

LAMPLIGHTER

18 Teves
Parshas
Shemos
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week we commence the Book of Exodus (Shemot), which begins: "These are the names of the Children of Israel who came to Egypt."

This is not the first time the Torah enumerates the names of the Children of Israel. The sons of Jacob have already been tallied several times in previous chapters. Why, then, does the Torah list their names again?

The Midrash offers two explanations:

Even though they were in exile, the Jewish people did not change their names for Egyptian ones.

The Jewish people are likened to the stars, about which it states, "He [G-d] counts the number of stars; each one He calls by name." Aside from denoting preciousness and value, once something has been counted it can never afterward be nullified.

Chasidic philosophy explains that a person's name relates to his most external aspects rather than his innermost being. (The reason a person has a name is so that others can call him by it; he himself, however, does not really need a name.)

To a certain extent, this describes the Jewish soul after it descends into the physical world and is invested in a body. However, not all of the soul comes down into the physical world: its essence always remains above, united with G-d, while only its external reflection descends to the physical plane.

This is alluded to in the verse "And these are the names of the Children of Israel who came to Egypt." The Hebrew name for Egypt, Mitzrayim, comes from the word meaning constriction and limitation. Only the "name" of the Jewish soul, its outermost reflection, is subjected to the limitations of the physical world and the difficulties of the exile. The soul itself, however, remains unaffected and in full possession of all its powers.

The Jewish soul has never gone into exile. It is not contained or restricted in any way by the physical world, and its essence is always "free." Thus it is a perpetual source of strength for its reflection down below, enabling a Jew to overcome spiritual obstacles and cleave to G-d in all circumstances and situations.

It was this strength that empowered the Jewish people throughout their years in Egyptian exile, allowing them to remain faithful to their beliefs and retain their original Jewish names. Indeed, this is the connection between the two explanations in the Midrash: the Children of Israel were able to "stay Jewish" in Egypt precisely because the essence of the soul never goes into exile - a lesson that applies to our day as well.

Freud's Great Freudian Slip

By Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

It was Freud's greatest Freudian slip, and for some reason his commentators, at least those I've read, haven't noticed it.

It appears in his last book, *Moses and Monotheism*, a strange work if ever there was one. It was published in 1939, by which time Freud had taken refuge in Britain. Had he stayed in Vienna, heaven knows what humiliations he would have suffered before being murdered along with his fellow Jews. For some reason, at this desperate time, Freud wrote a book (he originally described it as a "historical novel") in which he tried to prove that Moses was an Egyptian. There have been many speculations as to why he wrote it, and I have no wish to add to their number. Early on in the book, though, there is a most curious episode.

Freud notes that several scholars have identified a common theme in stories about the childhood of heroes. The hero's birth is fraught with danger. As a baby, he is exposed to the elements in a way that would normally lead to death -- sometimes by being placed in a box and thrown into the water. The child is rescued and brought up by adoptive parents. Eventually, he discovers his true identity. It is a story told about Sargon, Gilgamesh, Oedipus, Romulus and many others. It is also the story of Moses.

At this point, however, Freud notes that in one respect the story of Moses isn't like the others at all. In fact, it's the opposite. In the conventional story, the hero's adoptive parents are humble, ordinary people. Eventually he discovers that he is actually of royal blood, a prince. In the Moses story, the reverse is the case. It is his adoptive family that is royal. He is brought up by the daughter of Pharaoh. His true identity, he discovers, is that he belongs, by birth, to a nation of slaves.

Freud saw this and then failed to see what it meant. Instead he changed tack and concluded that the story is a fabrication designed to conceal the fact that Moses was the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he really was a prince of Egypt. What Freud failed to realize is that the story of Moses is not a myth but an anti-myth. It takes a myth and turns it upside down.

Its message is simple and revolutionary. True royalty -- the Bible suggests -- is the opposite of our conventional wisdom. It isn't privilege and wealth, splendor and palaces. It's moral courage. Moses, in discovering that he is the child of slaves, finds greatness. It's not power that matters, but the fight for justice and freedom. Had Moses been an Egyptian prince, he would have been eminently forgettable. Only by being true to his people and to G-d did he become a hero.

Freud had mixed feelings about his own identity. He admired Jews but was tone-deaf to the music of Judaism. That is why, I suspect, he failed to see that he had come face to face with one of the most powerful moral truths the Bible ever taught. Those whom the world despises, G-d loves. A child of slaves can be greater than a prince. G-d's standards are not power and privilege. They are about recognizing G-d's image in the weak, the powerless, the afflicted, the suffering, and fighting for their cause. What a message of courage Freud might have sent his people in that dark night! Let us at least see what he did not, that the story of Moses is one of the great narratives of hope in the literature of mankind.

Slice of LIFE

Meeting My Husband

The writing was on the wall

by *Mina Richler*

It's funny to think back about the first time my husband and I crossed paths. We probably did not do more than glance at one another, but we were both praying for the same thing at the same place, just minutes apart from each other—and of all places, in the city of Lubavitch, across the world, in Russia.

It was the summer of 2005 when a friend told me that the government in Belarus had been giving the Chabad rabbi a difficult time opening a summer camp. The camp was for Jewish children from Minsk, Orsha, and the neighboring communities. The program was due to start in July—all had been coordinated: staff, accommodations, food, airline tickets—the works! But with a corrupt government and a little dose of anti-semitism, the camp was not allowed to open, and all the hours of planning were on hold.

Miraculously, the camp was able to launch its program, but only in the month of August. All the staff were reserved for the month of July and already had plans for the coming month. So, with the camp being short-staffed and in need of more counselors, here was my golden ticket to Belarus, all expenses paid, to take care of and nourish the souls of Jewish children halfway across the globe.

And so I went and had the experience of my life. I learned that you don't need to speak the same language in order to teach, love, share, and show that you really care. I learned that happiness is not in how much you have, but how much you appreciate what you do have. I learned that you can find similarities and grow to be friends with people with whom you thought you have nothing in common.

After my wonderful, life-changing experience, the staff were treated to a tour visiting the holy sites of deceased righteous Chabad rebbes. And that's when my life changed even more, without my even knowing it at the time.

It was a six-hour drive, and one I try really hard to forget, because there are no traffic regulations or speed limits in the forsaken dirt paths in Ukraine. There are no

fancy rest stops with Starbucks coffee. And there are cows that can sit in front of your vehicle for a really long time.



Avi Richler's signature on the wall, written minutes before the author took the picture

Anyway, we finally arrived to the city of Lubavitch, which means “the city of love,” named appropriately for the love that the Jews have toward G-d and toward each other. We were about to disembark and go to the holy sites there, when we saw a huge group of American boys milling around. They were from a Jewish traveling camp, and had chosen this same day to visit the city—which was more like a village, and was void of any Jewish life. Since the place was crowded, we waited for them to board the buses before we went in.

We did not have a tour guide, so we tried to guide ourselves through the sloshy mud paths so that we could say our prayers by the gravesite of the rebbes and rebbetzins buried there. On our way, three young men passed by. They had stayed a little longer than the rest of the group and were on their way back. One of those men was my husband-to-be. At the time, I did not even glance at him for more than a second.

I was so enthralled with the idea that I was walking through the very same mud paths that our chassidic ancestors had traipsed through every day. I was trying to envision life there just some decades ago. In my mind I was trying to imagine what everyday life was like, what the streets looked like: the sounds of children laughing, neighbors calling out to each other, the strains of Shabbat melodies, and the silence and respect that would fall upon the streets as the holy rebbe would walk by.

I tried hard not to focus and dwell on the horror which befell this city, as innocent Jewish lives were taken and the soil soaked with the blood and tears of our brethren. I tried to focus on the future of our people and the beautiful legacy that the people in the city of Lubavitch had left for us. I promised that I would perpetuate their legacy of unconditional love for G-d and for our fellow

Jewish brothers and sisters.

While we were looking around, we stumbled upon the most dilapidated building I've ever seen—but was intrigued, along with the rest of our group, by the sign that said “770 Beit Chabad” (Chabad House). We walked inside and, to our great amusement, we saw names, lots of names, hundreds of names, scribbled all over the walls. It was a huge walk-in guest book with the signatures of all the young and maybe not-so-young visitors to the city of Lubavitch. I modestly took an almost-dried-out permanent marker which I found on a windowsill, and signed our initials on the door. One of the counselors quipped, “Hey, take a picture of the name next to yours. It just might be your soulmate!” and as ridiculous as I thought the idea was, I did take the picture.

And then we found the gravesites. We prayed all together. I prayed hard. I prayed for health and success; I prayed for my family and I prayed for my friends. I stood by the gravesites of holy rabbis, and then by the gravesites of their righteous and noble wives, who had sacrificed more than any of us can fathom, and I cried with so much emotion. There is something so powerful and so spiritually tangible there by the sites of our rebbetzins, our spiritual mothers. I felt a strong connection to these special women. I asked for a blessing that I get married to the person who is best for me, and that G-d bless us with children and a beautiful, warm Jewish home. And you know that fulfilling feeling that you get when you prayed and you know that your sincere words were accepted? I had that feeling there.

I'll fast-forward a bit. I finished my trip to the Ukraine and the trip to Israel which followed after. The summer days were over and the High Holidays were approaching. I was ready to find my soulmate and get married, and my mother had told me that a great young man had been suggested for me to meet. She told me his name, but I had never heard of him.

That very same hour, I was looking through my digital files and uploading my pictures. And there it was. In big, bold, black letters, scribbled on the wall, so close to my name, written just a few minutes before me, “Avi Richler 2005.” It was on that wall in the city of Lubavitch, just a short walk away from the gravesites where we had both prayed to meet our soulmates.

Avi and I met, and I guess the rest is history. We were married on a fine, freezing winter day. Avi likes to say, “The writing was on the wall!” It sure was!

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INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Setbacks Make one Stronger

By the Grace of G-d
25th of Shevat, 5736 [January 27, 1976]
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Mr. Mordechai Shoel Landow
Miami Beach, Fla.
Greeting and Blessing:

Through our mutual friend, Rabbi Sholom Ber Lipskar, I enquire from time to time as to how things are going with you business-wise, and he reports to me insofar as he knows. I have also seen the newspaper clipping.

I surely do not have to emphasize to you that the true businessman is not the person who can manage his affairs when conditions are favorable and things run smoothly and successfully, but also, and even more so, when he shows that he knows how to cope with an occasional setback. Indeed, facing up to the challenge of adversity makes one a stronger and more effective executive than before, with an added dimension of experience and a keener acumen, to put to good use when things begin to turn upwards. Sometimes, a temporary setback is just what is needed for the resumption of the advance with greater vigor, as in the case of an athlete having to negotiate a hurdle, when stepping back is the means to a higher leap.

In plain words, I trust - on the basis of my acquaintance with you - that you are taking the present difficulty well in your stride, coping with it squarely and making the necessary structural and other improvements, in terms of closer supervision and greater efficiency, as I see also from the clipping, although basically the present difficulty is no doubt a consequence of the general economic situation.

I send you my prayerful wishes that you should very soon have good tidings about a tangible improvement, and that the setback has indeed served as a springboard for the great upturn in the days ahead. All the more so now that we are about to enter the first of the two months of Adar in the current Jewish Leap Year - may your Hatzlocho be doubled, too, in quantity and quality, i.e. in the resurgence of profits and in their being used in the best possible way, for good, wholesome and happy things, materially and spiritually.

With blessing,

A WORD

from the Director

This coming week contains two special dates in the Jewish calendar: Sunday, 20 Tevet - the anniversary of passing of Rabbi Moshe Maimonides (Rambam) and Thursday, 24 Tevet - the anniversary of passing of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman was the author of the Tanya and compiler of the Shulchan Aruch HaRav. He established what later became known as Chabad Chassidut.

The goal of Chabad Chassidut - an acronym standing for chachma (wisdom), bina (understanding) and da'at (knowledge) - is to bring the Jew to an intellectual understanding of G-d through the contemplation of G-d's exalted nature and His relationship with the world and the Jewish people. It brings the loftiest concepts down into a framework the human mind can readily comprehend and assimilate.

For generations prior to the writing of the Tanya, the rarefied secrets of the Kabala were beyond the true grasp of the intellect. G-d sent the holy soul of Rabbi Shneur Zalman down into the world for the purpose of creating a body of teachings that would once and for all break through the barrier between the infinite light of the Creator and the limited intellect of His creatures.

Chabad Chasidut thus forged an entirely new path in fulfilling Moshiah's promise to the Baal Shem Tov to come when "the wellsprings of your teachings will be disseminated." Over the next seven generations, this new path in man's service of G-d was developed and broadened by the leaders of the Chabad movement. Each successive Rebbe added new insights, drawing from the bottomless well of Divine wisdom and bringing us closer to the Messianic era, when, as G-d has promised, "The world will be filled with G-dly knowledge like the waters cover the sea."

May it commence immediately.

J. I. Guterlich

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

How do I Explain the Logic Behind my Parenting to my Child?

Question: *Dear Rabbi, I tell my nine year old son that people who work hard will progress in life and have what they need. Now I have a dilemma. There is a new electronic toy which costs \$499, and more for each game! His cousin has one, many of his friends have it, but we have no intention of buying him one. We don't have the money, and even if we did, it is not one of our priorities -- there are far better things he can do with his time than play video games. The problem is, my son does everything properly: he listens to us, puts in the effort at school and is now devastated that he has worked hard but still cannot have what he wants. How will I explain it to him?*

Answer: You have just been given a wonderful parenting opportunity. You have the chance to teach your child two vital truths: that he can't have everything, and that he can't always understand why.

The idea that kids needs to understand the rationale behind every one of their parents' decisions is incorrect. If children were capable of understanding their parents' every motive, then children could be parents themselves. It is precisely their inability to appreciate why every whim and fancy cannot be fed that makes them children. The parents' job is to set boundaries, and that means sometimes the answer is just no.

When a parent lays down the law and gives a clear no, they are doing their child an incredible favor. The child will learn an important life lesson: you don't always get what you want. Sometimes it seems unfair, sometimes it seems to be without any justification, but it happens, and it happens to everyone, and it happens throughout life. There will always be things we want and can't have.

Sadly, many children are never taught this. Their parents give them everything they want, and then when they grow older, they are shocked to discover that sometimes they can't have whatever they want. Often children reared this way become adults who think that their spouse, their friends, their country and G-d should all be giving them whatever they ask for. If only they were taught as kids that you can't have it all, they would be accepting of this as adults.

Your son deserves to be rewarded for his good behavior and hard work. Choose something he wants, just not the super expensive one. It isn't easy, but it is far better to endure the tantrum of a disappointed child for a few days than to have a spoilt child who will become and remain a spoiled adult for life. Like King Solomon said (Proverbs 22:6), "Train the child in his way, so that when he is older he will not stray from it." Today he will be upset, but one day he will thank you.

IT HAPPENED



The Condition

by Tuvia Bolton

One of the greatest humans that ever lived was Rebbe Shneur Zalman of Liadi; the first Rebbe of the Chabad Chassidim. He was expert in all sciences, had memorized all the books of Judaism including the Kabbalah and was a known healer and miracle worker.

One day a desperate looking man came knocking at the Rebbe's door and was granted an audience. He had to wait for a day or two but finally entered and poured out his aching heart. He had no children. He and his wife had been to the greatest experts but nothing worked and now he needed the Rebbe's blessing.

The Rebbe put his head down on his hands that were on the desk before him and after a minute looked up and said 'If you are willing to have a son that is blind I can help you.'

The man closed his eyes, thought for only seconds and agreed.

Sure enough shortly thereafter his wife became pregnant and that very year was born a beautiful, intelligent, healthy child but... as the Rebbe had warned... completely blind.

Of course he returned to the Rebbe to thank him but several years later he returned again with a worried look on his face.

"I know that I agreed to have a son that couldn't see but, Rebbe, after all, if you could do such a great miracle as convince G-d to give us a child with a soul and an entire, complicated body surely you can convince the Almighty to just give him two eyes."

The Rebbe reminded him that this was the condition and that nothing could be done but the poor fellow insisted. He very politely but stubbornly insisted that the Rebbe could, should and must do another miracle.

The Rebbe refused repeatedly but after the fellow broke down weeping the Rebbe changed his tone and said, "Take your son, go to the city of Metz, look for a road that descends steeply, count seven houses and knock on the door and ask the owner if you can lodge at his house. If he agrees then put your bags down and start wandering the town. Spend as much time as possible wandering the streets till you find someone to help you."

The next day the man packed his and his son's bags and set off for the distant city of Metz. After a journey of several days they arrived, found the house they were looking for, got permission from the owner to stay there and, after putting their suitcases down, began wandering.

One morning as they were about to leave and asked them to sit down for a chat. "I don't mind you staying by my house," he said "Thank G-d, as you see I have plenty of room (the owner was obviously a wealthy man and his house was very large) but tell me, exactly what are you doing here? You've been here for more than a week and people tell me that you just wander the streets. Perhaps I can help?"

The visitor poured out his heart and told him why the Rebbe, Shneur Zalman, sent him.

"All the way to Metz?" The owner said. "Why that's a journey of several days. How could he know what is in Metz? And what could there be here in Metz for you?"

They sat in silence for several minutes, shrugging their shoulders and turning up the palms of their hands in bewilderment.

Finally the owner said. "Listen, I have an idea. My wife and I took an orphan girl into our home that was a distant relative of ours. We brought her up gave her an education and everything. There is also a Yeshiva (Torah Academy) in Metz and every day they would send a boy to eat by us (In those days there were no lunch rooms and pupils would be distributed to private

homes for meals). Well it so happened, this was years ago, that the gentile that worked guarding my orchards decided to quit and I offered this boy to take his place, for pay of course.

"Anyway, he took the offer but insisted that he not sleep in our house but rather we make him a small hut where he could live and guard at the same time. So the point of the story is that once, in fact it was the first night he worked here, my wife woke up in the middle of the night and saw fire burning inside his hut. But when I ran out to see what it was, the fire disappeared. And so it happened for several nights until I decided that this young fellow must have special powers. But neither I nor my wife ever mentioned it to anyone

"It wasn't long before we decided to ask him if he was interested in marrying and if so if he would consider our orphan girl. He agreed on the condition that she would agree and that they would not live near us but rather in a concealed place in the woods and that he would bake bread and she would sell it in the market.

"She agreed to all this. They married and moved and since then they seem to be living a happy quiet life. But I'm sure that if you find their house and ask for a blessing you will get it. Probably this is the reason the Rebbe sent you here. And probably he told you to wander around because if the young man saw me escorting you he would certainly not want me to know of his powers. Now I'll tell you where he lives."

The Chassid took his son, found the place, knocked on the door and a young Jewish man that showed no sign of being anything but average answered and invited them in.

As soon as they entered the Chassid looked the young man in the eyes and said, half beseeching half commanding, "The Rebbe of Chabad, Rebbe Shneur Zalman, sent me. I want a blessing for my blind son."

The young man looked with wide, unbelieving eyes and exclaimed almost in anger, "What, you mean to tell me that even here he was able to find me!? Is there no place I can hide from him!?"

Sure enough, the 'young man' was on of the "36 Hidden Tzadikim" found in every generation and somehow the Rebbe knew. He blessed the boy, gave his father advice on how to cure him and in just a short time he was able to see like a normal person.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

The children of Israel multiply in Egypt. Threatened by their growing numbers, Pharaoh enslaves them and orders the Hebrew midwives, Shifrah and Puah, to kill all male babies at birth. When they do not comply, he commands his people to cast the Hebrew babies into the Nile.

A child is born to Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, and her husband, Amram, and placed in a basket on the river, while the baby's sister, Miriam, stands watch from afar. Pharaoh's daughter discovers the boy, raises him as her son, and names him Moses.

As a young man, Moses leaves the palace and discovers the hardship of his brethren. He sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and kills the Egyptian. The next day he sees two Jews fighting; when he admonishes them, they reveal his deed of the previous day, and Moses is forced to flee to Midian. There he rescues Jethro's daughters, marries one of them (Tziporah), and becomes a shepherd of his father-in-law's flocks.

G-d appears to Moses in a burning bush at the foot of Mount Sinai, and instructs him to go to Pharaoh and demand: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me." Moses' brother, Aaron, is appointed to serve as his spokesman. In Egypt, Moses and Aaron assemble the elders of Israel to tell them that the time of their redemption has come. The people believe; but Pharaoh refuses to let them go, and even intensifies the suffering of Israel.

Moses returns to G-d to protest: "Why have You done evil to this people?" G-d promises that the redemption is close at hand.

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 5 - 6 January	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	8:28	9:32
Adelaide	8:15	9:17
Brisbane	6:29	7:27
Darwin	6:59	7:52
Gold Coast	6:29	7:27
Perth	7:09	8:09
Sydney	7:52	8:53
Canberra	8:04	9:06
Launceston	8:30	9:39
Auckland	8:26	9:30
Wellington	8:39	9:47
Hobart	8:34	9:45
Byron Bay	7:30	8:28

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS SHEMOS • 18 TEVES • 5 JANUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	8.35 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	9.05 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.43 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	8.25 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	8.35 PM
	MAARIV:	9.15 PM