

# LAMPLIGHTER

23 Tammuz  
Parshas  
Pinchas  
**1355**  
6 July  
5778/2018

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In the beginning of this week's Torah portion, Pinchas, G-d rewards Pinchas for having "zealously taken up My cause among the Israelites and turned My anger away from them." The reward was the priesthood: Pinchas and his descendants would be kohanim (priests). "I have given him My covenant of peace...a covenant of eternal priesthood to him and his posterity after him."

Our Sages tell us that "Pinchas is Elijah." Like Pinchas, Elijah the Prophet was a zealot, chastising the Jewish people when necessary. Similarly, as reward for "zealously taking up My cause for G-d, the L-rd of Hosts," G-d granted Elijah a "covenant of peace" - that he would personally attend every brit mila ceremony.

On a deeper level, the term "covenant of peace" alludes to the relationship ("treaty") between body and soul. This connection was particularly apparent in Elijah, as his soul never departed from his physical body. As the Torah relates, instead of passing away, Elijah ascended heavenward "in a tempest" - both the soul and physical body.

How was Elijah able to do that? The answer lies in the concept of refinement. Elijah's physical body had been completely purified to the point that it no longer obscured the underlying spirituality of the soul, thus constituting a vessel for holiness. Accordingly, there was no need for Elijah to die and be buried. The body itself could ascend and absorb all the higher spiritual revelations.

In this respect, Elijah was even superior to Moses. Moses' physical body was certainly holy; in fact, "the house filled with light" the moment he was born, illustrating how his physical being was not an impediment to the light of the soul.

Nonetheless, Moses passed away and was interred, as this light never completely permeated his body to the extent that it was fundamentally transformed. While he was alive, Moses' body allowed the light of the soul to shine through, but it remained essentially physical.

This helps to explain why Elijah the Prophet will be the one to herald the Final Redemption, as the whole meaning of Redemption is the definitive refinement of the physical world and its transformation into a vessel for holiness. Indeed, in the Messianic era, "The glory of G-d will be revealed and all flesh shall see [G-dliness]." "Flesh" - the material plane - will be able to perceive "that the mouth of G-d has spoken."

The power to effect this transformation was granted to Pinchas; had we been worthy, the Final Redemption would have occurred immediately upon the Jews' entrance into the Land of Israel. Due to various negative factors this was not the case, and we are still waiting. But thank G-d, Elijah's announcement of Moshiach's arrival is imminent, along with the era of complete Redemption it signifies.

## How To Take the Law Into Your Own Hands

By Yanki Tauber

My upstairs neighbor was having a rooftop garden put in. Fine and dandy, except for the fact that his special drainage system was not yet installed, and the unremitting drip-drip descending from above was driving us bananas. Worse yet, a cloud of mosquitoes hovered above the muddy patch under our bedroom windows, so that each morning my three beautiful daughters woke up covered with ugly insect bites.

I asked the guy in charge of the renovations up there to please stop the water torture. He patiently explained that the potted trees and shrubs (which included some very delicate ferns especially imported from some exotic sub-tropical country) had to be fed a small but steady stream of nutrient-enriched water, which must not be interrupted, ever. But they're working on a solution to divert the water by some less vexatious route. He referred me to the gardener/landscape artist in charge of the project for further elucidation.

"I don't care what you're doing up there and how you do it," said I, not ungraciously. "Just stop the dribble of water, ok?"

But the dribble didn't stop. I spoke with the guy's plumber, his foreman, his gardener, his secretary (who said that he's in San Francisco). I begged, I pleaded, I cajoled. Tears sprang to my eyes as I described the suffering of my family. I yelled, I threatened. Weeks went by, and the drip-drip of nutrient-enriched water and the buzz of nutrient-enriched mosquitoes continued.

So one Friday afternoon, after all the workers had left for the weekend, I clambered into a small dark closet under the stairs and shut off the water to the upstairs apartment.

Come Monday morning there was a pounding on my door. A shouting match ensued. He called me a criminal and I rejoined that there are situations in which an ordinary citizen is justified in taking the law into his own hands. He threatened to sue me, and I welcomed the suggestion. By the end of the week, a hose had been rigged up to send the water elsewhere.

But before I had a chance to properly savor my satisfaction over how I had handled the situation, I discovered The Three Fundamental Rules on How To Take The Law Into Your Own Hands. To my dismay, I found that I failed to meet all three requirements.

The three fundamental rules on how to take the law into your own hands are:

1) There has to be a truly extraordinary compelling need--e.g., tens of thousands of people are dying in a plague, and hundreds of thousands more will die unless drastic action is taken to stop it.

2) You must be prepared to pay the price. The law will not protect you from the consequences of your deed. You must be willing to sacrifice all--including your righteousness.

3) It must be completely against your nature to act this way, and it must pain you no end that you are forced to do so. In other words, if you enjoy doing this, then you shouldn't be doing this.

(In case you're wondering where I found these Fundamental Rules, it's all in the precedent of Pinchas' slaying of Zimri, as described in the Bible and discussed in the Talmud and the commentaries.)

Well, that nipped my career as an outlaw in the bud. Though it was fun while it lasted.

*Editor's Note: This article is not intended to be a halachic treatise on the complex subject of taking the law into one's own hands. A rabbi should be consulted in case of actual need.*

# Slice of LIFE

## Mrs. Devorah Groner OBM, Pioneering Australian Jewish Leader

By Menachem Posner

Mrs. Devorah Groner, a pioneering matriarch of Jewry in Melbourne, Australia, passed away on May 27. She was 92 years old.

She was born in Smolensk, Russia, in the spring of 1926 to Rabbi Chaim Tzvi and Breina Konikov, devoted Chabad Chassidim. Having served as a community rabbi and determined not to work on Shabbat, Rabbi Chaim Tzvi found piecework employment making clothing from home, one of the few professions in Soviet Russia that allowed workers to set their own hours. Also blessed with mechanical skills, he soon found himself fixing the sewing machines and equipment of many other Chassidic workers engaged in similar trades.

His success aroused some jealousy, and he soon found himself the target of unwanted attention from the Soviet authorities. In 1929, armed with affidavits and tickets for relatives in the United States, the Konikov family immigrated to the United States, settling in New Jersey. Devorah was 4 years old at the time. She would later recall how difficult it was to acclimate to an American kindergarten, where only English was spoken. Years later, when groups of Russian children came to Australia and enrolled in the schools her husband led, she reached out, and was able to relate to them personally and help ease their transition by empathizing with their immigrant experience.

In 1933, her father was appointed rabbi of the Tzemach Tzedek synagogue in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, N.Y. In addition to his official rabbinical duties, Rabbi Konikov was deeply involved in many aspects of Jewish education. He would gather children on Shabbat afternoon for treats, Torah thoughts and stories. He taught them basic Judaism after their public-school days. He even released records in which he spoke and sang in Yiddish. These projects were often family affairs, where Devorah and her brothers would contribute to the efforts in any way they could.

Devorah inherited her father's knack for teaching. In 1942, she began teaching the first class in the nascent Beth Rivkah school in Brooklyn, which was founded by the Sixth

Chabad-Lubavitch Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn of righteous memory, and headed by his son-in-law and subsequent successor, the Rebbe.

At some point, Devorah heard from her after-school charges (she taught during and after the school day in several institutions) that Catholic children in their public schools received an hour of religious training during the public-school day. Discussing it with her father, they consulted with the Rebbe, who strongly encouraged them to teach the Jewish children Judaism. These early efforts quickly grew into the Released Time Program, directed by Chabad-Lubavitch's National Committee for Furtherance of Jewish Education, which was closely overseen and spurred on by the Rebbe. Thousands of Jewish children receive weekly doses of Jewish education and inspiration until this day from the program.

As an older teen, she was sent by the Sixth Rebbe to teach in the Chabad-Lubavitch schools that were being founded across the East Coast. In an era when phone calls were prohibitive, this entailed significant hardship, often living alone far from family and friends.

In 1946, she married Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner, a promising young scholar and communal leader, who had been sent to lead the school in Providence, R.I., where she had been teaching. In 1947, the newly married rabbi was sent by the Rebbe on a spiritual tour of Australia and New Zealand to assess the religious needs of the Jewish communities that were growing rapidly through an influx of European immigrants after the Holocaust. The trip to Melbourne took 55 hours.

"The task of inspiring people is a necessity, and this—awakening people—is *ikar ha'ikrim* [the main part]," wrote the Rebbe.

The trip to Melbourne was his first connection to a community that would end up adoring the Groners' fearless and unabashed dedication to Jewish activism, and their boundless love for every Jew.

Following the trip, the Groners and their growing family moved to Buffalo to run the Chabad school there. While in Buffalo, she was instrumental in building a women's mikvah—a project she spearheaded and raised significant funds for.

In 1954, the rabbi visited Australia a second time—this time as an emissary of the Seventh Rebbe—and the local community asked that he come back permanently. In 1958, the Groners moved to Australia for what was initially meant to be for three to five years. Mrs. Groner waited behind for several months, and then took her children by boat to

join her husband.

They threw themselves into their work of bolstering the existing Jewish framework and building new institutions.

They ended up remaining for the rest of their lives devoted to their mission as emissaries of the Rebbe. Their home was an open one, and there were regular classes for men and women there both on Shabbat and on weekdays.

Under their stewardship, the cluster of schools they led grew to educate tens of thousands of Jewish children over the decades, and Judaism flourished in Australia.

At the time of her husband's passing in 2008, Isi Leibler, a former president of Australian Jewry, said: "History will record that Rabbi Yitzchok Groner was beyond a doubt the greatest Australian Jewish leader of the past century."

While her husband built organizations and schools, she built people and families.

Even as their community grew, she remained involved in the lives of hundreds of individuals, patiently listening and supporting with gentle advice and encouragement. That same patience allowed her to teach many people who discovered Judaism late in life how to read Hebrew, supporting, encouraging and taking pride in their accomplishments.

Her Chassidic devotion and fervor never waned. She was scrupulous in her mitzvah observance, faithfully praying three times a day, and was particular that someone (often a doting grandchild) be present to say "Amen" after she said each of the morning blessings.

Like her father, she loved to sing, tell stories about her beloved and revered Rebbes, and share anecdotes from her storied and significant life. But most of all, she loved to laugh. She saw the best in everyone and everything.

In her early days in Melbourne, she struggled to light the fire in her home one chilly winter morning. In true Chassidic fashion, she saw it as a lesson in human service to G-d. After she shared her insight with the Rebbe, she received a letter back encouraging her to publish her insights. The result was an article in the N'shei Chabad Newsletter (Purim 1983) in which she compares the Rebbe to matches, the *shluchim* to twigs and their communities to logs, all of which burn with a holy fire.

She is survived by her children: Rabbi Sholom Ber Groner (Johannesburg); Mrs. Miriam Telsner; Mrs. Shterna Zirkind (Brooklyn, N.Y.); Rabbi Yossi Groner; Mrs. Chaya Haller (Johannesburg); Rabbi Chaim Tzvi Groner; Mrs. Rivkah Yurkowicz; and Rabbi Mendy Groner; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother, Rabbi Velvel Konikov of Brooklyn, N.Y.

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### WEEKLY VIDEO



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movement that promotes Judaism and provides daily  
Torah lectures and Jewish insights



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## Publicizing Shabbat Times

By the Grace of G-d  
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan,  
5735. Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Dr. S. L. Simons  
Greeting and Blessing:

Thank you very much for your letter of the 27th of Tishrei and enclosures.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness in letting me know the good news about joint effort with Mrs. Simons in the matter of publicizing candle lighting time and Torah readings for the week.

As for the deed itself, there is no need to say "thank you" for it, for your reward is assured from Heaven, but it is in order for me to say thank you for the pleasure which you brought me with the above news.

I trust that inasmuch as you have the editor's cooperation, it will be possible for you to add another line to indicate the time of the termination of Shabbos, thus making the whole thing complete by specifying both the beginning and the end of the holy Shabbos.

Inasmuch as our Sages declare that human nature is such that ambition grows with accomplishments. Or, as they put it, "He who has 100, desires 200, and having attained 200, desires 400," I am confident that your accomplishment in this very important matter will be the forerunner of further and greater accomplishments in spreading true Yiddishkeit in your community. The Zechus Horabim will surely stand you and yours in good stead.

With blessing  
M. Schneerson

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

### Why Must the Wedding Reception Be Kosher?

**Question:** *Why do rabbis insist that the food at a wedding be kosher? Frankly, I don't see why it should matter who the caterer is, and if I don't usually keep kosher, why should my wedding be kosher? I understand you need a rabbi to oversee the ceremony, but why do you need a rabbi to oversee the kitchen?*

**Answer:** Good question. But let me take it one step further: Why do we need to serve food at a wedding in the first place? Can't you get married without eating? And indeed, why does every Jewish event involve food?

The answer: Eating is our way of capturing a moment and ingesting it. By linking a holy event with a meal, we bring the holiness down into our body. Without food, the event would remain somewhat abstract. The food is what brings it down to earth.

Food is the bridge between matter and spirit, body and soul. Our soul is our life force; our body, a lifeless shell. By eating, we connect our physical self with its spiritual life force—we bring soul into body. If we didn't eat, our body would gradually disconnect from its source of life. It is food that creates the link between body and soul.

That's why we eat at a wedding. The Jewish wedding is a spiritual event. A holy light descends upon the souls of the bride and groom, bringing them together as one. We don't want this to be a fleeting moment, but rather we want to absorb the spirit and energy of the day. This is achieved by eating a celebratory meal. Through eating food from a wedding meal we absorb the Divine light into our bodies and bring the blessings down to earth, so that the holiness of the day influence the lives of the new couple, their families and all present.

That's why the food must be kosher. The kosher diet promotes good circulation between soul and body. If this is true of every meal, how much more so for a wedding meal. The holiness of a wedding can be captured only by food that is holy.

You hire a good photographer to capture the scene of the wedding day. Have a kosher function, and capture the soul of the day forever.

## A WORD

from the Director

*Last Shabbat was the Seventeenth of Tammuz, when the ancient city of Jerusalem was assaulted by invading gentiles. Twenty-one days later, on the Ninth of Av (Tisha B'Av), the Holy Temple was set afire and razed.*

*The fact that this interval on the Jewish calendar is known as the "Three Weeks" and not the "Twenty-One Days" is not incidental. The number three alludes to the inner significance and function of the Three Weeks as a period of preparation for the Third Holy Temple.*

*On a superficial level the Three Weeks are a sad time, a period of mourning for the destruction of the Temple and the beginning of the Jewish people's current exile. But on a deeper level they contain a hidden good. Why? Everything that happens in the world is directed by G-d. G-d is the essence of good, and everything He does is good, even if it doesn't appear that way at first. Having come directly from G-d, there is no other possibility.*

*Accordingly, the Three Weeks, although superficially associated with sadness, contain a positive meaning: At the exact moment when the Second Holy Temple was destroyed, the Third and eternal Holy Temple was constructed up in heaven! In this light the entire destruction can be seen as nothing but a preparatory stage in the Redemptive process, a necessary step toward the Final Redemption with Moshiach, at which time the concept of exile will no longer exist.*

*At present, the good contained within the Three Weeks remains hidden. But reflecting upon its true, inner meaning hastens the day when its inner goodness will be revealed, when the Temple will be reestablished.*

*Let us therefore accustom ourselves to seeing the hidden good that exists in all things, thereby meriting the ultimate revelation of inner goodness with the arrival of our Righteous Moshiach.*

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED



**A Death Bed Confession**

By Yrachmiel Tilles

"Water!" the invalid rasped in a whispery voice. The astounded doctors, who had given up the unconscious man for dead, were shocked to hear his voice again. The priest, who had taken his final confession, turned pale. Had a miracle taken place?

The doctors quickly initiated treatment. For hours they attended at his bedside. Finally, they saw clear signs of a positive change in his condition. By evening they were able to declare that his situation was no longer critical; he was out of danger.

For another several weeks Bagalo continued to be very weak, and the doctors prohibited him to engage in any of his regular activities. Finally, however, he regained his strength completely. Every trace of the disease had completely disappeared!

All of Spain breathed a collective sigh of relief at Bagalo's recovery. He was one of the King's most trusted advisors, with a strong reputation for honesty and intelligence. The king loved to consult with him so much that he had risen to be one of the most important personalities in the royal court.

His advice was especially valued by the monarch in economic affairs. More than once his suggestions had directly resulted in great fiscal gain for the kingdom, and concurrent improvements in the daily life of the people. The king considered Bagalo to be a financial wizard, and was not slow to express his appreciation, as he showered upon him wealth and valuable gifts.

Although everyone was aware of Bagalo's great wisdom and praised him for it, no one had yet realized that he was really a Jew. This was his great secret. He was an anus [forced'-a Marrano], of a family that had been coerced to convert. As far as he was concerned, his Catholic status was for appearances only. He conducted himself outwardly as he had to, while he continued to observe all of the commandments secretly, in hiding.

Lately, though, he hadn't had much to hide. Whereas previously he had set aside time for mitzvah observance and even for Torah study and thought, his new prominent position in court consumed virtually all of his waking hours. He no longer had time to pray or to study, or even to perform the commandments. His Judaism remained only in his core beliefs, his strong inner faith in his G-d and His people.

From time to time, at moments when he was alone, a heavy sigh would push through his lips. How he longed for Shabbat and the Jewish holidays, for all of the mitzvot. How had he allowed himself to become so distant?

But such thoughts could only be indulged for a few moments. Than the heavy pressure of his workload would again take over his time and his thoughts. Thus he conducted his life until he fell critically ill.

The most competent of the royal physicians had been summoned to care for him. They gave him the finest medicines and treatments, at the king's order sparing no expense, but nothing helped. He became weaker and weaker until finally the doctors felt they had no choice but to declare that his case was hopeless. An important priest was summoned.

Then came his miraculous recovery. After a while, no one recalled that he had been so sick. No one but him, that is. He remembered very well what had happened; he knew and kept to himself what even the most expert of the physicians could not know.

One day Bagalo summoned the priest who had taken his confession. He led him to a private room, locked the door behind them and lowered the window shades. He sat opposite the priest and looked him straight in the eyes. "I remember everything you said to me when we thought I was dying. At the end, after all the prayers, you muttered a few words that I didn't

understand. Those words are engraved in my memory. What do they mean?"

The priest visibly trembled. His face changed colors. He tried to stammer a reply but his teeth were rattling too hard. Seeing that the other's distress had rendered him unable to speak, Bagalo continued. "The words were: 'Shma Yisrael A--noy E--heinu A--noy Echad.' Isn't that a Jewish prayer?"

The priest's whole body quivered, but no words were forthcoming. "So, you are a Jew?" Bagalo pushed on.

The priest sat frozen, his face registering shock and terror that his secret had been uncovered by the king's advisor.

"Don't be afraid; I won't inform on you," Bagalo said gently. "Just give me your word of honor that you will be wholehearted in the word of our god and you will put aside these Hebrew incantations."

"No!" roared the priest. "I prefer to die as a Jew. Enough of this double life. This is the moment of truth." Now that he had recovered himself, the words were quickly tumbling from his mouth. "I am prepared to die, but as a Jew."

"My brother!" Bagalo cried out, and fiercely embraced his co-religionist. "I too am Jewish. And now I know that you are truly attached to the faith of our fathers. We are one!"

Their shared secret drew the two men to become close friends. They revealed to each other their secret lives. The priest explained that he had entered the clergy for one reason only: to be able to whisper "Shema Yisroel..." in the ear of Marrano Jews on their death-bed, so that their souls would exit in purity.

The king's advisor related that when he had been at death's door he had wanted to at least say the Shema. To his distress, he found that he couldn't remember exactly how it went. Then, suddenly, he heard the holy words being said in his ear! It was as if a gentle breeze had wafted him up and re-invigorated him with new life.

Falling into a deep sleep, he began to dream. He saw an old man, who smiled warmly and spoke. His voice was gentle and melodious. "I am your grandfather. You shall recover from this illness and you shall live, but only on a condition. You must return to a full Jewish life. Therefore, you shall leave this country. Move to the Land of Israel. Upon your departure, take with you the bones of your father and give them a Jewish burial there."

The two friends planned their escape. They decided that Bagalo should tell the king that during his critical illness he had vowed that if he recovered he would make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The king would probably not be able to refuse such a request. He would likely even help him to fulfill it. The priest would arrange for the disinterment of the remains of Bagalo's father, for the church cemetery was under his supervision.

Thus, the pair was able to abandon Spain. After a series of difficult journeys, the two baalei teshuvah (returnees to Jewish observance) reached the holy city of Tsfat (Safed). There they dedicated themselves to lives of total mitzvah observance, Torah-study and prayer. When, in the course of time, they passed away, both of them were complete tzadikim (perfectly righteous).

**PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL**

Aaron's grandson Pinchas is rewarded for his act of zealotry in killing the Simeonite prince Zimri and the Midianite princess who was his paramour: G-d grants him a covenant of peace and the priesthood.

A census of the people counts 601,730 men between the ages of twenty and sixty. Moses is instructed on how the Land is to be divided by lottery among the tribes and families of Israel. The five daughters of Tzelafchad petition Moses that they be granted the portion of the land belonging to their father, who died without sons; G-d accepts their claim and incorporates it into the Torah's laws of inheritance.

Moses empowers Joshua to succeed him and lead the people into the Land of Israel.

The Parshah concludes with a detailed list of the daily offerings, and the additional offerings brought on Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh (first of the month), and the festivals of Passover, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret.

**CANDLE LIGHTING**



	Shabbos 6 - 7 July	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	4:56	5:57
Adelaide	4:59	5:59
Brisbane	4:49	5:45
Darwin	6:16	7:08
Gold Coast	4:46	5:42
Perth	5:07	6:05
Sydney	4:41	5:40
Canberra	4:46	5:46
Launceston	4:37	5:41
Auckland	4:59	6:00
Wellington	4:47	5:51
Hobart	4:31	5:37
Byron Bay	4:44	5:40

**CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH**

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

**PARSHAS PINCHAS • 23 TAMMUZ • 6 JULY**

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	MINCHA	5.00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	5.35 PM
<b>SHABBOS DAY:</b>	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.58 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MOLAD WILL BE:	FRIDAY 6.49 (8 chalakim) AM
	FARBRENGEN AFTER DAVENING	
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	MINCHA	4.55 PM
	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MAARIV	5.05 PM 5.50 PM