

LAMPLIGHTER

25 Sivan
Parshas
Shelach

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Shelach, tells the episode of the spies whom Moses sent to gather intelligence about the land of Canaan. Ten of the 12 spies returned with disparaging reports; that although the land was fertile, its inhabitants were too strong and their cities too well guarded to be defeated by the Israelites. This report broke the morale of the Jewish Nation.

These spies were no ordinary men. They were the leaders of their tribes, especially selected by Moses for this mission. Their report was not animated by fear of physical defeat; instead they feared a spiritual defeat.

In the wilderness, each of the Israelites' needs was met by a direct gift from G-d. Their bread was the Manna which fell from the heavens; their water came from Miriam's Well; their clothes never needed repair.

The possession of the land of Israel meant a new kind of responsibility. The Manna was to cease. Bread would come only through toil. The miracles would be replaced by labour; and with labour came the danger of a new preoccupation.

The spies feared that the concern to work the land and make a living might eventually leave the Israelites with less time and energy for the service of G-d. When the spies said, "It is a land which eats up its inhabitants," they meant that the land and its labour, and the resulting preoccupation with the materialistic world, would "swallow up" and consume all their energies. They thought that spirituality flourishes best in seclusion, in the protected peace of the wilderness where even the food was "from the heavens."

And yet, the spies were wrong. The purpose of life is not the elevation of the soul: it is the sanctification of the world.

The end to which every mitzva aims is to make a dwelling place for G-d in the world-to bring G-d within the world, not above it.

Every Jew may feel the doubts that plagued the spies. While involved with Jewish activities, he feels wholly given over to the spiritual demands of Judaism. But in his work he can see little or no religious significance. He is making the spies' mistake, of placing G-d outside the world, of failing to respond to G-d's presence in every human transaction, forgetting the imperative to "Know Him in all your ways."

The essence of spirituality lies in a Jew reaching out beyond himself to his fellow Jew, to the world of his work, extending holiness to everything he touches, without the thought that this or any situation lies outside the domain of G-d.

Recognition

By Tali Loewenthal

The power of recognition is a fascinating feature of our minds. What gives us the ability to recognize another person? Or the street on which we used to live? What about recognizing when someone is telling the truth? "I just knew she was being truthful. It was obvious."

One of our great problems in life is the fact that we often do not recognize the world around us for what it really is. For many reasons we allow ourselves to be deceived; in fact, it might be incredibly difficult to see things in a clear way. Then, sometimes, we suddenly recognize the truth. Immediately everything looks different.

This week's Torah reading provides an example. At this point, the Jewish people were poised to enter the Promised Land. They had gone through a wonderful series of events. They had seen the miraculous destruction of the power of Egypt and had experienced the Giving of the Torah at Sinai. These were phenomenal events which the world has never forgotten. Their goal, as they had been told by Moses long before, was to enter the Promised Land. They would fulfil the promise which G-d gave to their ancestor Abraham: to make Israel into a Jewish spiritual centre for the whole world.

Twelve spies were sent to the Land of Israel. Their job was to give a report to the Jewish people. You've guessed it. This is where the problem starts. The spies saw a wonderful country, which was inhabited by strong, tall people: hardly a surprise. But they came to the conclusion that the mission was impossible. They claimed that the Jews would never be able to enter the Land promised them by G-d.

When the Jewish people heard this report they began weeping. They forgot everything that had gone before. Fear dominated their minds. There was no hope. "If only we had died in the desert! Let's go back to Egypt!" they shouted wildly.

The Torah then describes the next steps, which were actually part of a process of Recognition. Recognition of what is true and genuine, despite appearances and false claims. G-d told Moses that as a result of their weeping, the Jewish people would have to wander in the desert for forty years. That entire generation of adults would live comfortable lives, eating manna from heaven. But only their children would enter the Land.

When Moses told this to the Jewish people, they suddenly recognized the truth. How wrong they had been! A large group said "Let's go! We will go to the Land! Come on!" They rushed up the hill leading towards the Promised Land.

What had changed? Nothing! Why should they now suddenly believe in G-d's power, while previously they thought they should go back to Egypt?

The answer given by Chassidic teachings is that deep within us, the soul knows the truth all the time. We sometimes adopt, or are presented with, a false perspective on life. But this is superficial. Deep down we have the power to recognize reality.

From this comes our power to recognize our responsibilities and our destiny today, as individuals and as a people. We are often confused by false messages, some of which come from the environment, and some we create ourselves. Yet deep within us is the power of Recognition. This helps us know who we are, where we come from and where we are going: to the Promised Land.

Slice of LIFE

The "Ploni" family were devoutly Orthodox Jews from Hungary who lived in the populous Jewish neighbourhood of New York's Lower East Side in the 1950's. The father, meticulousness in mitzvah-observance, was highly respected in the community. The mother was a popular woman who worked in the summers as a cook in Camp Emunah (the Lubavitcher camp for girls in the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York). Thus, she was well-acquainted with Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda ("J.J.") Hecht OBM, the founder and director of the camp.

One Thursday she showed up at Rabbi Hecht's house in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Bursting into tears, she begged his help. Her daughter had run away from home the year before at age 16. She had attached herself to a group of disreputable people and had ceased completely to observe mitzvot. They no longer had any idea of where she was. Relatives and friends had helped them to search, but every hopeful lead had turned out to be a false trail.

Finally they heard from her, but the news was not good. "Yesterday," wailed the hysterical mother, "she telephoned my married daughter, and told her that next week she will marry her non-Jewish boy-friend. Please, Rabbi Hecht, you must help us!"

Rabbi Hecht immediately called 770, and arranged for the Plonis to be on the list for yechidut (private audience) with the Lubavitcher Rebbe that night. He also hired a private detective to try to track down the runaway daughter's whereabouts.

That evening the Ploni couple entered the Rebbe's private room and poured out their hearts to him. The Rebbe listened with careful attention to all the details of what had occurred and then turned to Rabbi Ploni and asked him what seemed at first to be a strange and irrelevant question: "When you and your wife became engaged, did her parents give their approval?"

Rabbi Ploni's face drained white. From his appearance the answer was already clear. He explained that at the time a major quarrel had broken out in the family, and her parents had refused to give their blessing to the match.

The Rebbe probed further. "Afterwards, did you ever ask their forgiveness?"

Rabbi Ploni averted his gaze. With his head down, he admitted that he hadn't.

"If so," instructed the Rebbe, "you should travel to their gravesite and beg their forgiveness."

"But," protested Rabbi Ploni, "nobody knows in what graveyard in Hungary they are buried, and anyway, most of the Jewish cemeteries there have been destroyed over the years. The chance of finding their site has to be considered infinitesimal."

"If so," replied the Rebbe, "tomorrow you should assemble a minyan and go to the "Ohel" [resting place] of the [previous] Rebbe, my father-in-law. Tell aloud the whole story there and ask for their forgiveness there, and G-d will help you."

The next morning, Friday, Rabbi Ploni gathered a minyan (one of whom was Rabbi Hecht's brother-in-law, Rabbi Moshe Zvi Lasker, from whom we know this story). In

accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, Rabbi Ploni related the whole course of events in front of them at the Ohel of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. He then asked the forgiveness of his deceased in-laws.

Meanwhile, the detective had succeeded in locating the missing daughter. He tried to convince her to return home, but she wouldn't listen. So he reported to Rabbi Hecht, who called in the parents for a conference that same day.

After examining and discarding a number of possible plans, they finally decided that the parents would lodge a complaint with the police against their daughter. First of all, she was still under 18, so according to New York State law required parental consent before marrying, which they refused to give. Second, they told the police, she stole from them various things when she ran away.

That Shabbat the police arrested her. Her 'fiancée' tried to secure her release but was unsuccessful. The wedding had to be postponed.

When the parents arranged her release, the girl still refused to return home. Her spirit unbroken, all she wanted was to reunite with her non-Jewish intended. Rabbi Hecht spent many hours over several different occasions to try to influence her.

In the end she agreed to at least first go to Eretz Yisrael for a while to complete her studies. Rabbi Hecht and her parents were pleased, as now she would be far away from her fiancée and crowd of friends. After some time in Israel she slowly came back to her roots. Eventually she married an observant Jew and raised a strong Jewish family.

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ISSUE 1250

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Not only must we remember the Sabbath on the day of Shabbat itself, but we must also remember it on each of the preceding weekdays. It is for this reason that we recite in the daily prayers, "Today is the first day to the Sabbath," etc., followed by a chapter of Psalms for the day, and we prepare in advance for each coming Sabbath. The same is true of the six millennia that precede the Era of Redemption, the "day that is entirely Shabbat." By remembering the redemption during the preceding days of exile, our service of G-d is easier, for we anticipate the imminent redemption and eagerly prepare for its arrival. (*The Rebbe, Yalkut Moshiach UGeula al HaTorah*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Continued from previous issue

The above provides an insight also into the meaning of the Golus (the exile and dispersion [of the Jews] among the nations of the world) which is at the root of most, if not all, the difficulties and obstacles confronting the Jew in his desire to live his G-d-given Torah-way of life.

To be sure, we recognize the Golus as a punishment and rectification for failure to live up to our obligations in the past as, indeed, we acknowledge in our prayers: "For our sins we were banished from our land." But punishment, according to our Torah, called "Torah Chesed" (a Torah of loving kindness), must also essentially be Chesed. Since G-d has ordained a certain group, or people, namely the Jewish people, to carry the difficult and challenging task of spreading - in all parts and remotest corners of the world - the Unity of G-d (true Monotheism) through living and spreading the light of Torah and Mitzvos [commandments], a task which no other group was willing or capable of carrying out, the greatest reward is the fulfillment of this destiny, or, as our Sages put it, "The reward of a Mitzvah is the Mitzvah itself." Thus, the ultimate purpose of the Golus is linked with our destiny to help bring humanity to a state of universal recognition of G-d.

Our Divine Prophets and Sages explained at length the state of the ideal world which will eventually be attained, when all evil will be eradicated and "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," etc., "they shall not hurt nor destroy," etc. Here again, at first glance, one may ask: "Why was it necessary to create vicious beasts in the first place, if they were ultimately - when the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d - destined to be turned into docile and peace-loving creatures, so that 'a small child shall lead them' "? But the answer is the same as above.

Paving the road to the gradual achievement of the said destiny has always been the persevering and indomitable work of determined individuals and groups conscious of their responsibility. They dedicated themselves to the vital need of strengthening and spreading the Torah and Mitzvos among the widest sections of our people.

In recent generations, more than ever before, the main emphasis has been on the need to bring the knowledge and practice of the Torah and Mitzvos to the widest possible segments of our people, in the greatest number of locations, without waiting for them to seek it - in the hope that they will sooner or later realize the need of it themselves. The most effective way to accomplish this is, of course, is through organized Torah-true education of the young, the young in years and "young" in knowledge. The pattern has been set by the founders of Chasidus and of Chasidus Chabad, who exemplified this approach with dedication and selflessness.

The Baal Shem Tov, before revealing himself and his way of life, was a Melamed - a teacher of small Jewish children. Similarly, the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad, a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov's disciple and successor, began his work by founding his well-known three "Chadorim." This road has been followed also by his successors, the heads of Chabad, each in his generation.

They personified an indomitable spirit and a disdain for any and all difficulties and obstacles in their work for the dissemination of the Torah and Mitzvos. They also made it plain for all to see that whatever the difficulties, these are nothing but a challenge, to be expected and overcome. And by facing up to, and eventually overcoming, all obstacles, they had verified the truth of the basic tenets of our faith, namely that G-d's Providence extends to each and every one individually, and that "He who is determined to purify himself and others, receives aid from On High."

It is a matter of common experience that when there is a firm will and unshakable determination, it soon becomes apparent that the difficulties are often largely imaginary, and even when real - not insurmountable. The forces of good are cumulative and self-generating, as our Sages indicated in their well-known dictum, "One Mitzvah brings another in its train." If evil can be contagious, good is certainly much more so, and many who stand at the sidelines are inspired and willing to join in constructive and positive action, provided the lead is given and the way is shown.

The challenge of our time is to spread the knowledge of the Torah and Mitzvos, particularly through the education of our young, until each and every Jew will attain the level of "Know the G-d of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart," and the fulfillment of the prophecy: "They all shall know Me, small and great, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d, as the waters cover the sea."

With blessing,

CUSTOMS CORNER

What is the significance of the number of coils on the Tzitzis?

There are five (double) knots on each of the Tzitzit tassels. In the spaces between these knots, one of the fringes - which is longer than the others - is coiled around the rest. Seven coils in the first space, eight in the second, eleven in the third, and thirteen in the fourth. These 39 coils have the same numerical value as "Hashem Echad" -- G-d is One.

A WORD

from the Director

This Shabbos has a special lesson from the portion of Shelach. The Parsha relates the story of the Jewish spies who entered Israel to scout out the land prior to the nation entering. The Haftorah also describes a story of sending spies; Joshua's sending of spies and the favourable results brought about by their mission.

What is the simple and direct lesson we learn from Shelach? The word Shelach means sending out on a mission. And it is in the form of a command!

The mission associated with Shelach is symbolic of the soul's descent into this material world. Each Jewish soul descends to this material world and clothes itself in a body to carry out the mission of creating a dwelling for G-d in the lower worlds. To carry out this mission, it is necessary to "explore the land," to survey the nature of the service which must be carried out, discovering what conflicts and difficulties will arise and what is the best possible way to transform the land into a dwelling for G-d.

In the same vein a Jew must "send out" to help other Jews in other places. He must investigate and see what can be accomplished outside, somewhere else, or what he can gain from somewhere else.

To one who is in a lofty plane and fulfils his responsibilities, as well as to one who still lacks a lot in his Divine service to the outside, we say: Don't be despondent; "send out" someone to that place and you too will reach a higher plane.

Mainly, do not be stagnant. You must rise from level to level. Going from strength to strength means that it is continuous, without stop. And although normally this is said of Torah scholars, that they constantly rise, yet, even the average Jew can, and must, attain this position at auspicious times, such as Shabbos of Shelach!

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

It happened over 200 years ago on a snowy, stormy night. On a desolate road in the middle of Poland, a Jewish businessman's wagon, laden with goods, was stuck in the mud. The wagon wasn't budging, and the two strong horses that had previously been faithfully doing their job were now helpless.

The driver tried all the tricks he knew; the horses strained until they were exhausted. Another few hours in the cold and they would freeze to death. The forest was filled with wolves and robbers who were just waiting for such an opportunity. The horses and the contents of the carriage would be easy pickings. The situation was desperate.

The businessman was at the end of his wits. He turned to the driver and begged him to run to the nearest town; perhaps there he could find someone with a horse or two, or a few strong men to come back and help.

The nearest town was the city of Apta. The driver took a small swig from the small vodka flask and began walking swiftly. By the time he entered the town it was well after midnight. Except for the screaming winds the streets were enveloped in black, frozen silence.

Where would he find anyone to help him now? But he couldn't go back. With no choice he began walking, hoping to find some sign of life. Eventually, he saw a dim light in the synagogue. He entered the silent building, tried to warm himself up and after a few seconds burst into tears.

Suddenly he heard from a corner of the room someone say something. He looked up to see a thin, young man who had been sitting and studying Torah by candlelight. "What's wrong?" the young man repeated. "Why are you crying? What happened?"

The driver walked over to him, dried his tears, and told him the whole story; where the carriage was stuck, how he had come looking for some help and added that possibly there was a tavern or some other place in the town where they could find strong fellows or maybe a horse or two to help push the carriage.

The young man told him not to worry, put on his coat, closed his book and told him to follow him. The driver couldn't believe his ears! It was a miracle!! He thanked the young man profusely and thanked G-d for sending him. Soon there would be help! Probably he knew where there were some big strong men! The driver followed him into the street but to his surprise the young man kept walking straight.... out of the town in the direction of the carriage.

The driver tried to protest, to explain that it was senseless to go alone, they had to go back and get help; bring a horse or even three. But the young man just kept walking swiftly through the swirling snow and freezing wind until they arrived at the site of the carriage.

Approaching the carriage, the young man looked at the businessman who had exited the carriage and then said quietly, "You have already been stuck here too long. I hate to see it when people are stuck. The time has come that you should continue on your journey."

There was something so simple in this young man's words that it caught the driver by surprise. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean, go back up to your seat, crack your whip over the horses and continue on your journey." He replied.

"And what will you do?" the driver asked.

"I'll get in the coach and return with you to Apta."

The confident tone of the young fellow's voice made the driver jump up onto the carriage, climb to his place, grab his whip and snap it over the horses and amazingly, the horses pulled the carriage smoothly out of the mud to freedom.

The astonished businessman and the driver entered the carriage and the young fellow entered after them. Minutes later they arrived in Apta and when the carriage stopped the young man alighted and walked quietly off without saying a word.

Before they could digest what just happened the irresistible smell of freshly baked bread wafted by them. They followed the aroma and in just moments found themselves entering the bakery of Apta and being greeted by its owner, a religious Jew. "Welcome honoured guests! Come wash your hands, sit down, and have some fresh bread" he said. They washed for bread while the baker prepared some hot tea and as they ate they told their host about the miracle that they had just experienced.

"Young man? Miracles? I know everyone in this city," the baker said. "I tell you for sure there are no young, thin miracle workers here. Perhaps it was Elijah the prophet himself!"

Suddenly the door of the bakery opened and a thin figure wrapped in an old winter coat slipped into the room. The baker's smile turned to a look of disgust. "That's my son-in-law! The whole day I work to support him and his family. He does nothing. He drives me crazy!"

The driver's face registered shock. "He's the one who took us out of the mud!!"

The baker's eyes widened. "He is the miracle worker?" he asked, and then he fainted.

As soon as the baker's son-in-law heard the commotion he ran to his father-in-law's aid. When the baker came to his senses he began to beg forgiveness.

That night a hidden Tzadik became revealed to the world, a great Rebbe who would help thousands lift themselves "out of the mud", known as the Yid HaKodosh (Holy Jew) of Peshiska, Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak Rabinowicz.

by Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Moses named Hosea . . . Joshua (13:16)

The letter yud, which had been removed from Sarai's name (when she was renamed "Sarah"-cf. Genesis 17:15), was soaring and flying before the divine throne all those years, and saying before G-d: "Because I am the smallest of the letters, I was taken out of the righteous Sarah?" She was therefore compensated by being added to Joshua. (*Midrash Rabbah*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 1 JULY 2016



BEGINS		ENDS
4.54	MELBOURNE	5.55
4.57	ADELAIDE	5.57
4.47	BRISBANE	5.43
6.15	DARWIN	7.07
4.44	GOLD COAST	5.40
5.05	PERTH	6.04
4.39	SYDNEY	5.38
4.44	CANBERRA	5.44
4.34	LAUNCESTON	5.39
4.57	AUCKLAND	5.58
4.44	WELLINGTON	5.48
4.29	HOBART	5.35
4.42	BYRON BAY	5.38

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS SHELACH • 25 SIVAN • 1 JULY

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4.54 PM
	MINCHA:	5.00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5.25 PM
SHABBOS	TEHILLIM:	8.00 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.58 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF TAMMUZ	
	WILL BE ON TUESDAY	12.28 (1 chelek) AM
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	4.50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5.55 PM
WEEKDAYS	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	8.00 AM / 9.15 AM
	MINCHA:	5.00 PM
	MAARIV:	5.45 PM