

# LAMPLIGHTER

10 Shevat  
Parshas  
Beshalach  
**1332**  
26 January  
5778/2018

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Beshalach, we read about the splitting of the Sea. This miracle prepared the Jewish people for the giving of the Torah and the Final Redemption.

Concerning the splitting of the sea, the Torah tells us that Nachshon ben Aminadav risked his life to jump into the Sea. It was only after Nachshon entered the Sea that the waters parted and the Jews were able to proceed.

Did Nachshon disregard his life by jumping into the sea? No! For Nachshon knew that G-d had taken the Jewish people out of Egypt for the sole purpose of giving them His Torah at Mount Sinai. Nachshon was guided by the desire to advance toward the Torah. It mattered not to Nachshon that a body of water obstructed his path; he jumped into the Sea.

Faced with a seemingly impossible situation the Jewish people had been of several opinions. Nachshon, however, was uninterested in any of their "options" - returning, waging battle or running away - for he knew that none of this would bring them closer to Mount Sinai. He was also not interested in arguments or calculations. There was only one solution: to go forward to Mount Sinai. And so he did so, with tremendous mesirat nefesh (self-sacrifice).

The portion of Beshalach is generally read on the Shabbat preceding or following the 10th of Shevat, the anniversary of the passing of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. The circumstances surrounding the splitting of the Sea contain a timeless lesson; so do the actions of the Previous Rebbe. For throughout his life the Previous Rebbe acted with mesirat nefesh and set an example for all future generations.

The Previous Rebbe did not specifically seek out mesirat nefesh; this was not his intent, as his sole objective was to spread Torah. He did not stop to consider if self-sacrifice was necessary, nor did he pay attention to the prevailing opinions and views of the other Jews of his time. To him, their arguments carried no weight at all. The only thing that motivated the Previous Rebbe was the need to get closer to Mount Sinai. Even if a "sea" stood in his way, he would jump in. What would happen next? That was G-d's concern, not his. This was immaterial to the Previous Rebbe. He simply did what he had to in order to reach Mount Sinai.

From this we learn a lesson to apply in our daily lives. Our function on earth is to serve G-d, to love His creations and bring them closer to Torah. Differences of opinion and approach are not our concern. Our only true goal is to draw nearer to Mount Sinai, and to do so without consideration for any obstacles that seem to obstruct our path.

## Why Humans React Irrationally to Problems

By Elisha Greenbaum

My six-year-old son got a mosquito bite last week. He scratched at it for days, and of course that made it worse. He couldn't sleep from the pain, and he opened up quite a large sore on his leg.

I tried to help him, I really did. I held him on my knee and explained that the more he scratched, the worse he'd feel. I spoke calmly and rationally to him, and I'm positive that he didn't hear a word I said.

The moment I left the room, he was back to picking at it again. You see, when your foot is itching, you don't want to be told, "Think about something else and the pain will go away," because you're convinced that your scratching is somehow bringing you short-term relief. It doesn't, of course; if anything, it only makes it worse, but at least you feel like you're doing something.

We all do it, all the time. Alcoholics drink to drown their sorrows, but their sorrows learn to swim. Bankrupts scatter their remaining funds on harebrained investments and get-rich-quick schemes, only to fall ever deeper into debt. It's as logical as my son scratching to get rid of his itch—the more you rub, the worse you'll feel in the end.

No matter how much we try to problem-solve, a permanent solution always seems to remain tantalizingly over the horizon. The harder our wheels spin in the mud, the deeper a hole we dig for ourselves. We try to run away from our problems, only to find that we bring our problems with us. If doing what we've done till now is what got us into this mess, what makes us think that doing more of the same will save us?

The Jews of the Exodus thought they knew what their problem was: Egypt. As slaves and strangers in a strange land, they were positive that the path to happiness lay in leaving Egypt. Imagine their shock after escaping the land of their bondage and arriving at the Reed Sea, only to discover that the Egyptians were right behind them: "They raised their eyes, and look! The Egyptians were advancing after them. They were very frightened, so the children of Israel cried out to G-d."

Up to that point, they had assumed that leaving Egypt would automatically solve all past and future difficulties. They weren't ready to admit that their problem was greater than just being trapped in the wrong land. Yet the reason why running away from our troubles never helps is because our troubles tend to tag along. We think we're being proactive, but we've just kicked the can of worries a little bit further down the road.

The long-term solution begins only when we cry out to G-d. When the Jews were ready to admit that they had a problem and submitted to a Higher Power, they were finally on the path to freedom. That's when G-d promised them, "You will never see the Egyptians again."

It's not going to be easy, and we're unlikely to arrive at the Promised Land immediately. There will be setbacks along the way, and we have to find a positive outlet to replace the negativity. Yet if we want to be able to cross the sea in safety and watch while our enemies drown on the other side, we need to stop the destructive behavior of the past, connect to G-d, and then begin to walk forward securely into the future.

# Slice of LIFE

## For Just One Mitzvah!

by Tuvia Bolton

Rabbi Ben Tzion Raider, a Chabad Chassid who is a businessman from England once flew to Detroit Michigan for several business appointments.

After a long tiring day he took a taxi to the home of a friend of his that always hosted him when he came to Detroit, to eat something and go to sleep. But he was in for a surprise.

His friend, besides preparing a nice warm meal and comfortable room for him also invited some of his acquaintances, most of whom were non-observant Jews, for a pleasant evening with his Rabbi friend.

The evening was pleasant, despite the fact that much of it was on the verge of religious debate.

One fellow in particular seemed like he was trying to make trouble. He asked question after question about Tefillin (phylacteries); why we put them on, why must they be square, why black, why only in the day, why the left arm etc. etc.

Time really flew and before they knew it the discussion ended at two in the morning. Rabbi Raider decided to go against his feelings and judge the fellow that had been asking questions favorably. So he took him aside and simply asked him if he was interested in putting on Tefillin. And the answer surprised him.

"You see all these people that were here tonight?" The fellow answered rhetorically, "They are all going home to sleep. Right? But not me! I'm going to work! I own a bakery and I have to start baking in a half hour. So if you want to put Tefillin on me come there in four hours, at six thirty a.m. That's when we take a half-hour break in the baking and I can put them on."

Rabbi Raider, after an international journey and a full day of work was

definitely not looking forward to waking up at six in the morning but he again put his feelings aside, and he did it!

The next morning he was there and to his surprise the 'baker' put the Tefillin on with the greatest of ease and expertise and even recited the prayer by memory; with feeling! When he removed them from his arm and head he explained: .

"I used to put them on every day. But the last time I put them on was twenty years ago. I guess I was just too lazy. Still am! But you know what?! If you get me a pair I'll start putting them on again! What do you say to that?"

He explained that he really had no desire to buy a new pair and didn't even know where to go if he wanted to. Rabbi Raider said that he would try to get him a pair.

But it would have to wait. He wouldn't have time to buy them until he returned to England. Then in six weeks he was planning to return to Detroit and would try to bring them then.

"Really Rabbi, if I waited for twenty years I can certainly wait a few weeks." He replied, shook the Rabbi's hand and said good bye.

A few hours later Rabbi Raider was on his flight to England with a few hour stop off in New York. His plan was to pray the Morning Prayer with the Rebbe in his headquarters in 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, then briefly go to Manhattan to buy a few things for his family then return to 770 and pray the afternoon prayer before resuming his flight home.

He arrived in Brooklyn, finished praying, wrote a note to the Rebbe explaining what he was doing and briefly mentioned the fellow he met in Detroit. Then he handed the letter to the Rebbe's secretary and proceeded to Manhattan.

But when he returned in the early afternoon he was in for a surprise. He got a reply from the Rebbe! He opened the letter with trembling hands and it read:

"Do you think it is proper that a Jew who put on Tefillin yesterday for the first time in twenty years should wait

another six weeks until you buy him another pair?"

Buy the Tefillin today and if you can arrange it that they reach him in Detroit today so he can put them on today it is good. But if not then you should return yourself to Detroit to give him the Tefillin in order that he can put them on in time, even if it means that you won't make it to England for Shabbat.

And when this Jew sees how much it was important to you that he shouldn't miss even one day of Tefillin it will be a very important commandment for him."

Rabbi Raider was startled. He had a planned family reunion waiting for him in England; for the first time his entire family would be meeting together and spending the entire Shabbat together, he had been looking forward to it for a long time....but the Rebbe was always right.

He had to figure out a way to send them there. But it wasn't so easy. First of all, all of the Judaica stores he tried said that Tefillin had to be ordered.

Then, when he did find a store that had one pair on hand it was only with the greatest difficulty that he convinced them to take an English check because he had almost no cash. Then he had to find an airline to take them and convince his host in Detroit to come to get them and agree to deliver them to the baker.

Miraculously he did it, and he even made his flight to England!

Six weeks later when he returned to Detroit he met the baker who thanked him profusely and told him with great pride and joy that since he received them he didn't miss a day putting them on.

Even one particular freezing-stormy day when he got into a traffic jam and was sure he wouldn't make it home in time to put on Tefillin....he weaved in and out of traffic and drove on the side of the road like a possessed man .... and made it!

"You know why I value this commandment so much?" he explained. "Because when I saw how important it was to you that I shouldn't miss even one day of Tefillin... it became a very important commandment for me."

Exactly the words of the Rebbe.

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### WEEKLY VIDEO



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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## Business Advice: Enlarge Rather Than Reduce

By the Grace of G-d  
26th of Teveth, 5717 [December 30, 1956]  
Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 19th of Teveth.

I need hardly emphasize that one should not pay too much attention to what anyone says in the heat of a discussion, which he himself no doubt eventually regrets. And even if he does not regret it, it still does not matter. The important thing is to conduct the business in a friendly co-operation, since peace is the "Vessel" for blessing.

With regard to the plans that you mention, the one of selling the assets of the business and starting in a small way should be ruled out completely, for one should try to enlarge one's business and not reduce it. This should leave the first two alternatives that you mention, that is, either to make your partnership into a corporation in order to attract more capital, or to continue the partnership as is, but in a larger and improved building, etc. The choice between the two depends to a considerable extent upon the preference of your brother, and also what are the prospects of enlarging suitable lines, etc.

Inasmuch as we have recently started to read the Book of Shemoth, about the enslavement in Egypt and how our ancestors survived it and eventually were liberated, all of which has a direct bearing on recent events, as well as on conditions of Jewry everywhere at this time. I trust that you will find the enclosed message of interest. I hope that you will also find an opportunity to bring it to the knowledge of your friends. May G-d grant that in the very near future the Divine Promise will be fulfilled for the final Liberation and Redemption through our righteous Messiah.

Although you may have heard the message read at the recent Yeshivah dinner, it is enclosed herewith for you to have on hand, and for reference. Enclosed are the receipts according to your instructions.

With blessing,

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*In a renowned letter, the Baal Shem Tov describes an elevation of his soul to the chamber of Moshiach at which time he asked Moshiach when he would come. "When your teachings will become widely known in the world, and your wellsprings will be disseminated outward," Moshiach answered.*

*Thus, from its very beginning, bringing Moshiach has been an integral goal of the Chasidic movement.*

*From his earliest childhood, Moshiach and the Redemption were uppermost in the Rebbe's mind, as he once wrote: "From the day I went to cheder and even before that, there began to form in my mind a picture of the future Redemption, the Redemption of the Jewish people from their final exile..." Even before the age of three the Rebbe's young mind was already occupied with the Redemption. And this has been the Rebbe's focus ever since.*

*Preparing the world for Moshiach is thus integral to the entire Chasidic movement, particularly to Chabad-Lubavitch. Thus, once the Rebbe accepted the enormous responsibility of the leadership of Chabad-Lubavitch, he stated in no uncertain terms the ultimate purpose of his leadership:*

*"This is what is demanded of each and every one of us of the seventh generation - and 'All those who are seventh are cherished': Although the fact that we are in the seventh generation is not the result of our own choosing and our own service, and indeed in certain ways perhaps contrary to our will, nevertheless 'All those who are seventh are cherished.' We are now very near the approaching footsteps of Moshiach, indeed, we are at the conclusion of this period, and our spiritual task is to complete the process of drawing down G-d's presence - moreover, the essence of G-d's presence - within specifically our lowly world."*

*These words were spoken in the Rebbe's first public discourse on the tenth of Shevat, 5711 (1951). The Rebbe completed the discourse by saying, "May we merit to see and be together with the Rebbe, down here in a physical body and within our reach, and he will redeem us."*

*So it should be with us.*

*J. I. Gutterman*

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

*With Rabbi Aron Moss*

### Am I Always too Busy?

**Question:** *My partner tells me I should spend more time chilling out, relaxing, and just enjoying life. And that I should do things purely for entertainment value.*

*I'm the kind of person who does things to improve myself (really, not my imagination). Everything I do is for the purpose of education or self-improvement. All I ever do is read self-help books or watch lectures.*

*Apparently that's my problem. I take life too seriously. What do you reckon?*

**Answer:** There is no question that Jewish wisdom abhors time wasting. "The day is short, and we have a lot of work to do," say our sages. The Talmud warns, "Remember that the day of death approaches," which Chassidic masters explain to mean, "Remember that each day ends and never returns. Don't waste even one day."

And then there is the saying:

"People worry about losing money, but don't worry about losing time. Yet money can't save you, and time can't be recaptured."

Clearly, we are in this world to achieve. And yet, there is a concept of meaningful rest. Sometimes we do need to chill out. This is not necessarily a waste of time. We are much more effective after resting. Just like we need to sleep to be able to achieve more when we wake up, we need to have down time so our minds can be more focused and our energies replenished to get on with our mission.

Not that we should do things that will lower our moral standards, but we can sometimes just chill, take a walk, read something light, go to the zoo, fly a kite. This will refresh us and lead to more productivity. Not learning Torah is sometimes the best way to promote learning Torah. If your reluctance to waste time comes from a true desire to serve G-d, then you have nothing to fear from relaxation. For that is serving G-d too.

But if something else is driving you, if it is psychological rather than spiritual, then this avoidance of time wasting may not be such a good thing at all. It could be compulsive, or an attempt to prove your worth by always achieving something, or an aversion to sharing time with others, or a fear of facing your inner self. Ironically, addiction to self-help can be a great way to avoid facing your real self and caring for others. There is nothing holy about that.

This has very recently been dubbed the shark syndrome. Sharks constantly swim through the water, even when they are asleep, because if they don't they will sink to the ocean floor and die. Perhaps you are scared the same will happen to you. If you stop for a minute, you will fall apart.

You are not a shark. You are a soul that needs to achieve its purpose. We do this through meaningful work and meaningful rest too.

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## Choni the Circle-Maker

It once happened that they petitioned Choni the Circle-Maker, "Pray that rain should fall."

Said Choni to them, "Go, bring your Passover ovens indoors, so that they should not dissolve."

Choni prayed, but no rain fell. What did he do? He drew a circle, stood inside it, and said to G-d: "Master of the Universe! Your children turned to me because I am like a member of Your household. I swear by Your great name that I'm not budging from here until You have compassion on Your children!"

A rain began to drizzle.

Said Choni: "That's not what I asked for. I asked for rains to fill the cisterns, trenches and reservoirs."

The rains started coming down in torrents.

Said Choni: "That's not what I asked for. I asked for rains of goodwill, blessing and generosity."

A proper rain began to fall. But it continued to fall until the Jews went out of Jerusalem up onto the Temple Mount, because of the flooding caused by the rains. So they came to Choni and said: "Just as you prayed that the rains should fall, now pray that they should go away." Said he to them: "Go and see if the Stone of Claims has dissolved yet..."

Shimon ben Shetach sent a message to Choni: "If not for the fact that you are Choni, I would have issued a decree of excommunication against you. But what can I do against you, who unburdens himself before the Almighty and He fulfills your wish, like a child who unburdens himself before his father and his father fulfills his wish..."

## The Cow That Kept Shabbat

There was once a Jew who owned a cow with which he plowed his field. Then it came to pass that this Jew became impoverished and was forced to sell his cow to a non-Jew.

The new owner plowed with the cow throughout the week, but when he took her out to the field on Shabbat, she kneeled under the yoke and refused to do any work. He hit her with his whip, but she would not budge from her place.

So he came back to the Jew and said to him, "Take back your cow! All week I worked with her, but today I took her out to the field and she refuses to do anything..."

The Jew said to the cow's purchaser: "Come with me, and I will get her to plow." When they arrived at the field, the Jew spoke into the cow's ear. "Oh Cow, Cow! When you were in my domain, you rested on Shabbat. But now that my sins have caused me to sell you to this gentile, please, stand up and do the will of your master!"

Immediately the cow stood, prepared to work. Said the gentile

to the Jew: "I'm not letting you go until you tell me what you did and what you said to her. Have you bewitched her?" The Jew told him what he said to the cow.

When this man heard this, he was shaken and amazed. He said to himself: "If this creature, which has neither language or intelligence, recognizes her Creator, should not I, whom G-d created in His image and likeness and imbued me with intelligence and understanding?"

So he went and converted to Judaism and merited to study Torah. He became known as Yochanan ben Torta ("Yochanan son of the Cow")

## The Child and the Slave

Turnus Rufus asked Rabbi Akiva: "If your G-d loves the poor, why doesn't He feed them?"

Said Rabbi Akiva to him: "So that we should be saved from purgatory (in the merit of the charity we give)."

Said he to him: "On the contrary: for this you deserve to be punished.

"I'll give you an analogy. This is like a king who got angry at his slave and locked him away in a dungeon, and commanded that he not be given to eat or to drink—and a person came along and gave him to eat and to drink. When the king hears of this, is he not angry at that person? And you are called slaves, as it is written (Leviticus 25:55), 'The children of Israel are My slaves.'"

Said Rabbi Akiva to him: "I'll give you an analogy.

"This is like a king who got angry at his child and locked him away in a dungeon, and commanded that he not be given to eat or to drink—and a person came along and gave him to eat and to drink. When the king hears of this, does he not reward that person?"

"And we are G-d's children, as it is written (Deuteronomy 14:1), 'You are children of the L-rd your G-d.'"

## 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 26 - 27 January	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	8:20	9:21
Adelaide	8:09	9:08
Brisbane	6:27	7:22
Darwin	7:02	7:53
Gold Coast	6:26	7:22
Perth	7:04	8:01
Sydney	7:46	8:45
Canberra	7:58	8:57
Launceston	8:20	9:25
Auckland	8:19	9:19
Wellington	8:29	9:34
Hobart	8:23	9:29
Byron Bay	7:27	8:23

## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

### PARSHAS BESHALACH • 10 SHEVAT • 26 JANUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	8.25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	8.55 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.57 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	8.15 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	8.20 PM
	MAARIV	9.10 PM