

# LAMPLIGHTER

5 Av  
Parshas  
Devarim  
**1306**  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Book of Deuteronomy (Devarim), which we begin reading this Shabbat, presents a fundamental question. It begins: "These are the words that Moses spoke," i.e., it collects Moses' farewell addresses to the Jewish people, statements which he made on his own initiative. On the other hand, one of the fundamental principles of Jewish faith is that every word in the Torah, including Deuteronomy is "the word of G-d," endowed to us by Divine revelation.

One of the resolutions offered points to the utter identification of Moses with G-d. For this reason, in these addresses Moses occasionally uses the pronoun "I" when speaking of G-d. For example, in the second portion of the Shema, it says: "I will grant your rains in their season." The "I" refers to G-d, but was spoken by Moses. As our Sages commented: "The Divine presence spoke from Moses' throat."

This motif is not only limited to Moses. Our Sages comment: "Every new Torah insight developed by an experienced scholar was given to Moses on Mount Sinai." Although the person labored to bring out these new ideas, they are not his own, but G-d's. Every person has the ability to transcend the human realm and reveal Divine truth.

What is the key to discovering such insights? Identifying one's "I" with G-d and not with one's own self. When a person is preoccupied with self-concern - what I want, and what I think is right - that is what he will think and speak about. When, by contrast, he is able to step beyond his individual concerns, he is able to appreciate - and share with others - G-d's wisdom.

The Torah portion of Devarim is always read before the fast of Tisha B'Av, the day on which we commemorate the destruction of both Holy Temples. More importantly, it is a day when we focus on building from those ruins, seeing that exile is not in itself an end, but rather a phase in the progress of mankind to its ultimate goal - the Future Redemption.

Our Sages describe exile with the analogy of sowing seeds. Before a seed can grow into a flowering plant, its exterior husk must utterly decompose. Similarly, for the G-dly core of the Jewish people to flourish, all the external dimensions of their personality must be stripped away.

In the analogue, the descent that characterizes the exile wears away at our connection with G-d. Without gentleness or mercy, exile tears apart the husky shells of our personalities. Layer after layer of who we think we are, and what we've been trained to be, what we would like to be, is peeled away.

Ultimately, what is left? The very essence of the soul, the point within our being that is an actual part of G-d. And when that essence is tapped, true growth begins. When this pattern spreads, the Jewish people blossom. In doing so, they spread the awareness of G-dliness throughout the world, precipitating the dawning of the era of the Redemption.

## Tisha B'Av

*By Chana Engel*

The blackest of days on the calendar year, When hundreds of generations have shed hot tears. A date marked with sorrow, with fire and blood, When G-d rules with judgement and tears endlessly flood.

The crackling of flames - this day echoes their sound, Our Holy Temple, twice, burnt down to the ground.

We've been mourning our loss for a millennium – more, Because our wound is still open, our pain is still raw.

Why are we stubbornly clinging to our sorrowful past? Do we like to feel lethargic and downcast?

Build a bridge & get over it – don't you think it is time? So we don't have our temple, but we're managing fine.

That's the realist's view, that I wish to dispel, As Napoleon the Great put it so well.

"A nation that mourns 2000 years through, Will live to see their temple rebuilt anew!"

It's not tears of despair, it's our cry of hope, In a state of exile – we'd rather not cope!

Get over it?! "No way!" we should scream, It's not that easy to get us to relinquish our dream!

It's not about mourning what was long ago, The way to rebuild is to look to tomorrow.

It's about refusing to accept what we currently see, And opting to focus on what will be.

Our denial of reality stems from the belief, That there's a better future devoid of any grief.

The only reason we're still weeping destruction, Is because we fervently believe there'll be reconstruction.

So cry your heart out on the ninth of Av, But keep in mind what was said above.

No, we're not crying over milk that's been spilt, Yes, very soon we'll see the Beit Hamikdash rebuilt.

# Slice of LIFE

## A Special Visit

by David Nesenoff

As a Conservative rabbi for 20 years I had attended my share of hospital visits and, in more severe situations, stood with the family alongside their loved one as he or she left this world. That is why when my father lay in his hospital bed with hours remaining to his life I wanted my moment with him; and indeed, I knew the importance of that moment.

It was Saturday night and the doctors said he would most likely pass sometime the next day. The conflict was in front of me; I was to officiate at a funeral that Sunday morning but I wanted to stay with my father. Every rabbi knows that often he has to tend to his flock prior to even his own family, but there is only one time when the soul leaves the body and I had been there for others; it just felt correct and fair that I should be there for my own beautiful father.

But the family who had already sustained their loss was counting on me and it seemed like the logistical choice to preside at the funeral and then rush back to the hospital, hopefully in time. As I drove to the graveside funeral that Sunday morning I kept wondering if my father was perhaps leaving this world at that very second and I was not there. The clock was ticking. I arrived at the Queens, New York cemetery and found the open grave, situated alongside the very edge of the grounds next to the fence on Francis Lewis Boulevard. Trying not to let the mourners realize that I was on borrowed time, I respectfully recited prayers; but my heart and head were miles away. I didn't want to rush, but I had to be efficient while being compassionate, as they deserved their sacred time as well.

Perhaps I didn't notice it right away

because of all that was whirling through my mind, but just a few feet away was a tremendously large mass of human beings in a line. All types, looks, styles and ages stood there waiting; they were entering and exiting a small structure right there in the cemetery.

Although I was not involved with Chabad, I realized that this place was the resting place of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I knew that there had been this master rabbi of Chabad who was very special and who with great wisdom and compassion advised everyone from the homeless to heads of state. And now he obviously continued to draw hundreds of souls waiting for a moment of his time.

I thought about all this while juggling the funeral Psalms and sentences, as well as the sustained thought in my mind about wanting to be with my father. The eulogies and interment finally concluded and although I am usually the last one to leave, I knew what I had to do; but something stopped me from fleeing.

I was drawn to the sight of the Rebbe's grave. When I was a teenager growing up on Long Island, I remember our Conservative synagogue's youth group had a field trip for a Shabbat in Brooklyn. At the time I really didn't know much about where we went, other than we were observing the day of rest in traditional homes and eating Sabbath foods. I remember seeing a noisy tumultuous room of black beards and hats come to a complete silent stand still as a white bearded man walked through an aisle that was instantaneously created by two walls of attentive, respectful men.

I also recall the memorable fun and interesting songs we sang that Shabbat afternoon, "Ufaratzta," "Ain't Gonna Work on Saturday," and "Little Bird." But why am I thinking about beards and "Ufaratzta"? I need to run to the car, jump in and race to the hospital. I truthfully don't remember how it happened, but I found myself in that structure known as the Ohel where the Rebbe rests alongside his father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe. People encircled the graves with their pleas and supplications; perhaps they were petitioning for health issues or business deals or brides to find grooms. My prayers for health had concluded the night before with the knowledge of the inevitable; I just wanted to be with my father when he passed from this world.

Even though the clock was still

ticking, the sentiment of the very first of the seven Lubavitcher Rebbes is so true. Sometimes the long road gets you to your destination faster than the short trail, which will delay your journey. I took the time to place my tearful request.

Upon my arrival to the hospital my family was gathered around the bed and they all grabbed a well-deserved break from the difficult emotional moments they were experiencing; I found myself alone in the room with my father. Never have I witnessed such a dignified, noble, sacred exit of one's G-dly soul from this material world. The date was Tisha B'Av, the ninth of Av. Who could have thought that the most tragic day on the Jewish calendar could feel a little more pain?

My father had shown me how to walk and dance on this earth and I had the great merit and honor to learn from him how to step from this world as well.

I saw the Rebbe from afar when I was a teenager, and then I experienced his compassionate blessings and warmth up close in the Ohel that very memorable Sunday of Tisha B'Av. As a Chabad Jew today, I have continued to form a deep relationship with this Rebbe through literally the hundreds and hundreds of his beautiful Shluchim, emissaries, that I have visited on my speaking tours throughout the world.

My father, may he rest in peace, I am sure is proud to know that his grandson Adam and his granddaughter Shira are now Lubavitcher Chasidim; and that they both lead lives of true Yiddishkeit, as they pursue the Rebbe's directives to follow Torah and mitzvos, to conduct acts of kindness and to endeavor to transform darkness into light.

*Dr. David Nesenoff is a world-renowned inspirational speaker and writer on Jewish topics including Chabad, anti-Semitism, Israel, Shabbat, women in Judaism, and relationships.*

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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## The Childless Woman's Role in Judaism. Part 1

Now with regard to your question about the woman's role from the viewpoint of our religion, or, as you refer to it, 'orthodox' Judaism,

I must first point out that the division of Judaism into 'orthodox, conservative, reform,' etc. is a purely artificial one, for all Jews have one and the same Torah, given by the One and Same G-d, though there are more observant Jews and less observant Jews. To tag on a 'label' does not, of course, change the reality.

As for the attitude of Judaism to the woman, it has also been frequently pointed out that those who think that the Torah places the woman in an inferior role to that of the man labor under a misconception, for it has no basis in truth. Man and woman are like the head and the heart in the physical body: both are equally vital, though each has entirely different functions, and only the normal functioning of both together ensure a healthy body. The same is true of the role of the man and woman in Jewish life, and, indeed, in any healthy human society.

It follows that the heart need not feel inferior to the brain, although in certain aspects it depends on the brain, just as the brain need not feel inferior to the heart because in certain respects it depends on the latter. Similarly in Jewish life there are duties and functions which G-d has allotted to the woman and those allotted to the man.

Where a person, for some reason, is unable to perform a certain Mitzva or some of his or her functions, there is a ruling in the Torah, *Toras Emes* (so called because all its teachings are true), "the Merciful One excuses a person who is incapable of performing his, or her, duty." Indeed, G-d who knows what is in the heart of everyone, and knowing that were the person able, he or she would have performed it, considers the thought in place of the deed.

Incidentally, it is noteworthy that of the various Divine names, it is the name *רחמן* ('Merciful One') that is used in the above ruling. This pointedly emphasizes that all G-d's precepts derive from His attribute of mercy and loving-kindness, which, like all Divine attributes, is infinite. It follows that where a person is precluded from performing a Mitzva by circumstances beyond his or her control is completely excused and exonerated.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

### Why Do Jews Pray Three Times a Day?

**Question:** Everyone who has been to synagogue knows that we Jews recite the Amidah (silent prayer) three times every day. Why do we all say the same thing, and why do we do it at those specific times? When did it all start?

**Answer:** The Talmud offers two (apparently divergent) origins of the thrice-daily prayer regimen:

a) The three prayers were actually instituted by our forefathers. Abraham instituted the morning (Shacharit) prayer; Isaac first prayed the afternoon (Minchah) service; and Jacob was the first to say the evening (Maariv) prayers.

b) The rabbis timed the daily prayers to correspond with the two daily Temple sacrifices, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and the burning of the limbs of the afternoon offering, which would go on through the night. This explains why on days like Shabbat, when additional sacrifices were offered, we have an additional (Musaf) prayer.

The Talmud then goes on to say that both are true. Although the patriarchs established praying at these three times of the day, their conduct wouldn't necessarily obligate us to do so. It was only later that the rabbis formalized the three daily prayers as standard practice, and they timed them to correspond to the daily sacrifices.

As mentioned, there was not always formal prayer in Judaism. Until the time of Ezra, each person would pray according to his ability and eloquence. A person who was so inclined would offer many lengthy prayers and requests, and one who was less articulate would pray less. Some would pray once daily; others, several times.

After the destruction of the First Temple and towards the end of the Babylonian Exile, the Jews were dispersed in Persia, Greece and other lands. The Jewish children born in these foreign countries spoke a peculiar mix of Hebrew and other languages, and were unable to express themselves coherently in any one language. In the words of Nehemiah: "Their children spoke half in Ashdodite, and did not know how to speak the Jewish language. Rather, [they would speak] according to the language of various other peoples."

This greatly hampered their ability to pray to G-d in unadulterated Hebrew. When Nehemiah's co-leader Ezra and his court saw this, they formalized the 18 blessings of the Amidah, which is the heart of the daily prayer service. (The formalized Amidah leaves room for one to express personal requests and prayers.)

At that time, they determined that this formula of standard prayer be said thrice daily, corresponding to the Temple sacrifices.

## A WORD

from the Director

*This Shabbat, the Sabbath before Tisha B'Av, is called Shabbat Chazon. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev used to note that the name comes from the word machaze, meaning "vision," for "on that day everyone is shown the future Holy Temple."*

*The purpose of this vision is to inspire and encourage a Jew: having caught a glimpse of the Third Holy Temple in its heavenly perfection, all that is left for him to do is to bring it down to this world.*

*Although not everyone actually sees the Third Holy Temple, everyone is intrinsically affected by it. This is similar to the following episode from the Book of Daniel: "And I Daniel alone saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them..."*

*Our Sages ask why a dread fell upon the men with Daniel if they had not actually witnessed the vision.*

*They answer: "Though they did not see it, their heavenly soul saw it."*

*In the same way, on Shabbat Chazon, the soul sees the future Sanctuary; moreover, this perception leaves an impression on the individual, even on his body.*

*Tuesday, Tisha B'Av, is a fast day. On that day we mourn the destruction of the First and Second Holy Temples and other devastating events that took place on that date.*

*The Rebbe spoke about the comment of our Sages that Tisha B'Av is the birthday of Moshiach. The Rebbe explained that this is true because the moment the destruction began, the potential for the Redemption also began. And, since Moshiach was "born" on Tisha B'Av, his mazal is stronger and shines brighter on that day.*

*May we celebrate in actuality the birthday of Moshiach this Tisha B'Av with the revelation of Moshiach and the Complete and Final Redemption.*

J. I. Gutnick

# Here's my Story

Personal Encounters  
With The Rebbe. Culled From JEM's  
'My Encounter' Project



When my friend Rabbi Daniel Moskowitz, a Chabad emissary in Illinois, and I were young students in yeshiva, we volunteered for Merkos Shlichus – the Chabad Jewish outreach program by rabbinical students. In the summer of 1976, we were presented with

an opportunity to go on a short trip to Sweden. We prepared everything that was needed, and we went to Sweden for about ten days or two weeks. We visited a few small towns, but mainly we stayed in the capital, Stockholm. We gave classes in the local synagogues and we distributed mezuzahs and tefillin.

While there, we were told that about two hours from Stockholm was a very small town by the name of Vasteras, where a few Jewish families were living. So we decided to visit them.

The Jews in this town were not religious, except for one man. I remember his name was Gilinderman. He told us that his family had made aliyah to Israel in 1948, and for a time he had even learned in the Lubavitcher yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, Israel. Then his family went back home to Europe, and he ended up marrying a Jewish woman from this small Swedish town and settled there.

We were astonished by his story, and we spent some time with him. He told us about his life in this town. He said he was alone there in trying to keep Torah and mitzvos. He put on tefillin, and he would not eat unkosher meat. He slaughtered his own chickens in order to keep kosher as best as he could.

He also told us that all the Jews of the region get together for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in a place two hour's drive from there. They hold services and, since he's the only one who knows how to read Hebrew, he is the cantor – the chazzan and the baal koreh – the one who reads the Torah. He said that, unfortunately, he goes by car but, as he put it, "I am the only one... I have to save all these Jews. So on the High Holidays, I go there."

That was the extent of our visit, and when we returned home, we wrote a report to the Rebbe. The Rebbe must have been happy by what he read, because a few weeks later, Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky, the Rebbe's representative in Europe, told us that the Rebbe mentioned our report to him and said: "I got a report from Sweden that the yeshiva students were very successful." We were,

obviously thrilled to hear that.

But here is the part that I want to tell you about: A year later, another group went to Sweden and visited this Gilinderman. He showed them a telegram that he got from the Rebbe, which arrived a few days before Rosh Hashanah.

In the telegram, the Rebbe wrote, "It is very important to save Jews and to be a chazzan on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. But you cannot travel on the holy day. Please go there beforehand. May Hashem grant you hatzlocha – success in fulfilling his mitzvos and spreading yiddishkeit."

Now I ask you: How many reports did the Rebbe get? Our report was one of many. We were just two yeshiva students who wrote a report that included a small detail about a small Jew in a small town, and we mentioned in passing that he makes the minyan for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and that, unfortunately, he goes by car because he is the only one who can lead services.

But here, the Rebbe sent a telegram to this Jew saying that although it is very important to be a chazzan and make minyanim, he should never desecrate the holy day for that. A whole telegram! So much personal attention the Rebbe gave to a small Jew in a small town that is so small it is not even on most maps – in the interior of Sweden no less.

We were yeshiva students on a short mission. Bochurim! And yet the Rebbe read my report, and every other bochur's report, and paid attention to every detail.

*Rabbi Yosef Dovid Weitman is a Chabad emissary in Brazil for over 30 years. He was interviewed in his home on a My Encounter trip to Brazil in June, 2012.*

## PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

*On the first of Shevat (thirty-seven days before his passing), Moses begins his repetition of the Torah to the assembled children of Israel, reviewing the events that occurred and the laws that were given in the course of their forty-year journey from Egypt to Sinai to the Promised Land, rebuking the people for their failings and iniquities, and enjoining them to keep the Torah and observe its commandments in the land that G-d is giving them as an eternal heritage, into which they shall cross after his death.*

*Moses recalls his appointment of judges and magistrates to ease his burden of meting out justice to the people and teaching them the word of G-d; the journey from Sinai through the great and fearsome desert; the sending of the spies and the people's subsequent spurning of the Promised Land, so that G-d decreed that the entire generation of the Exodus would die out in the desert. "Also against me," says Moses, "was G-d angry for your sake, saying: You, too, shall not go in there."*

*Moses also recounts some more recent events: the refusal of the nations of Moab and Ammon to allow the Israelites to pass through their countries; the wars against the Amorite kings Sichon and Og, and the settlement of their lands by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and part of the tribe of Manasseh; and Moses' message to his successor, Joshua, who will take the people into the Land and lead them in the battles for its conquest: "Fear them not, for the L-rd your G-d, He shall fight for you."*

## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

### PARSHAS DEVARIM • 5 AV • 28 JULY

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:12 PM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:45 PM
<b>SHABBOS DAY:</b>	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:52 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:10 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:12 PM
<b>TISHA B'AV TUESDAY:</b>	MINCHAH:	1.00; 4:55 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS:	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	MAARIV:	6:05 PM

## CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 28 - 29 July	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	5:12	6:12
Adelaide	5:13	6:12
Brisbane	4:59	5:54
Darwin	6:22	7:13
Gold Coast	4:57	5:52
Perth	5:20	6:17
Sydney	4:55	5:53
Canberra	5:00	5:59
Launceston	4:54	5:57
Auckland	5:14	6:14
Wellington	5:04	6:07
Hobart	4:50	5:54
Byron Bay	4:55	5:50