his sparkling clean home became a shambles. The soldiers wasted no time in eating everything they could and laying down to sleep anywhere they wanted. Reb Berel and his wife had to sleep in the hay loft. But he thanked G-d that things weren't worse. at least the soldiers left them alive!

Then, suddenly in the middle of the night Berel was awakened by the sound of trumpets. He peered out the window of the loft to see soldiers running out of all the houses on the block, as well as his, with all their gear. It was a call to order. Berel hoped they weren't going to be given orders to kill everyone. He began reading Psalms again. But the soldiers all mounted their horses and rode off like a huge horde of locusts just as they had entered.

Rab Berel and his wife dragged themselves back into their house, it looked like a hurricane hit the place but they thanked G-d that the invaders had left. They went to their room to sleep in their own beds when suddenly Berel's wife noticed that from under Berel's bed protruded a wide, low wooden crate. But they were too tired to do anything about it. They left it for the morning and went to sleep.

The next morning they woke up, pulled out the crate and opened it to see that IT WAS FILLED WITH GOLDEN COINS!

In fact, what had happened was that shortly after the soldiers left they realized that one of their chests of booty was missing.

Their commander immediately dispatched twenty men to return to the town and find it and in no time they were back in T'shish'nik, waking every family and ransacking every house one at a time.

But for some reason they kept missing Rab Berel's after a few hours of futility they concluded that either they made a mistake in calculation or had lost it somewhere else and returned to their commander empty handed.

But all this was completely unknown to Rab Berel; he slept through the whole thing. He held on to the crate for another few months waiting for someone to claim it and when they didn't finally decided to ask the Rebbe what to do. The crate had no markings on it, no names and he certainly had no idea where the soldiers were; maybe it was his.

He took two thousand rubles of the money, only a small portion of it, and travelled to the city of Chernobyl.

He arrived with trepidation and immediately got an audience and when he entered the Rebbe's room the Rebbe was smiling.

"The money is yours". He said. "All of it. And you can keep this money also".

"But, but I thought." Berel stammered. "I thought you wanted two thousand rubles. See? Here's the money."

"No, Berel" answered the Rebbe "I saw that a fortune was waiting for you but you were missing two things; humility and prayer.

The fact that you hosted me every year in T'shish'kin gave you a bit of false self-confidence and the fact that you never really broke down and prayed to G-d with all your heart for anything in your entire life. Those two things prevented the blessing from reaching you. The money they left is really yours. You just had to want to leave your present state with all your being."

Needless to say Reb Berel gave a lot of what he had to charity for the rest of his long and generous life.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

"Let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord." (44:33)

[Said Judah to Joseph:] I am more useful than him in every regard: in strength, as a warrior, or as a servant. (Rashi)

G-d deals with man measure for measure: because Judah had sold Joseph into slavery, he was now compelled to offer himself to Joseph as a slave. (Abarbanel)

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Be'er-Sheba (46:1)

Why did he go there? Said Rabbi Nachman: He went to cut down the cedars which his grandfather Abraham had planted in Be'er-Sheba. These cedars were then taken along when the Children of Israel left Egypt, and were used for the construction of the Sanctuary in the desert. (Midrash Rabbah)

For all the years that the children of Israel were in Egypt, Jacob's cedars served as a link to their past and a promise of their future. "This is not your home," the growing trees said. "You, like us, hail from a loftier, holier place. And soon you will leave this depraved land, to be reclaimed by G-d as His people. You will then uproot us from this foreign land and carry us triumphantly to Sinai, where you will construct out of us a dwelling for the Divine presence in your midst." (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 18 DECEMBER 2015



BEGINS	ENDS
8.22 .....MELBOURNE .....	9.28
8.09 .....ADELAIDE .....	9.12
6.22 .....BRISBANE .....	7.21
6.51 .....DARWIN .....	7.44
6.22 .....GOLD COAST .....	7.21
7.02 .....PERTH .....	8.03
7.46 .....SYDNEY .....	8.48
7.58 .....CANNBERRA .....	9.01
8.25 .....LAUNCESTON .....	9.35
8.20 .....AUCKLAND .....	9.25
8.34 .....WELLINGTON .....	9.44
8.29 .....HOBART .....	9.41
7.23 .....BYRON BAY .....	8.22

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD  
PARSHAS VAYIGASH • 6 TEVET • 18 DECEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8.22 PM
	MINCHA:	8.30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9.00 PM
SHABBOS	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.35 AM
	MINCHA:	8.20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9.28 PM
WEEKDAYS	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	8.00 AM / 9.15 AM
	MINCHA (except Tuesday):	7.00 / 8.30 PM
	MINCHA (Tuesday)	7.00 / 8.15 PM
	MAARIV (except Tuesday):	9.20 PM
TUESDAY	FAST STARTS (22 December):	4.15 AM
	FAST ENDS & MAARIV:	9.13 PM