

LAMPLIGHTER

10 Elul
Parshas
Ki Seitzei
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Teitzei, we read about the concept of divorce. In order for a Jewish couple to terminate their marriage, the husband must "write her a get (bill of divorce), and give it in her hand," i.e., the actual document must leave the husband's domain and be given over into the wife's.

Allegorically speaking, the Jewish people and G-d are likened to husband and wife, the "marriage" having taken place when the Torah was given at Mount Sinai.

Years later, when the Jewish people sinned, G-d "sent her from his house," i.e., banished them from the land of Israel, handing them, in effect, a "bill of divorce."

Yet how can we say that G-d "divorced" the Jews, when one of the principal requirements in the dissolution of a marriage is that the get leave the husband's domain and be given over into the wife's?

Is not the entire world G-d's domain, as it states, "The earth is filled with His glory"? Indeed, how can there be any domain that is separate from G-d?

The answer is that while G-d is certainly everywhere, His Presence in the world can be either revealed or hidden. When the Holy Temple stood in Jerusalem the Divine Presence was clearly manifest; ten open miracles perpetually proclaimed G-d's existence. It was a period in which the love between G-d and the Jewish people was open and apparent; His Presence in the world was palpable and easily perceived. During the exile, however, G-d "conceals" Himself, as it were, with the resultant perception of estrangement and disconnection from G-d.

In truth, however, this perception is only an illusion, brought about by our misdeeds. When Israel sinned, G-d responded by "withdrawing," causing them to feel as if they had entered another domain, and thus validating the "bill of divorce." We must therefore bear in mind that the entire concept of the existence of "another domain" is fallacious; the "divorce" between G-d and the Jewish people is also an illusion. The Jewish people's alienation from G-d is only imaginary, the consequence of the darkness of exile.

Very soon, when Moshiach ushers in the era of Redemption, G-d's eternal love for His people will again be openly demonstrated, and the imaginary "divorce" between the Jews and G-d will have been annulled.

A Successful Entrepreneur Shares Her Secret?

By Chana Weisberg

I recently read an article about a successful entrepreneur. She is a busy, hands-on mother of three young children who also runs a prosperous business. Several employees work for her, and she is constantly involved with launching new projects. To top it off, she is also writing a book about her business ideas.

How does she manage to balance it all?

She explained one key tool to avoid becoming sidetracked. At all times, she keeps with her a small black notebook. Throughout her many meetings, she jots down notes or important reminders. This way, she clears her mind to focus on her goals, rather than on what tasks she needs to remember.

More importantly, at the beginning of her day, she writes down three or four goals she wants to complete that day. She needs to be flexible to accommodate the many diversions that will require her attention. But, if at the end of the day, she can see that she accomplished those three or four goals, she knows she is on track.

This week's Torah portion, Ki Teitzei, begins with the words: "When you go out to war on your enemies, the L-rd your G-d shall deliver them into your hands."

Every day, we face a battlefield trying to realize our hopes, goals and dreams, while various forces within our lives work to defeat us. Every day, we struggle to prioritize our commitments, deciding which things can be put aside and which cannot.

In every battle, the way to achieve victory is to gain the higher ground, to go "on (or over) our enemies." We cannot become stooped in the minutia of daily life; we need to rise above it, while keeping an eye on our ultimate goals. Most importantly, we need to remember that it is G-d who will lead us to victory and help us access our talents to succeed.

Later in the parshah, we are commanded: "When You build a new house, you shall make a guard rail for your roof."

Building a house can mean working on any endeavor, goal or mission that we set out to achieve. In order to succeed and avoid being dragged into life's many distractions, we must remain sufficiently aloof from them. We accomplish this by building a guard rail to keep us on track. By setting appropriate boundaries, we can focus on what's important so that we don't fall away from our agendas.

Not all of us are suited to build large and successful businesses. But, more importantly, all of us can—and should—make it our business to build our spiritual selves into the people we wish to become.

The New Year is right around the corner. Perhaps now would be a good time to make a list of our three or four spiritual goals for this coming year.

And with G-d's help, we will succeed.

Slice of LIFE

Tefilin Light Up, Kansas City

by Steve Hyatt

One of the wonderful aspects of my work is the opportunity to travel around this great country during the course of fulfilling the responsibilities of my job. Whenever possible, I try to direct my travel through or near Wilmington, Delaware so I can spend time at Chabad of Delaware, study Torah with Rabbi and Rebbetzin Vogel, daven (pray) with my friends and eat some of the best kugel this side of Jerusalem.

Sometimes it takes some creative planning by my travel agent, but one way or another I usually find my way to Delaware for the holidays as well. Maybe I have been spoiled, but when I need a spiritual recharge, the only place to go is Chabad of Delaware.

Recently I faced a daunting challenge. I had to take care of some important business and still find a way to get to Delaware in time for the last two days of Pesach. The only way to do so was to schedule a flight through Kansas City, Missouri, a place I had never been to before.

The trip from Oregon to the Kansas City airport was uneventful, which is just the way I like it. My Southwest Airlines flight arrived promptly at 10:30 a.m. If everything went as planned I'd arrive in Baltimore at 4:30 p.m., take the 5:00 p.m. Metroliner to Wilmington and slide into my chair at Chabad by 6:30 p.m.

My plane pulled into the gate and I had to leave the terminal and walk to the other side of the airport.

When I entered the new terminal I had to stand in line at the security entrance and pass through the metal detectors like everyone else. Since this was a busy time of day, the line was quite long and the wait to pass through the detector was somewhat tedious. As I stood in the line my mind began to drift off with thoughts of the Rebbetzin's kugel. Just as my mouth began to water I found myself at the front of the line. I put my travel bag on the conveyor belt and stepped through the detector.

When I went to the end of the conveyor belt a nice, middle-aged woman from the "Heartland" asked me if she could look through my bag. I smiled and told her, "No problem." She opened all of the zippers, felt the contents of my bag and got ready to give it back to me, when she suddenly got a concerned look on her face. I leaned in and asked if something was wrong and she politely but sternly said, "Please step back from the bag sir!"

I began to wonder what I had put in my bag that could have generated this unsettling response. As I stood there looking somewhat bewildered, the line of people behind me began to increase. Not only couldn't I get my bag, but security wouldn't let anyone else get their bags either. It was a busy airport, so the crowd got bigger by the moment. Much to my chagrin, everyone was trying to get a peek at the "perpetrator" as well!

I asked again, "Excuse me but is something wrong?" Looking a little more agitated and sounding a little less polite, the inspector said, "Sir, I am not going to tell you again, please step away from the bag!" She then called her supervisor over and he looked in the bag. He looked at me, then he looked at the bag and then he looked at me again and said, "Sir would you please open the boxes?"

"Open the boxes? What boxes?" I asked somewhat perplexed. "These boxes sir," he said without a bit of humor in his voice. As I looked down at his hands I began to smile. He was gingerly holding my tefilin

looking as if he thought they'd blow up at any moment!

This whole event had taken about three minutes and by now the crowd was extremely large. Everyone was trying to get a good look at the "gun-toting terrorist" they had obviously corralled at the security station.

Doing my best not to laugh out loud, I slowly unwrapped the tefilin that goes on my head and showed the supervisor, the original security agent and the disappointed throng around me, what was in the "box." I explained that they are called "tefilin" and Jewish men put them on during the morning prayers. A relieved security team thanked me for the information and told me I could proceed to my gate.

During the remainder of my journey to Wilmington I had an opportunity to ponder the whole experience. One thing became very clear: I now know that there are at least a couple of security agents in Kansas City who know more about two little boxes called tefilin than they ever probably wanted to know. That thought alone was fun to think about. What I really wonder is whether or not there were any Jewish men in the crowd around me, who during the course of a mundane travel day, received a reminder from G-d about the mitzva of tefilin.

It made me think that you never know who might be watching when you eat a kosher meal on an airplane, buy a box of Shabbat candles in a supermarket or unwrap a pair of tefilin for security. What seems like a minor act for you may be a life altering experience for someone observing your actions. I am not sure if this experience changed anyone's life. But one thing is for sure; it made an otherwise mundane trip to my "Delaware family" one I will always remember.

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INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Greeting and Blessing:

I duly received your letter of June 12th with the enclosure.

I will remember you in prayer in the matters about which you write, and may G-d grant that just as you wrote about the problems, so you should have good news to report about their satisfactory resolution.

The Zechus [merit] of the Tzedoko [charity], for which receipt is enclosed, will surely stand you and yours in good stead.

It is surely unnecessary to emphasize to a person of your background about the need of learning Torah every day, with additional time on the holy Shabbos. I mention it only in accordance with the advice of our Sages to "encourage the energetic." May G-d grant that you should go from strength to strength in all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth [commandments], in accordance with the saying of our Sages, "He who has 100, desires 200, and having achieved 200, desires 400." If ambition grows with achievement even in material things, how much more should this be the case in matters of the spirit, which are the essential aspects of Jewish life.

With blessing,

5 Cheshvan, 5735 (1984)

For some reason, the enclosed letter [above] was not mailed to you promptly, and please forgive the delay.

In the meantime I have just received your letter of Oct. 16, and I hasten to reply to it:

With regard to your teaching profession - it would not be advisable for you to give it up (despite the difficulties involved) until you have another adequately stable Parnoso [livelihood].

Needless to say, it is not at all in accord with the directives of our Torah, Toras Chayim (our guide in daily life and source of a truly happy life), to delay the Mitzva of "pirya-urivya" [be fruitful and multiply] (the first Mitzva in the Torah) until one has an assured Parnoso according to human estimation. I trust that neither you, nor your wife, with your respective backgrounds, require elaboration on this - especially since our Sages of blessed memory have dealt with this at length in various sources.

If you will let me know your full Hebrew name and mother's Hebrew name, as well as the same in regard to your wife, I will remember you both in prayer when visiting the holy resting place of my father-in-law of saintly memory.

Again, with blessing

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

Why Doesn't G-d Flood Away the Yucky People?

Question: (from Zac, age 4)

Why doesn't G-d make a flood to take away all the yucky people, like He did for Noah?

Answer: Zac, I know you are a very good boy, but have you ever been naughty? Did you ever hurt your little brother, or say something rude to your mommy?

G-d wants us to be good all the time, but we don't always get it right. Even good boys like you can sometimes do the wrong thing.

It is a pity that we are naughty sometimes, but the most important thing is that we stop being naughty and say sorry. Then it's OK again, and we can start being good and doing what's right.

If a flood would come every time someone did something bad, no one would get the chance to say sorry and change. So G-d has patience. He is waiting for the yucky people to realize that they are wrong and to start behaving.

In the times of Noah, G-d warned the people to change their ways 120 years before He brought the flood. The flood only happened because no one changed their bad ways in all that time. They even watched Noah building the ark, and he told them the flood was coming, but they still didn't start behaving themselves. From that story we learn how silly it is to keep on being yucky when we have the ability to change.

G-d always gives us a chance, because even when we do something bad, He knows how good we can be.

A WORD

from the Director

It is customary during the entire month of Elul to sound the shofar daily, except on Shabbat. The shofar is not sounded on the eve of Rosh Hashana but it is sounded on both days of Rosh Hashana. The shofar is also sounded during the final service of Yom Kippur.

What is so special about the sound of the shofar? The sound of the shofar gives us two distinct messages: It is the sound of trumpets announcing the coronation of the king and it is a signal, like an alarm, reminding us to consider our past deeds and return to G-d in sincere teshuva (repentance).

Why was the shofar, a rather crude musical instrument, specifically chosen to give over these two messages? Even in ancient times, finer musical instruments producing more refined sounds existed.

The shofar is made from a ram's horn. Even when the horn has been hollowed out, cleaned and polished, it is still more similar to a horn than a fine musical instrument.

The preparation for Rosh Hashana, and its inauguration through the sounding of the horn of an animal, teaches us a profound lesson. Although people are intelligent creatures and our intellect is one of the things that separates us from other living creatures, intellect cannot be the be-all and end-all. When it comes to accepting G-d as our Ruler, we must do so with the submissiveness of an animal. Our return to G-d, too, is more easily accomplished by setting aside our cold, calculating intellect and relying, instead, on our warm, simple, more primitive emotive qualities.

J. I. Gutnick

Here's my Story

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

Send a Telegram to My Father-in Law

I was born in Paris, France, and the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin were the kvatters at my bris. That is, they carried me to the circumcision ceremony when I was eight days old.

Of course, at that time, the Rebbe was not yet Rebbe. The Rebbe Rayatz was the Rebbe of Chabad Lubavitch at the time. He was living in Otwock, Poland, having been exiled from Russia by the Communists. This was in the 1930s before World War II broke out.

The Rebbe had married one of the Rebbe Rayatz's daughters, Chaya Mushka, and the two of them were living in Paris. The Rebbe was very close to my father, Laibish Heber, as they had known each other back in Russia. At that time, there weren't too many Lubavitcher chassidim in Paris and so they naturally gravitated toward each other.

My father had set up a business in Paris in which he was very successful. The Rebbe was a student at the time and of modest means. My father saw that he had rented an apartment in a hotel that was called Max – it wasn't actually an apartment, but a studio, just one room that was both a bedroom and a kitchen. This made my father upset, because it was not fitting for the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin. So he rented them a nice apartment and decorated it, and he went to see the Rebbetzin to tell her about it. Her response was, "I have to discuss it with my husband."

Later, she told my father the answer, "I talked it over with him and he feels that we should stay over here." And that little studio was the apartment they lived in for many of the years they were in Paris. During the years that they were in Paris – my father told me this – the Rebbe tried to hide his identity. He begged my father not to tell anyone that he was the Rebbe Rayatz's son-in-law. And on one occasion, Rav Yoel Leib Hertzog – the father of Rabbi Yitzchak Halevi Hertzog who later became the Chief Rabbi of Israel – came to visit Paris. He met with my father and my father invited the Rebbe along to the meeting. They started discussing Torah and learning together. And Rav Hertzog asked my father, "Who is this young man that knows so much?" My father said, "Oh, that's somebody who just arrived from Poland." They continued talking, and when the meeting ended, Rabbi Hertzog again asked my father who this was. And my father said, "Now is not the time to talk about it."

These were hard years – the Nazis had invaded Eastern Europe and all sorts of terrible things were happening. And my father saw that the Rebbe was extremely distraught; he looked very pale and very tired. So he went to the Rebbetzin and he said, "You know your husband is overworking himself. He is driving himself to the point of exhaustion. I think it would be a good idea for him to take a little vacation."

The Rebbetzin said, "If you think so, then perhaps you might speak with him about it." So my father brought this subject up to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded, "I am a Shliach," a messenger. I assume he meant that he was the messenger of the Rebbe Rayatz. And he went on, "The Talmud says that it's an established fact – if a messenger is sent on a mission, he must accomplish his mission." And he refused to take a vacation. This carried over when he left France and came to the United States, where he never took a day off. He knew no such thing as a day off.

Meanwhile, it was apparent that the Nazis might soon invade France, and my father was very undecided as to whether he should leave Paris. He

had established a good business, and he was making a lot of money. And he had to make a choice: to remain in Paris or emigrate to the United States along with the entire family.

And, as usual, whenever he had a problem and didn't know what to do he went to the Rebbe and he asked the Rebbe's opinion.

The Rebbe said, "You are a chosid. Send a letter or a telegram to my father-in-law." So my father said, "But there's a war going on now! No letters are crossing the border, and I doubt there are any telegrams or telephone calls that can be made."

"As a chosid," the Rebbe continued, "you should know that the Rebbe does not necessarily have to receive a telegraph or a letter or a telephone call to know the question that you are asking, and you don't necessarily have to receive a telegraph or a letter or a telephone call from the Rebbe to know what the answer is."

Hearing that, my father went down to the local Western Union office and he announced that he wanted to send a telegram to Otwock, a town near Warsaw where the Rebbe Rayatz was residing.

The agent sitting behind the desk started laughing. He said, "Are you crazy? You can't do that! It's impossible! There's a war going on. There's no communication between Poland and France."

But my father insisted. The agent looked askance at my father, as if to say: "If you're crazy enough and you want to try, we'll attempt it." So my father formulated the letter, and he said, "This is what I want you to send."

As he awaited the answer, he continued to be very much in doubt whether he should go to a strange country and start all over again. Here he was established and successful. He really preferred to remain in Paris.

The next morning he woke up with a clarity – even though the day before he had been completely in doubt, completely in the dark, as to what to do – he woke up with the clear realization and with no doubt in his mind whatsoever that the family must leave Paris and go the United States. And that's exactly what we did. Our lives were saved because of it.

Rabbi Asher Heber is a lifelong educator. Presently he teaches at Yeshivas Ohr Torah in Manhattan. He was interviewed in his home in Brooklyn, NY in October, 2005.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Seventy-four of the Torah's 613 commandments (mitzvot) are in the Parshah of Ki Teitzei. These include the laws of the beautiful captive, the inheritance rights of the firstborn, the wayward and rebellious son, burial and dignity of the dead, returning a lost object, sending away the mother bird before taking her young, the duty to erect a safety fence around the roof of one's home, and the various forms of kilayim (forbidden plant and animal hybrids).

Also recounted are the judicial procedures and penalties for adultery, for the rape or seduction of an unmarried girl, and for a husband who falsely accuses his wife of infidelity. The following cannot marry a person of Jewish lineage: a mamzer (someone born from an adulterous or incestuous relationship); a male of Moabite or Ammonite descent; a first- or second-generation Edomite or Egyptian.

Our Parshah also includes laws governing the purity of the military camp; the prohibition against turning in an escaped slave; the duty to pay a worker on time, and to allow anyone working for you—man or animal—to "eat on the job"; the proper treatment of a debtor, and the prohibition against charging interest on a loan; the laws of divorce (from which are also derived many of the laws of marriage); the penalty of thirty-nine lashes for transgression of a Torah prohibition; and the procedures for yibbum ("levirate marriage") of the wife of a deceased childless brother, or chalitzah ("removing of the shoe") in the case that the brother-in-law does not wish to marry her.

Ki Teitzei concludes with the obligation to remember "what Amalek did to you on the road, on your way out of Egypt."

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 1 - 2 September	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	5:41	6:39
Adelaide	5:39	6:35
Brisbane	5:17	6:10
Darwin	6:25	7:15
Gold Coast	5:15	6:08
Perth	5:42	6:37
Sydney	5:19	6:15
Canberra	5:26	6:23
Launceston	5:29	6:29
Auckland	5:42	6:40
Wellington	5:38	6:38
Hobart	5:27	6:28
Byron Bay	5:13	6:07

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS KI SEITZEI • 10 ELUL • 1 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5.41 PM
	MINCHA:	5.50 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6.20 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.28 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	5.40 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6.39 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	5.50 PM
	MAARIV:	6.35 PM