

LAMPLIGHTER

14 Shevat
Parshas Beshalach
Shabbos Tu'
B'Shvat
1282
10 February
5777/2017

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

As we read in this week's Torah portion, Beshalach, the Jewish people engaged in two conflicts on their way to receive the Torah at Mount Sinai. One was a battle against Pharaoh, and the other was a war against Amalek.

In connection to the war against Pharaoh G-d told the Jews, "G-d will fight for you and you should hold your peace." However, when it came to the war against Amalek, G-d said, "Go out and fight against Amalek."

In what way did the two wars differ? Why did G-d fight for the Jewish people in one instance, yet command them to fight for themselves in the other?

Pharaoh and his army were not preventing the Jews from reaching Mount Sinai. In fact, the Egyptians were massed behind them, blocking their way back to Egypt. Amalek, by contrast, presented the Jews with an obstacle on their way to receiving the Torah. Amalek was trying to prevent their advance. For this reason G-d commanded them to "Go out and fight against Amalek."

Whenever someone tries to prevent a Jew from accessing the Torah, the greatest efforts must be made to fight against him. True, waging war goes against the nature of the Jewish people; the verse "by your sword you shall live" was said to Esau, not to Isaac. But if fighting is necessary, we are obligated to do so.

The victory of the Children of Israel against Amalek transcended the laws of nature. According to nature, Amalek should have prevailed. But the Jewish people weren't fighting out of a sense of personal power and strength. They went to war with the knowledge that they were Moses' emissaries, that they were fighting to receive the Torah. And when a Jew fights with the power of Torah behind him he will succeed.

Amalek confronted the Jews at a time when they were enthusiastic and were eager to reach Mount Sinai. Amalek attempted to cool off that enthusiasm, to dampen their ardor for receiving the Torah. Amalek "met you (korcha) by the way" - from the Hebrew word for coldness, "kor."

The Essence of Things

By Tali Loewenthal

For many people, a major aspect of life is looking for the "essence." What does it mean? they ask, what does it really mean? The questioners might be teenagers looking cynically and quizzically at the world around them, students at university, backpackers in the Far East, housewives in the pay queue in a supermarket, businessmen at the end of a day in the office, senior citizens musing on a park bench. The person and the location might differ, but the question is the same: What is the essence of it all? What does it mean?

This week's Torah portion provides a valuable clue. The Jewish people are at last leaving Egypt, where they have been enslaved for many years. Now they will be traveling towards the Land of Israel. At this point the Torah tells us, "And Moses took the bones of Joseph along with him."

Joseph, viceroy of Egypt, had requested of his brothers that after his demise, when they would finally leave Egypt, they would take his remains with them for eventual burial in the Holy Land.

This tells us of the centrality of the Land of Israel in the consciousness of the Jewish people. Yet the term used -- "bones of Joseph" -- sounds a little intriguing. In fact, this is the word used by Joseph himself, before he died: "G-d will redeem you and you should take my bones with you." Why the emphasis on bones? Surely a more elegant expression could have been used, something a little more respectful?

Nothing in the Torah is without reason, and this expression too has a lesson to teach us.

In Hebrew the word for bones (atzamot) is closely related to the word for "essence" (atzmiut). The "bones" of Joseph means the physical skeleton of Joseph, the framework of the body. The "essence" of Joseph means his spiritual makeup, the framework of the soul. Moses took the casket containing the remains of Joseph's body in order to bury him in the Land of Israel, and he also took the essence of Joseph.

So what then is this essence of Joseph that Moses took with him? It is the striving to love and to care for another: to bring closer those who feel that they are far.

Why is this the essence of Joseph? When Joseph was born he was given his name by his mother Rachel, who said: "Let G-d add to me another son." Joseph (Yosef in the Hebrew) means "add". The literal meaning of this was a prayer to have a second son, but Chassidic teachings explain that this provides the inner meaning of Joseph's name and his entire being: to help each person be added and included among the Jewish people, and especially that individual who feels that he or she is "other" and remote from the community.

This is the essence of Joseph, and the everlasting legacy he left to Moses and the Jewish people: to devote ourselves to make "another" into a "son." To find those who feel distant and help them connect to their roots. To love and to care.

Slice of LIFE

Jewish Life on Campus, the Chabad Way

by Rachel Neuhausen

When I began my sophomore year of college at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, there was nothing more exciting than signing up for the annual Birthright Israel trip. My spirit was dampened, however, when I learned to my dismay that my boyfriend, Jared, and I were placed on the U of I Chabad trip instead of on one of the many other Birthright options that we were hoping for.

I didn't know what Chabad was, or who Rabbi Dovid and Goldie Tiechtel were, but I knew that this was supposed to be my trip to break free from the Chicago Jewish circle that I was raised in, and to meet new people from across the US. I worried that a trip with Chabad wouldn't offer me the new experiences I was looking for.

I definitely could not have predicted the effect that the trip would have on Jared and me, and that I would be mentioning that very trip at our wedding seven years later, with Rabbi Dovid laughing in the audience. Not only was that trip a great introduction to a new way of living Jewish life on campus, it was the first of many experiences with Chabad that has weaved itself through our young adult lives and helped us develop into the strong Jewish couple that we are today.

In November, an independent study of Chabad on Campus found that participation at Chabad while at college significantly increases participation in Jewish life after graduation. Jared and I can personally attest to this, and can attest to having seen this happen to dozens of other young Jews.

The study, commissioned by the Hertog Foundation and conducted by leading sociologists, surveyed and interviewed 2,400 students and

validated much of what I already knew about Chabad. One of the key findings was that 88% of the students who participate at Chabad, like myself, do not come from an Orthodox background. This holds true for us as we both were raised in conservative Northshore Chicago homes, with family Shabbats and weekly services.

I've had the opportunity to experience Chabad on campus as both a student leader as well as an observing adult, after returning to the University of Illinois for my master's degree. I would describe much of Rabbi Dovid and Goldie's success as stemming from their ability to relate to the students so well. The rabbi is a Facebook master, and he Instagrams and Snapchats. He visits fraternity houses, and lets them ask whatever questions they want.

But when they're not throwing high fives and sending texts, Dovid and



Goldie also act as your Jewish parents' right in the middle of campus. When you're ill, you can count on hot matza ball soup, delivered. When you're homesick, you can count on a traditional home-cooked meal nearly every night of the week, and five children pulling you in every direction making you forget you're on a college campus. For me, it was at my most vulnerable moments that I needed a heartfelt reminder that as a Jew, you stay strong and repair the world with goodness, light, and compassion.

My husband and I lost a family member during our undergraduate tenure, and Rabbi Dovid and Goldie played an active role in helping us cope with the loss. This included picking me up from class one day when my stress turned into a full-blown panic attack.

The rabbi even drove up to Chicago several times to make house calls to both our families, and did the same for many of our friends as well when they were in similar circumstances.

The study's report says that out of the 2,400 alumni that were surveyed, the most frequently used word to describe Chabad was "welcoming." This sort of judgment-free atmosphere opens a host of opportunities for young adults to begin exploring their lives and opportunities, including determining whom they marry, what they study, and how to handle life's challenges.

As the survey indicates, Chabad didn't stop on campus for us, but it introduced us to an entire network around the world in which to feel comfortable. My husband and I love to travel, and as Jews, we feel better knowing that we have a safe haven wherever we go. All it took was one phone call from Rabbi Dovid, and we were connected to a network of families that hosted us overnight for amazing meals and holiday celebrations. I stayed with the Chabad family in Costa Rica while I studied abroad my junior year, while my husband visited the Chabad in Rio de Janeiro. Together, we visited Chabad in Panama for Passover, and spent Hanukkah with the Chabad in the Dominican Republic. Likewise, as our lives took us to central Chicago, we continue today to be active with our local Chabad house, and feel well-educated on maintaining a Jewish home.

This is our story, but it is one of thousands being written around the country.

A Birthright trip that was supposed to offer us new experiences gave us that and so much more. Our lives were changed in so many ways from that one trip and from meeting Chabad. While this study has proven the success of Chabad as an organization and in general, for me it is personal. Chabad has offered me a home, a lifestyle, and connection to something so much bigger than myself.

And I wouldn't trade that for the world.

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

Editors: Shlomo Chaim Kesselman and Mendel Bacher

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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

ISSUE 1282

SOUL COFFEE

*He made this universe with a plan: That you will do the impossible.
But if it is the plan, then how could it be impossible?
For you it is impossible. For Him, anything is possible.
But I am the one who must do it. How am I to do the impossible?
Because He is with you and within you. Hiding.*



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Maimonides and Freudian Theory

You ask me about my reference to the Rambam and where it contains in substance, though in different terms, the concepts of the conscience and subconscious of modern psychology. I had in mind a passage in Hilchos Gerushin, end of ch. 2, in the Rambam's Opus Magnum ("Yad Hachazakah"). The gist of that passage is as follows: There are certain matters in Jewish Law, the performance of which requires free volition, no coercion. However, where the Jewish law requires specific performance, it is permitted to use coercive measures until the reluctant party declares "I am willing", and his performance is valid and considered voluntary. There seems here an obvious contradiction: If it is permitted [to] compel performance, why is it necessary that the person should declare himself "willing?" And if compulsory performance is not valid, what good is it if the person declares himself "willing" under compulsion?

And here comes the essential point of the Rambam's explanation:

Every Jew, regardless of his status and station, is essentially willing to do all that he is commanded to do by our Torah. However, sometimes the Yetzer (Hara) prevails over his better judgment and prevents him from doing what he has to do in accordance with the Torah. When, therefore, Beth Din compels a Jew to do something, it is not with a view to creating in him a new desire, but rather to release him from the compulsion which had paralyzed his desire, thus enabling him to express his true self. Under these circumstances, when he declares "I am willing," it is an authentic declaration.

To put the above in contemporary terminology: The conscious state of a Jew can be affected by external factors to the extent of including states of mind and even behavior which are contrary to his subconscious, which is the Jew's essential nature. When the external pressures are removed, it does not constitute a change or transformation of his essential nature, but, on the contrary, merely the reassertion of his innate and true character.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

Karma

Question: What is the Jewish view on karma?

Answer: Karma is an idea that permeates many cultures. In ancient Egypt, it was called "ma'at," in Greek, "heimarmene" or "fate" and in Germanic, "wyrd." Basically, the idea is everything is within the system (Greek: cosmos) and so everything bounces back eventually. You can play around with the system and even manipulate it, but you can't escape it.

Divine Providence ("hashgacha") means that we can reach beyond the system. We can plead with the Creator of the system, or do teshuvah (repent) and transform ourselves, even change our past. We can break out of the prison of our personal Egypt and reach to the pre-cosmic Infinite Light, unbounded and free.

For example, the "karma" of Abraham and Sarah was such that they would not have children together. The Torah tells that G-d lifted Abraham above the stars and Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Similarly, the "karma" of his offspring was to be enslaved to Pharaoh. Again, divine intervention overrode that karma and they were miraculously freed.

Yes, karma envelopes us and all that exists. But there's an escape hatch, through teshuvah, through Torah and through good deeds.

A WORD

from the Director

"The righteous person shall flourish like the date palm..." wrote King David in Psalms. A righteous person is compared to a date palm as it bears exceptional fruit. Dates are one of the seven species for which the Land of Israel is praised. The Torah describes the Land of Israel as "a land of wheat, barley, vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olives that produce oil and honey (dates)." This Shabbat, we will be celebrating Tu B'Shevat - the "New Year" of trees - thus, it is fitting to briefly discuss these seven types of produce and how they connect with our spiritual service:

Wheat: Our Sages described wheat as "food for humans," an allusion to that aspect of our existence that makes us human - the G-dly soul. Like actual food, our G-dly soul's mission must be assimilated into the totality of our being.

Barley: Barley is described as "food for animals." It refers to the elevation of the animal soul.

Grapes: Grapes are used to produce wine, which "gladdens G-d and people."

Figs: The Torah relates that figs were used to make the first garments worn by Adam. Later, G-d gave man "garments of leather" ("ohr" spelled with the letter "ayin"), which Rabbi Meir in the Talmud refers to as "garments of light" (spelled with an "alef"). From this we learn that a Jew's service must involve spreading G-dly light.

Pomegranates: We must always remember that every Jew is "as filled with mitzvot as a pomegranate is filled with seeds."

Olives: Olives are bitter. A Jew's life should be characterized by sweetness, but in times of introspection he must come to a state of bitterness when evaluating his spiritual achievements.

Dates: Dates refer to the Torah's mystical dimensions, the study of which strengthens the inner dimensions of the Jewish soul.

Through developing our spiritual potential that relates to all these qualities, and spreading these concepts to others, we will merit to proceed to the Land of Israel with Moshiach, where we will "partake of its produce and be sated with its goodness."

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED



Many years ago in the Land of Israel, there lived a man named Reb Nisim. He and his family lived in a small stone house, very much like all the other houses in his village, with one exception. Next to his house there grew the most beautiful tree, which produced a crop of luscious pomegranates. People traveled from far and wide to purchase these special "Nisim" fruit. In fact, they were so much in demand that the family was able to live all year on the profits they made from selling these pomegranates.

Every summer the tree was heavy with the beautiful, red fruits. But one summer not even one pomegranate could be seen. Reb Nisim called his eldest son and told him, "Climb up to the top of the tree; perhaps there are some fruits there that we don't see." The boy climbed to the top, and indeed, hidden from view were three precious fruits - the most beautiful they had ever seen.

When Shabbat came, Reb Nisim put two of the pomegranates on the table for a special Shabbat treat. The third, he put away to eat on the holiday of Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of the Trees.

That was a difficult year for the family, as they had always depended on the tree for their livelihood. Finally Reb Nisim's wife suggested that he travel outside the Holy Land to earn or raise some money. He was very reluctant to leave. He had lived his entire life surrounded by the holiness of the Land of Israel, and he didn't want to "shame" the land by admitting that he could not make a livelihood there. He tried in various ways to earn some money, but every effort met with failure, and it seemed that he had no choice but to do as his wife had suggested. "All right," he said. "I will go, but I will never reveal to any soul that I come from the Holy Land."

For many months he traveled from city to city, but each place had its own poor to support, and he had no luck. Since it is a great mitzva (commandment) to support the poor of the Land of Israel, he would have received alms had he identified himself, but this he refused to do.

It was Tu B'Shevat when Reb Nisim arrived in the city of Koshta, Turkey. When he came to the local synagogue, a shocking sight met his eyes. All the Jews of the city were gathered there, weeping, mourning and reciting Psalms. "What has happened?" asked Reb Nisim, in alarm.

The sexton of the synagogue explained, "The son of the Sultan is very ill. He knows that Jews are accomplished doctors, and he has decreed that every Jew will be expelled from his realm unless we produce a doctor or a cure for his son. So far, we have failed." As Reb Nisim was absorbing this terrible news, the rabbi's assistant asked Reb Nisim to accompany him to the rabbi, saying, "Our rabbi says he is very happy to have a guest from the Holy Land."

Reb Nisim went as requested, but he was puzzled. How did the rabbi know? He had been so careful to tell no one where he was from. He decided to ask the rabbi directly.

"There is a special fragrance about you. I feel it is the holiness of the land which adheres to you," the rabbi replied.

"What you are smelling must be the fragrance of the

pomegranate I have brought with me," Reb Nisim explained. "I carried it with me especially for Tu B'Shevat, and since that is today, I beg you to partake of it with me."

The rabbi was overjoyed. "Please, tell me your name," he asked.

"My name is Reb Nisim." When the rabbi heard that he smiled broadly. "This surely is a sign of Divine Providence. In honor of Tu B'Shevat, I have been studying about the different types of fruits that are described in the holy books." The rabbi described what he had learned. Then he said, "The acronym of the word 'rimonim' (pomegranates) is 'refua melech u'bno nisim yaviya meheira' - the recovery for the king and his son, Nisim will bring quickly. Let us bring some of your pomegranate juice to the king's son at once. Perhaps, in the merit of the fruits of the Holy Land, G-d will bring us success."

The two men were admitted to the room of sick prince, who was lying close to death. They approached the bed and administered a few drops of juice into the unconscious boy's mouth. Suddenly color rose into his pallid complexion. They gave him a few more drops, and there was a weak but unmistakable flicker of the prince's eyelids.

The Sultan grasped the hand of his beloved child, and tears of joy welled in his eyes. He turned to the two Jews and said, "I will never forget what you have done for my son."

The next day Reb Nisim and the rabbi were summoned to the palace. The prince was sitting up in bed, a happy smile on his tired face. The Sultan's servants brought in large velvet bags bulging with gold coins and jewels. "Reb Nisim, this is just a small token of my gratitude to you for having saved my son. As for the Jews in my realm, they may stay and live in peace."

Reb Nisim returned home laden with riches. The next summer, the wondrous pomegranate tree produced as many beautiful fruits as ever. Its fame spread as the story of the prince was retold throughout the Holy Land.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Soon after allowing the children of Israel to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh chases after them to force their return, and the Israelites find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's armies and the sea. G-d tells Moses to raise his staff over the water; the sea splits to allow the Israelites to pass through, and then closes over the pursuing Egyptians. Moses and the children of Israel sing a song of praise and gratitude to G-d.

In the desert the people suffer thirst and hunger, and repeatedly complain to Moses and Aaron. G-d miraculously sweetens the bitter waters of Marah, and later has Moses bring forth water from a rock by striking it with his staff. He causes manna to rain down from the heavens before dawn each morning, and quails to appear in the Israelite camp each evening.

The children of Israel are instructed to gather a double portion of manna on Friday, as none will descend on Shabbat, the divinely decreed day of rest. Some disobey and go to gather manna on the seventh day, but find nothing. Aaron preserves a small quantity of manna in a jar, as a testimony for future generations.

In Rephidim, the people are attacked by the Amalekites, who are defeated by Moses' prayers and an army raised by Joshua.

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 10-11 February	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	8:06	9:05
Adelaide	7:57	8:54
Brisbane	6:18	7:12
Darwin	6:59	7:50
Gold Coast	6:18	7:11
Perth	6:53	7:49
Sydney	7:35	8:31
Canberra	7:45	8:43
Launceston	8:04	9:05
Auckland	8:06	9:04
Wellington	8:13	9:15
Hobart	8:06	9:09
Byron Bay	7:18	8:12

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS BESHALACH SHABBOS TU B'SHVAT • 14 SHEVAT • 10 FEBRUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8.06 PM
	MINCHA:	8.15 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8.40 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10.07 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	8.00 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9.05 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	8.05 PM
	MAARIV:	8.55 PM