

# LAMPLIGHTER

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Parshas Vayeishev  
Shabbos Mevorchim  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Vayeishev, begins, "And Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojourning, in the land of Canaan." The Maggid of Mezeritch offers the following explanation on this verse:

"And Jacob dwelt" implies the act of settling in, an active investment of one's energies;

"In the land" alludes to the material realm, to the physical world and its affairs.

In Canaan, the Maggid explained, our Patriarch Jacob involved himself in mundane matters, utilizing simple physical objects in his service of G-d. The Hebrew word for sojourning, "megurei," is related to the word "agar," to hoard or to store.

Jacob's work in Canaan consisted of collecting and refining the sparks of holiness that were concealed within the physical world and obscured by its gross materiality. Through his service Jacob elevated these sparks and returned them to "his Father" - to G-d.

Divine service of this nature is derived from our acceptance of the yoke of heaven, without consideration for individual understanding.

The Jewish people is called "the Army of G-d." A soldier in the army must obey without question. He does not act at his own discretion, nor does his commander explain his reasoning when issuing an order. A soldier demonstrates pure obedience and acceptance of authority; so must every Jew in his G-dly service.

Jacob left Be'er Sheva for Canaan to begin his work of elevating the sparks of holiness. He understood that he and Esau could not live in close proximity, but he did not question why he was the one who would have to depart, uprooting himself from a life of Torah study and tranquility. Rather, he accepted G-d's command without protest, and acted with joy and enthusiasm.

For Jacob, going to Canaan represented a very great descent, for it required him to abandon the world of Torah study and involve himself in mundane matters in order to elevate them. Yet we see that Jacob's spiritual stature was not damaged by this in the least. On the contrary, by serving G-d with true acceptance of His authority, Jacob experienced a very great ascent, both in the spiritual sense and in the material wealth that he accrued.

From Jacob we can derive a lesson for every Jew: When it comes to serving G-d, it is not necessary to look for grandiose actions and methods. A Jew's task is to properly utilize even the most mundane of physical objects in his Divine service, elevating the hidden sparks of holiness they contain out of a sense of acceptance of the yoke of heaven.

## The Quest for Peace

By Yanky Tauber

"Ignorance is bliss." How facile—and how true! Are you sick to your soul of all the ugliness and injustice in the world? Just close your eyes, and make believe it ain't so. And when reality barges in your door and comes crashing down on your head, close your eyes tighter, imagine harder. If you sing loud enough to drown out the sounds of carnage in the next street or continent, you can experience peace (or at least participate in a ceremony celebrating the same).

The opening verse of this week's Torah reading, Vayeishev (Genesis 37–40), speaks of Jacob's desire to "settle down in tranquility." Anyone following the Torah's account of Jacob's life until this point cannot but agree that, after 34 years of fleeing from Esau and slaving for Laban, Jacob deserves some peace and quiet. But the very next verse begins the story of how, as the Talmud puts it, "there pounced on him the trouble of Joseph": the most beloved of Jacob's sons is sold into slavery by his own brothers, and for 22 years Jacob grieves, thinking him dead; and then Jacob is compelled to spend the last years of his life far from home, in alien Egypt.

Why, indeed, was Jacob's desire denied him? "When the righteous wish to settle in tranquility," explain our sages, "G-d says: Is it not enough for them what is prepared for them in the World to Come, that they also ask for a tranquil life in this world?"

But why not? Does G-d have a limited quantity of tranquility to mete out? Why can't we have the peace and perfection of the World to Come, and a few years of respite in this world as well?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the World to Come is a world of truth. It is a world in which what happened yesterday and what will happen tomorrow cannot be divorced from what's happening today, and what's happening to your fellow man cannot be separated from what is happening to yourself. Peace in our still unperfected world, viewed from the perspective of the "World to Come," is a lie.

Many are content to live this lie: to forget what happened yesterday, avoid thinking about what will happen tomorrow, ignore the sadness in a neighbor's eye, the poverty on the other side of town and the bombs in the other time zone.

But then there are the righteous: men and women who cannot relish their meal as long as someone, somewhere, remains hungry; who, if there is ignorance in the world, know their own wisdom to be deficient; who, if there is discord anywhere in G-d's creation, cannot be at peace with themselves.

Yes, you can have some peace in this world, and then experience the real thing in the World to Come—if you're willing to let the World to Come come when it comes.

The righteous are not that patient. Their physical selves may be stuck in this world, but their minds and souls inhabit the World to Come. They refuse to close their eyes.

# Slice of LIFE

## Finding Light on Chanukah

by Rabby Ben Tanny

"You wander in the jungles of Borneo, climb the highest mountain in Africa and spend months at a Thai boxing camp in Thailand... how do you keep Shabbat and kosher in all these places?"

I have been traveling since 1997 and never really stopped. My house is my backpack where I have everything I need; clothing, a tooth brush, juggling balls, and a pair of Tefillin.

People would joke and say, "Ben you will see the whole world before you turn 25, then where will you travel with your wife?" My response was, "I am leaving the exciting places like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen for my honeymoon."

One of my highlights of traveling is having the opportunity to be chazan/cantor for the many communities I pass through. I have been a chazan since my Bar Mitzvah and I thank G-d for giving me the gift of leading people in prayer.

When the situation permits, I look for opportunities to speak to fellow Jews about Torah and the divine, and with non-Jews about the seven Noahide Laws and what really goes on in Israel. I often call myself the "Undercover Rabbi."

Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world by population, with 250 million inhabitants. It is also the largest Muslim country in the world, with over 120 million Muslims. There aren't many Jews still living in Indonesia, perhaps a few dozen, and there is no Torah scroll there. Holders of Israeli passports are barred entry, and the general anti-Israel/anti-Jewish sentiment does not make it to the Jewish person's list of "top ten travel destinations."

I went there anyway - mostly to Bali where the people are Hindu and more

accepting of foreign tourists. I rode a motorbike around the island, did some scuba diving, went snorkeling, and visited a couple of monkey temples. The majority of tourists visiting Indonesia don't get past Bali, but there is more to see. I traveled across the main islands of Java and Sumatra and climbed to the tops of a few active volcanoes. I spent time in local villages.

At one point I was on the east coast of Bali with plans to dive Tullamben, a famous wreck site. I was the only tourist in the resort. On Shabbat afternoon, I sat on the beach talking to G-d. "Please Hashem, I've been in Indonesia for a few weeks now and have not yet met one Jew. Please send me someone to talk to on this fine Shabbat afternoon."

A few minutes passed until I heard voices of a family chattering noisily. I turned around and spotted mommy, daddy, and their three kids, who had just checked into the resort. I introduced myself to the father and when he responded I recognized his accent.

"Where are you from?" I asked.

"Montreal," he replied.

"Wow, I'm from Montreal too. Maybe our families know each other?" I suggested. "What's your family name?"

The man shrugged. "You probably don't know us. The name is Cohen."

I laughed and wished them "Shabbat Shalom." Mr. Cohen was just as baffled to meet another Jew from Montreal on a beach in Bali. I reminded the Cohens that the following night Chanukah started. Mr. Cohen's wife looked at him, "I told you honey, you were supposed to find out when Chanukah starts!" He told his wife he would buy candles the next day.

I sat back down on the beach and thanked G-d for giving me the opportunity to remind the Cohens about the light of Chanuka. It seems there is always a Jew somewhere out there no matter how where one travels.

I remembered years earlier when I was in Laos for Chanukah. I was walking around the marketplace looking to buy olive oil. I could have used candles but I thought it would be nice to light with olive oil like they did in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, reminiscent of the miracle that took place with the small cruse of oil on that first Chanukah. I spotted a Western guy talking in the Lao language with one of the vendors. I thought, "he speaks the language. Maybe he can help me."

We got to chatting. Daniel was from the United States and had been coming to Laos over the years to buy native musical instruments. He was a bit strange looking to me. He wore his hair in dreadlocks, sported a wild beard, had a few tattoos, some body piercings, and wore strange baggy clothing. Most prominent were his two stretched earlobes over large wooden pegs.

Daniel helped me to a chemist shop where they sold small bottles of olive oil used for skin treatment. The shopkeeper and Daniel were equally mystified when I wanted to buy all the bottles he had. I explained to Daniel about the upcoming Jewish holiday of Chanukah and how I needed the oil to light the Chanukah menorah.

"Man, I've not seen a menorah in over 20 years," Daniel remarked. "When I was a kid we would light one in the house."

It was Friday. I invited Daniel to join me for menorah lighting and Shabbat dinner. On Friday, the menora needs to be lit before Shabbat begins. I waited for Daniel until the last possible moment and then lit without him. The sun had already set when Daniel arrived. I could not have waited for him to light the menorah. Daniel did not mind. He sat down next to the menorah and watched the burning flames with great intensity. When I offered him to join my Shabbat meal he did not want to leave the lights. For the next three hours he sat staring at the menorah, letting his Jewish soul reignite with the flames of Chanukah.

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

ISSUE 1275

## SOUL COFFEE

Marriage is not a power struggle, and the home is not a battlefield. To give in does not mean to relinquish power, and talking things over does not mean you are entering negotiations.

The two of you comprise a single entity—a couple. What is good for one is good for the other. When you come to a decision, it is the decision of both of you as one being. Do it not as a sacrifice but as a gift, not as a defeat but as a triumph of love.



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## Practical Dating Advice

1) What are the good qualities to look for in a Shidduch? The answer is that first and foremost the person should be trustworthy, so that he could fully be relied upon in all his promises relating to the establishment of a truly Jewish home, a Binyan Adei Ad. The maximum assurance that he is indeed such a person is when he is religious, and his whole life, in every aspect of the daily life, is directed by the Torah and Mitzvos. For in such a case one can be fully certain that he is not motivated merely by the opinions of other people, but considers these matters as a sacred Mitzvah, commanded by G-d. Having ascertained this first and primary quality, it is then possible to consider also what additional qualities a person has.

2) How is it possible to get to know a person well before the wedding? The answer is that it is quite true that it is impossible to get to know a person before the wedding as well as after. However, it is possible to get to know him in an adequate way by making sure that he has the primary quality mentioned above. And this can be found out indirectly, in addition also to what he himself reveals. In other words, it is possible to find out about his family background, his upbringing and education, and his general conduct in the daily life. For a person's character is a combination of all these factors and influences.

I would like to conclude with a further important point. If it is always necessary to have G-d's blessing, how much more so in the matter of a Shidduch which is to last a lifetime. The way to receive G-d's blessings is, as the Torah states clearly, "If you will walk in My statutes, and will observe My commandments and do them"—then follow all the good blessings, not only spiritual but also material. And although one is expected to do everything in the natural order of things, in accordance with the regular local practice in the circles of Torah observant Jews, it is well to bear in mind that the blessing is from G-d, as it is written, "And He will bless you in all that you do." Therefore every additional effort in matters of Torah and Mitzvos will bring you an additional measure of Divine blessing. In your case specifically, there is something which can also act as a "Segulah," as I told your father. No doubt he has also told you about it, though I am very much surprised that I have not heard from him in this matter, and that he has not acknowledged receipt of my letter, which I trust has duly reached him.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

### What's with the Candles?

**Question:** I notice that lighting candles is a big part of Judaism. We light candles every Friday for Shabbat, we light candles on every festival, and Chanukah is all about candles. What is the connection between candles and spirituality?

**Answer:** There is something about a candle that makes it more spiritual than physical. A physical substance, when spread, becomes thin. Spirituality, when spread, expands and grows.

When you use something physical, it is diminished. The more money you spend, the less you have; the more gasoline you use, the more empty your tank becomes; the more food you eat, the more you need to restock your pantry. But spiritual things increase with use. If I use my wisdom to teach, the student learns, and I come out wiser for it; if I share my love with another, I become more loving, not less. When you give a spiritual gift, the recipient gains, and you lose nothing.

This is the spiritual property that candles share. When you use one candle to light another, the original candle remains bright. Its light is not diminished by being shared; on the contrary, the two candles together enhance each other's brightness and increase light.

We sometimes worry that we may stretch ourselves too thin. In matters of spirit, this is never the case. The more goodness we spread, the more goodness we have. By making a new friend, you become a better friend to your old friends. By having another child, you open a new corridor of love in your heart that your other children benefit from, too. By teaching more students, you become wiser.

Keep lighting your candles. There is an endless supply of light in your soul. You will never run out of goodness.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*As we light the first Chanukah candle this Saturday night, we will be commemorating the Jewish victory over the Greeks and the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days. The miracle of Chanukah occurred in the holiest place on earth: in the Holy Land, in Jerusalem, in the Holy Temple where G-d's Presence was revealed.*

*The miracle of the oil involved the menorah, which in the times of the Temple was lit specifically by a kohen. Nowadays, however, the mitzva of lighting the menorah is no longer expressly connected to the Temple, and everyone, even a small child, may do so. We light the menorah in our homes, "at the entrance of the house facing outward," so that its light can illuminate our surroundings.*

*G-d has given us a truly an amazing capability. Just think about it: Everyone, not only a kohen, can transform his home into a Holy Temple by lighting a Chanukah menorah! By kindling the menorah's lamps, which remind us of the lights of the Temple that illuminated the entire world, we suffuse our surroundings even in exile with holiness and purity. Furthermore, the menorah's light accompanies us throughout the year, until the following Chanuka, when we can observe the mitzva anew.*

*Every year before lighting the first candle we recite the "Shehecheyanu" blessing, "Blessed are You... Who has kept us alive and sustained us, and allowed us to reach this time," thanking G-d for enabling us to perform this mitzva and turn our own private homes in to Holy Temple. And when a Jew transforms his home into a Temple, G-d does everything - even performing miracles, if necessary - in order to enable him to continue bringing light into his personal life and the world at large.*

*Happy Chanukah!*

*J. I. Gutnick*

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

It was the first night of Chanukah. Rabbi Baruch of Mezibuz, the son of the Baal Shem Tov, stood with a group of his Chasidim. With great concentration, he said the blessing over kindling the Chanukah lights and lit the first candle.

The Chanukah candle was burning steadily when Rabbi Baruch and his Chasidim sat down around the menorah to sing Chanukah melodies. Suddenly, the flame began to shake and leap. It seemed to dance around in irritation. And then, the flame just disappeared. The candle didn't go out; no smoke arose. It was as if the flame flew away to another place.

The Rebbe's assistant stood up to relight the Chanukah candles. But the Rebbe stopped him. "The Chanukah flame will return to us," he told his surprised Chasidim. "It has gone on an important mission," said the Rebbe quietly, mysteriously.

Rabbi Baruch instructed his Chasidim to continue singing and discussion Torah thoughts. Close to midnight, a cry startled everyone. The Chasid who was sitting next to the menorah called out, "Rebbe, the flame has returned!"

Within moments, the group heard the faint sounds of a wagon. One of the Rebbe's chassidim entered the house. His clothes were torn, his hair disheveled, it was obviously painful for him to walk. But in direct contrast to his appearance, his eyes shone with happiness.

"Just a few days ago, I left my house to come to our holy Rebbe for the Chanukah festival," began the chasid. "This is not the first time I have come to the Rebbe, and I know the way well from my many journeys. But this time, my traveling was very slow. I became worried that I would not arrive in time so I decided to travel day and night and eventually I would reach Mezibuz.

"This was a foolish thing to do. But I realized that too late. Last night, a gang of bandits stopped me. They were overjoyed to find me. They were certain that if I was traveling at night I must be a very successful merchant who had important business to attend to which could not wait. They insisted that I give them all of my money. "They would not believe me when I told them I only had the few coins which were in my bag. They cross-examined me and tortured me so that I would reveal where the rest of my money was. I, of course, had nothing to tell them.

"After many hours of torture they sent me to a dark cellar. When their leader came to me, I tried to explain to him the great joy that one experiences when with the Rebbe and how important it had been to me to be with the Rebbe for Chanukah. It would seem that my words entered his heart or, perhaps, after he saw that all the tortures were futile, he began to believe me. Whatever the case, he told me:

'I see that you are a person who believes in G-d and

longs for his rabbi. Go on your way. But be advised that the path through this forest is very dangerous. It is filled with wild beasts. Even we do not travel through it alone.'

'If you succeed in making it through the forest, take your handkerchief and throw it in the ditch on the side of the road just after the signpost for the city. I will send a messenger tomorrow to see if it is there. In this way I will know that you have reached your destination. And, if you have, I promise you that I will leave my band of robbers and change my ways.'

"I became frightened anew. But what choice did I have? When I thought of lighting the Chanuka candles with the Rebbe, though, I was strengthened. I retrieved my horse and wagon and resumed my journey through the pitch-black forest.

"Not long after I began traveling, I saw ahead of me a pack of wild wolves. My horse refused to go any further. Suddenly, a tiny flame appeared in front of my horse and began leaping about. The flame went forward and the horse advanced. The rest of the way, the animals on all sides ran from before us as if the flame drove them away.

"This flame was with me until I arrived here. I threw my handkerchief in the ditch, and who knows? Maybe in the merit of this Chanukah candle, the band of criminals will return to a better path.

The Chasid finished his story. And so the group of Chasidim understood to where their Rebbe's Chanukah flame had mysteriously disappeared.

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CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 16-17 December	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	8:25	9:31
Adelaide	8:12	9:15
Brisbane	6:25	7:24
Darwin	6:54	7:47
Gold Coast	6:25	7:24
Perth	7:05	8:06
Sydney	7:49	8:51
Canberra	8:01	9:04
Launceston	8:28	9:38
Auckland	8:23	9:28
Wellington	8:37	9:47
Hobart	8:32	9:44
Byron Bay	7:26	8:25

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

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PARSHAS VAYISHLACH • 16 KISLEV • 16 DECEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8.25 PM
	MINCHA:	8.30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9.00 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.35 AM
	TEHILLIM	8.00 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR TEVES IS ON THURSDAY 4:52 (7 chalakim) AM FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	8.20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9.31 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	8.30 PM
	MAARIV:	9.20/9.40 PM