

LAMPLIGHTER

1 Menachem-Av/Rosh
Chodesh
Parshas
Matos-Masei
1356
13 July
5778/2018

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Shabbosos during the "Three Weeks" (the time between the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Av), contain a unique dimension: They are within the period of lamentation over the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the Jewish people. Yet it is forbidden to mourn on Shabbat, and on the contrary, we are commanded to rejoice.

In truth, these special Shabbosos express the true good that is hidden within the exile. Seen superficially, the exile is only a negative phenomenon - painful and without merit. On a deeper level, however, the exile contains a higher purpose, one that is only goodness and light - the Final Redemption with Moshiach. In fact, in the era of Moshiach, those days that were marked by the Jewish people as days of mourning will be transformed into days of rejoicing.

This principle - that what we now perceive as cause for grief will ultimately be shown to be only good - is reflected in the dual nature of these three Shabbosos.

This duality is further expressed in this week's two Torah portions, Matot and Masei.

In the Torah, the Jewish people are sometimes referred to as "shevatim" and sometimes as "matot," both of which are generally translated as "tribes."

Literally "rods" or "staves," there is one important distinction between the two terms: although both signify a branch that has been cut from a tree, a "shevet" still retains its moisture and suppleness, whereas a "mateh" has already dried out and is therefore stronger and inflexible.

These two appellations allude to the Jewish soul's journey in this physical world.

Torn from its G-dly Source, the soul is "cut off" from its roots, as it were. Sometimes it manages to retain its original Divine "moisture," yet other times it is so estranged from its G-dly Source that it appears to have "dried out" completely. "Masei" ("Journeys") too, alludes to the soul's descent from the highest spiritual planes to this world, including the lowliest descent of all into the exile. And yet, the purpose of this descent is none other than ascent, thus the strong rod has a certain advantage over the flexible tree branch.

Matot and Masei remind us of the true essence of the exile, which is the great ascent and revelation of G-dliness that will be revealed precisely from within.

A Jew must always remember that the true purpose of the soul's sojourn in the physical world, as well as the Jewish people's travails in exile, is solely in order to reach the G-dliness of the Messianic era. This awareness in itself gives us the strength to overcome all difficulties and to fulfill G-d's will in the most trying of circumstances, leading all of Creation to its ultimate perfection with Moshiach.

Priorities and Price Tags

By Yossy Goldman

Is it the money or the man, the cash or the kids? Of course, no one would ever admit to putting money ahead of their children; but is it not an all too common phenomenon? Aren't most parents, even good parents, guilty of making that mistake now and then?

In this week's Parshah the Jewish People are preparing for the conquest of Canaan and the allotment of the Promised Land amongst the twelve tribes of Israel, when the tribes of Reuben and Gad make a special request of Moses.

They had abundant herds of livestock and the land east of the Jordan River was especially suitable for grazing. They asked Moses if they could receive this land rather than land west of the Jordan. In making this request they expressed themselves thus: "Pens for the flock we shall build here for our livestock, and cities for our small children."

Immediately, Moses chastises them and corrects their mistake. "Build for yourselves cities for your small children and pens for your flock." Moses turns around their sequence, putting the children ahead of the animals.

Rashi observes that these tribes were more concerned about their money, i.e. livestock, than they were about their sons and daughters. Moses needed to give them a lesson in values and priorities. Put family first. Possessions come later.

The veteran American spiritual leader, Rabbi David Hollander, once told me the story of a fellow who somehow managed to get himself locked in inside a big department store after they closed up for the day. To compound the problem, it was over a holiday weekend. When all his attempts to get out proved futile, he decided to give vent to his frustrations by taking revenge on the store management. He spent the time of his incarceration swapping price tags on the merchandise. The result? A mink coat was now priced at \$29.99, a necktie at \$999.00. Furniture was going for the price of peanuts, the latest hi-fi for a song, and a set of underwear was absolutely unaffordable! Imagine the chaos when the store reopened.

The question is, are our own price tags correctly marked? Do we value the things in our own lives correctly? Are our priorities in order? Or do we too put the cattle and the sheep -- the car and the office -- ahead of our children?

How many workaholic husbands have told their wives, "Honey, I'm doing it all for you and the kids." But the businesses we are busy building for them actually take us away from them in the most important and formative years of their lives. Rightly has it been said, "the best thing you can spend on your kids is not money but time."

I've seen many people become "successes" over the years. They achieve professional success, career success, business success, growing their fame and fortunes. Too many in the process have become family failures. At the end of the day, our deepest satisfaction in life comes not from our professional achievements but from our family -- the growth, stability and togetherness that we have nurtured over the years -- what our Jewish parents and grandparents simply called nachas.

To paraphrase the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, "Jewish wealth is not measured in property portfolios or stocks and bonds; true Jewish wealth is being blessed with children who walk in the ways of G-d." For that, we need to be there for them and with them.

A congregant of mine once walked up to me and proclaimed, "Rabbi, I am a millionaire!" I knew the man to be of modest financial means but he immediately explained, "I'm a millionaire in nachas!"

Amen. I wish it upon all of us.

Slice of LIFE

A Holocaust Survivor's Revenge: A Bar Mitzvah in Poland After 79 Years

By Mordechai Lightstone

Johnny Jablon began preparing for his bar mitzvah in Poland in the summer of 1939. A month later, the Germans invaded. Now 92 years of age, Jablon returned to Poland for the first time since World War II to finally celebrate his bar mitzvah.

Born the second of three sons to an assimilated Jewish family in Kraków, Jablon spent the first 11 years of his life fully integrated into Polish society. While many of the more traditional Jews lived in the Kazimierz district, the Jablons lived on a small suburban street next to Planty Park, the large garden that encircles Kraków's Old City, where the city's walls had once stood.

"Until the sixth grade, I spoke only Polish," Jablon recalls. "I was the only Jew in my class. My classmates made that very clear to me—for six years, they called me nothing but 'dirty Jew.'"

In the summer of 1939, Jablon was learning to swim in Kraków's new public pool and enjoying time with his aunt and cousins in a summer camp in Rytro, a resort town nestled in Poland's Tatra mountains. His parents hired a rabbi to help him

with his bar mitzvah studies. When the war broke out in September, his studies stopped—and the course of Jablon's life was forever altered.

"In one day, I lost everything," he says.

Instead of attending gymnasium as he had planned, Jablon spent the war years being shuffled from the Kraków Ghetto to the Płaszów, Auschwitz and Mauthausen concentration camps. When the war finally ended, he had lost his mother, father and brothers, as well as 16 aunts and uncles, and many more cousins.

Moving to Montreal, Jablon married, opened an electronics store and began a new life. He never planned to return to Poland. "How could I go back?" he says. "I had no one left. I didn't want to go to see the ashes of my family."

Last May, when his wife, Sally, passed away, Jablon began to reflect on his life in Poland before the war. At the urging of friends, he decided that it was time to finally return on a "March of the Living" trip to the country of his birth.

That's when Jablon met Chabad-Lubavitch emissary Rabbi Pinny Gniwisch. The director of Chabad-affiliated "Living Legacy" in Montreal, Gniwisch has been leading "March of the Living" trips to Poland for the past 13 years. This year, he served as the Montreal delegation's official rabbi.

As the two met over lunch before the trip, Jablon mentioned his interrupted bar mitzvah.

"He was adamant at first about not wanting to put on tefillin," notes Gniwisch. The conversation then turned to the subject of revenge.

"This is your revenge," Gniwisch told him. "You owe it yourself to reclaim what was taken from you." Jablon took to the idea. He was on board to wrap tefillin in Poland.

The bar mitzvah was held on Rosh Chodesh (the first day of the Jewish month) of the month of Iyar in the Tykocin synagogue, one of the few remaining historic synagogues in Poland.

"It was surreal," says Gniwisch. "We were in a shul that once had 4,000 members—all murdered in one day. Yet here it was, 79 years later, being used again, to help a survivor reclaim what was stolen from him."

To Jablon, the bar mitzvah was the highlight of his trip.

"I felt such a mixture of emotions. Everyone around me was crying. I felt so excited for the opportunity, and sad that no one from my childhood family could see it."

After Jablon donned tefillin for the first time and was called to the Torah, everyone in the synagogue began to dance.

"That was something else," he says. "To see all the kids around me dance. That is how you fight anti-Semitism—by showing Jewish pride through education."

Published by The Chabad House of Caulfield in conjunction with the

Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.

Editor: Shlomie Naparstek

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

The Lamplighter contains words from sacred writings. Please do not deface or discard.

ISSUE 1366

WEEKLY VIDEO



Please do not scan or access this QR code on Shabbat or Yom Tov.

Content printed with permission from

Chabad.ORG

The Official homepage for worldwide Chabad-Lubavitch movement that promotes Judaism and provides daily Torah lectures and Jewish insights



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Being Realistic AND Positive

I received your letter. While I am pleased to read in your letter a quotation about G-d being the Creator of the world Who also guides all its destinies, etc., this very good impression is weakened by the further tone of your letter, where you state that you want to be "realistic", based on the prognosis of physicians regarding your condition.

I want to tell you, first, that even from the realistic point of view, we must recognize the fact that very many times the greatest physicians have made mistakes in diagnosis. Moreover, in recent times we see that new discoveries are made daily in the medical field, with new "wonder" drugs and methods, which have revolutionized medical treatment.

Secondly, observing life in general, we see so many things that are strange and unbelievable, that to be truly realistic one cannot consider anything as impossible.

In a condition which is, to a large extent, bound up with the nervous system and the resistance of the organism, even medical opinion agrees that the stronger the patient's faith in cure, and the stronger his will to get better, the stronger becomes his ability to recover.

Needless to say, this is not said in the way of an admonition. But, inasmuch as by individual Divine Providence, you have learned of me, and I of you, I think I am entitled to convey to you the above thoughts, which I was privileged to hear from my father-in-law of saintly memory in similar cases.

May the Almighty help you to fulfill your promise to work for Torah-true movements, and to bring up your children in the way of true Yiddishkeit. With blessing, and hoping to hear good news from you,

Sincerely,

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

Why Is It So Hard to Immigrate?

Question: *The immigration experience has been much harder than expected. I am here for a year already, and not at all acclimated. Don't get me wrong, I have been welcomed with open arms into this community, and people have been great to me. But I miss home, still don't really feel I fit in and don't get the mentality. I am still very much a foreigner. Jews have moved around a lot in history, so is there a Jewish approach to adjusting to new country?*

Answer: Your difficulty is not uncommon. In fact every soul goes through a similar process on its journey to higher worlds.

Death is the ultimate immigration experience. The soul leaves this world and moves into the spiritual realm. This is most unsettling. Having become accustomed to life in a body on earth, the soul is at first disoriented and lost in its new supernal domain.

In order to adjust to this new reality, the soul has to be helped to forget physical life, to actively rid itself of the sights and sounds, the flavors and the attitudes of life in a body. As long as the soul still holds on to worldly memories it cannot appreciate this new, more refined world.

Of course, the soul can hold on to memories of the loved ones it left behind, because those connections are not merely physical. But tactile sensations and bodily pleasures must be forgotten in order to develop a taste for the higher pleasures up there.

This is astounding. It means you can be in heaven and not enjoy yourself, because you are thinking of the life you left behind. You'd expect that physical pleasures would pale in comparison to heavenly life. But no. The memory of familiar comforts will blind you to the opportunities that are still unfamiliar. No matter how sublime the delights of paradise may be, if you are still in earth mode, you will not appreciate them. You must shed your worldly outlook before you can adopt an other-worldly one.

The same applies to immigration. As long as your head is back in the old country, you will never settle in the new. You may be right—the water tasted better, the traffic wasn't as bad, the bureaucracy and the mentality and the accent and the price of fish are all better back home. Maybe. But you will only make your new country home if you stop comparing it and start living in it.

Being away from family and friends will always be tough. But you need to consciously make a shift—an immigration of the mind—by saying, "Now I'm here, and that's that." Then give it some time. Even heaven takes getting used to.

A WORD

from the Director

This Friday is the first day of the month of Av. With the beginning of Av, the three week mourning period over the destruction of the Temple intensifies.

The first of Av was also the day on which Aaron, the High Priest and brother of Moses, passed away.

Concerning his passing, the Torah tells us that "All of the house of Israel wept for Aaron for 30 days." But only the men wept for Moses and not the women. Why was this? Because Aaron had made peace between a man and his wife, and between a person and his friend, so all of the Jewish people mourned him.

Certainly it is Divine Providence that Aaron, who was known as a "pursuer of peace," passed away just on the day when, hundreds of years later, we would be intensifying our mourning over the destruction of the Temple? His life's work, evident even at his passing and how he was mourned, teaches us how to remedy the reason for which the Temple was destroyed.

Our Sages tell us that the first Temple was destroyed because the Jews indulged in idolatry, adultery and murder. The second Temple was destroyed through the sin of causeless hatred. We see, then, that hatred and divisiveness among Jews is equal to idolatry, adultery and murder.

We have much to learn from Aaron and his passing. But, most importantly, we must learn to emulate the wonderful example he showed us, that of doing everything in our power to bring peace and harmony amongst our fellow Jews. When this happens, we will no longer mourn the passing of Aaron, nor the destruction of the Holy Temples, for we will all be united, together as one, in the Third and Everlasting Holy Temple, NOW!

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Once there was a king whose palace had been ransacked by the wild hordes. For the wood and stone of the palace he had no tears, but for the crown jewels, passed down for many generations, for this there was no consolation.

The king gathered his wise men, but none could give counsel. The jewels had been spread by those barbarian hordes throughout the land and throughout many other lands, the most precious of them taken across the seas to the farthest reaches of the globe. But the King had a daughter very dear to him, and in her wisdom she saw what needed to be done.

So the king and his daughter trained many pigeons to return to the palace, to recognize the crown jewels and carry them back on their journey. Each day they would release the pigeons in the pastures about the palace and some would discover the jewels scattered about and return them to their home. And the king was glad and smiled to his daughter.

Then the king's daughter sent them further away, and again they returned, carrying a few more of the jewels her father had lost. As far away as they were sent, they hastily returned.

But the most valuable jewels, those in the most distant lands and most hidden places, those jewels had not yet been recovered. The pigeons did not venture far enough to find them--they were too eager to return home.

The king's daughter knew what must be done, but she could not tell her father, for it was too hard, too dangerous, too awful. But he looked in her eyes and he knew. And so he destroyed his palace once again, razing it to the ground, removing its every trace. When the pigeons attempted to return, they found nothing, no more than an empty pasture with scattered stones and smoldering wood. They were hungry for their food and sick for their home.

Until the most adventurous of the pigeons traveled far abroad and found other palaces, and in those palaces they found hidden the king's most precious jewels, and gathered them and polished them and kept them in their wings. And at night they cried, for they knew this was not their home.

And now has come the time for them to all return.

I can't explain to you everything meant by this story. If I could, what would I need a story for? I would just explain it to you without the story. But I can tell you some of the teachings that form its basis. For one, you need to know what the great Kabbalist Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, known as Ari Hakadosh ("The Holy Lion"), taught about our world. He taught that there is not a thing in this world that does not contain a holy spark. Even the greatest evil, even the harshest darkness that does everything it can to oppose its Creator and deny any purpose or goodness in the world, even that contains a Divine spark. And it needs that spark, because without it, it would not be able to exist for even a moment. Why then is it evil? Because the spark it contains is so dim, so concealed, its only way of expression is to be the opposite of what it truly is.

So you might think that if that spark is so dim, it couldn't be a

very important spark. Maybe G-d could do without it. But the Maggid of Mezritch taught just the opposite, that it is the highest sparks that fall furthest from their source. So in places that are warm and friendly to holiness, there are going to be some warm and friendly sparks. But if you want the most powerful sparks, the sparks that talk about the real essence of G-d, then you need to deal with the places that are furthest from their source.

As long as all these sparks are held hostage in things and places that don't know the real meaning of what they hold inside, the world is not fulfilled. That is how the Ari describes Torah and Jews-- they are the way those sparks become reconnected to their source.

There is one other thing I would like to say about this story-- the rest I will leave to you. In our history, the pattern of destruction and exile has repeated itself many times. We began in exile, in the land of Egypt. Then there was the destruction of the first Holy Temple and exile to Babylonia, and then the second destruction and a very lengthy exile which we still endure. There is no other nation that has been spread so far apart, yet retained identity a single whole, always with hope to return. And all of it was part of His Divine plan, to retrieve all the sparks of holiness. Which is what we did, because wherever we go, we use the materials, the foods, the music, the customs of that place in a Torah way.

But as far as I am concerned, the greatest destruction and the greatest exile began sixty years ago. Because, until then, if a Jewish person was looking for a teacher and a guide to find his or her path to G-d, or just looking for some spirituality in life, there were tzaddikim just around the corner, and everyone knew that was so. But when the communities of Europe were suddenly and brutally destroyed, along with all but a handful of the great tzaddikim, that is when the greatest darkness began. That is when this bizarre detour began, that if a Jewish soul wants to find meaning, she goes to drink from the wells of others. True, she will never be satisfied from those wells, since they are not her own. But a soul that lived for 3,300 years basking in spirituality simply cannot bear the dry, parched land.

And, unfathomable as it may be, that had purpose as well. But now has come the time for us to all return home.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Moses conveys the laws governing the annulment of vows to the heads of the tribes of Israel.

War is waged against Midian for their role in plotting the moral destruction of Israel, and the Torah gives a detailed account of the war spoils and how they were allocated amongst the people, the warriors, the Levites and the high priest.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad (later joined by half of the tribe of Manasseh) ask for the lands east of the Jordan as their portion in the Promised Land, these being prime pastureland for their cattle. Moses is initially angered by the request, but subsequently agrees on the condition that they first join, and lead, in Israel's conquest of the lands west of the Jordan.

The forty-two journeys and encampments of Israel are listed, from the Exodus to their encampment on the plains of Moab across the river from the land of Canaan.

Also in Massei: The boundaries of the Promised Land are given, and cities of refuge are designated as havens and places of exile for inadvertent murderers. The daughters of Tzelafchad marry within their own tribe of Manasseh, so that the estate which they inherit from their father should not pass to the province of another tribe.

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 13 - 14 July	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	5:00	6:01
Adelaide	5:03	6:02
Brisbane	4:52	5:47
Darwin	6:18	7:10
Gold Coast	4:49	5:45
Perth	5:11	6:09
Sydney	4:45	5:44
Canberra	4:50	5:50
Launceston	4:42	5:45
Auckland	5:03	6:04
Wellington	4:51	5:55
Hobart	4:36	5:42
Byron Bay	4:47	5:43

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS MATOS-MASEI • 1 MENACHEM-AV

ROSH CHODESH • 13 JULY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	5.05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	5.35 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.57 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	4.55 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	5.10 PM
	MAARIV	5.55 PM