

# LAMPLIGHTER

22 Menachem-Av  
Parshas  
Eikev  
**1359**  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In the Torah portion of Eikev, Moses recounts the passing of his brother Aaron immediately after recalling the breaking of the tablets containing the Ten Commandments. Our Sages tell us that the incidents are juxtaposed because "the demise of tzadikim (the righteous) is as difficult for G-d as the breaking of the tablets."

The parallel between the demise of the righteous and the breaking of the tablets is not only that they are both extremely difficult for G-d, but also that tzadikim and the tablets are analogous. How so?

With regard to the first tablets, the Torah states: "The tablets were the work of G-d; their text was written by G-d - engraved upon the tablets." The tablets thus had two distinct attributes: their very creation was a work of G-d; the text was engraved by G-d.

After the sin of the Golden Calf, "Moses looked at them and saw that the writing had disappeared. He said: 'How can I give the Jewish people the tablets, they are without substance? Rather, I will break them.'"

But even after the writing had disappeared, the tablets were still G-d's work. How could Moses refer to them as being "without substance"?

The text of the tablets was engraved within the tablets themselves. As such, the text became an integral part of the tablets' substance, not something added as ink is added to paper. Hence, the engraving of the text had a profound impact on the actual tablets, the words becoming entirely one with them.

Therefore, once the "writing had disappeared" - although the tablets were still a work of G-d - they were "without substance," for the true entity was the actual text, with its soul and spirit.

These qualities of the tablets have a parallel within each Jew. Every Jew is a composite of body and soul. The Jew's body is similar to the tablets, which were a work of G-d, for even the body of a Jew possesses tremendous sanctity. The soul that was placed within the body is similar to the Divine writing engraved within the tablets. The unity of body and soul is thus similar to the unity of the writing and the tablets themselves.

As mentioned earlier, the tablets were important unto themselves - "the work of G-d" - even before the writing was engraved, for the tablets preceded the text. Still, once the Ten Commandments were engraved within them they were elevated to such an extent that their totality was the "Divine writing." So when the writing disappeared, they were considered to be "without substance."

So too with the Jew. Although his body was created independently of his soul, once the soul is vested in the body, it becomes truly one with the body. The essential aspect of the soul becomes the essential character of the body as well. Thus we say that "the life of the tzadik is not physical life, but spiritual life - belief, awe and love [of G-d]."

This then is the similarity between the demise of tzadikim and the breaking of the tablets. With the introduction of an even higher spiritual element - the soul, the Divine writing - both entities undergo a profound change, with spirituality becoming their entire essence.

## The Difference Between Praying and Eating

*By Elisha Greenbaum*

It's the greatest feeling in the world. You walk into an almost empty synagogue, and you can feel the waves of love pouring out from the nine men who got there before you. You are the minyan man!

They were just hanging around waiting for you. Maybe the chazzan (prayer leader) was about to start the Amidah, or one of the guys needed to say Kaddish, or maybe the rabbi was desperate to start the Torah reading. The reason for the effusive welcome is that the collective just couldn't move forward without you, the tenth Jew.

But what are you supposed to do once you've gotten there? Do you need to don a tallit (prayer shawl) and start praying in order to count towards the minyan? What if you're not quick enough to catch up to the crowd? What if you've prayed already?

The basic rule is that although we need ten men physically present to constitute a minyan, only six of them actually need to be praying together. As long as we have a majority up to speed, the other four can answer "amen" and just hang around doing their own thing.

It's not just in the synagogue that a minyan counts for more; there are other occasions in Judaism when we count to ten.

For example, Jewish law requires - as per Deuteronomy 8:10 - that after we eat, we recite a blessing to thank G-d for the food He so generously provides. Depending on the indulgence, different blessings are recited. There is the short, one-line Borei Nefashot that we say after most snacks, the longer Al Hamichyah that follows cake or biscuits, and the full blown, five-benediction Grace After Meals that is said or sung after eating bread.

Those prayers are recited irrespective of when, how, or with whom one ate. However, when dining in company there is a preliminary passage, the zimmun, which we recite together. There is the so-called minor zimmun, read when at least three men have shared a meal, and there is the major zimmun, which includes G-d's name, for a minyan or more.

Fascinatingly, though a minyan is required in order to recite the major zimmun, only seven must have partaken in the meal. As long as seven men have shared a meal together, three others can join to make a minyan.

I never really thought about this discrepancy between a minyan for praying, which requires only six participants, and the minyan for Grace After Meals, which requires seven, until I came across a comment by Rabbi Yisroel Salant, the Lithuanian Torah authority and ethicist. He points out that this distinction between prayer and Grace After Meals is indicative of the significance that Judaism allocates to individual responsibility and communal identity.

It is important to gather together in a common cause. It is crucial to our identity as Jews that we join together in shared homage to our Creator. We should always be on the lookout to invite other Jews into our synagogues and influence them to pray. But the primary focus of our interactions with others should be to ensure that they have food to eat and to welcome them to our tables. It is more important to make sure someone has eaten than that he has prayed.

Reach out to others; invite them to your home and feed their hunger. You have no right to enjoy your meal while another goes without. Even if you have a table full of guests, go that extra step to find one more mouth to feed. That is our priority, and that is where we should direct our efforts. Doing so qualifies us as true minyanaires.

# Slice of LIFE

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, whose yartzeit (anniversary of passing) was this Wednesday, 20 Av, was a descendant of the founder of Chabad-Lubavitch, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi. His eldest son, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, became the present Lubavitcher Rebbe.

It was a few days before Passover in 1939 when four NKVD agents burst into the home of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson in Dneperpetrovsk. The search continued for hours until Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was ordered to accompany the NKVD agents.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was sent to Kiev where he spent six months in jail and underwent grueling interrogations. In August 1939 he was sent back to Dneperpetrovsk. Rebbitzin Chana was informed that she was allowed to deliver a package of food and money to the jail for him. This was the first time that she had been given any positive proof that her husband was still alive.

A non-Jewish professor who spent time in jail with Rabbi Levi Yitzchok later told Rebbitzin Chana: "I will never forget this remarkable man for his sharp intellect, extensive scholarship, and incredible courage. Four of us were crammed into one cell and the only reason why we didn't lose our minds was because we were so affected by Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's tremendous valor. Despite our suffering and feelings of depression, his indomitable spirit sustained us. He stood by his religious principles with unwavering determination. One incident in particular deeply moved me. One day the prison authorities ordered all the inmates to shave off their beards. Some of the prisoners, including a number of rabbis and other religious Jews, unsuccessfully attempted to resist. Not so with Rabbi Levi Yitzchok! When his turn came, he declared firmly,

"I will not remove my beard under any circumstances!" The prison

wardens were so surprised by the authoritative tone of his voice that they left him alone."

Among the charges against Rabbi Levi Yitzchok were: being the "ringleader" of an underground clerical anti-Soviet organization, building an illegal ritual bath, cooperating with "extreme reactionary religious groups from abroad", holding unlawful gatherings in his home, establishing funds for assisting the wives and children of Jewish prisoners and exiles, and receiving matzas and money from abroad to be distributed among needy Jews.

Eventually, Rebbitzin Chana was summoned to NKVD headquarters. She was informed that that her husband had been sentenced to five years of internal exile in an Eastern Asian republic.

She was told to prepare some provisions for his journey because he had refused to eat any food he had been offered throughout his imprisonment.

Rebbitzin Chana's joy at seeing him was mixed with shock when she saw how badly his health had deteriorated. He had become so emaciated that he was almost unrecognizable.

"Thank G-d we have been able to meet!" Rabbi Levi Yitzchok exclaimed through the iron bars that separated them. Their entire meeting only lasted a few minutes. When they parted, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok asked his wife to forgive him for anything he may have said or done to offend her over the years. He was clearly worried that he might not survive the hard journey ahead.

Soon after this Rabbi Levi Yitzchok and his fellow exiles boarded a train to Chiali in central Asia. It was a long, arduous journey that dragged on for a whole month.

Chiali was a miserable, impoverished outpost where even obtaining a loaf of bread was a difficult process. Every three days everyone lined up to receive their ration of one loaf, which was often moldy. Only those who managed to reach the front of the line were lucky enough to receive any

bread at all. Anyone standing further back than the middle of the line would be sent home empty-handed.

Many different types of people joined the breadline. They included prisoners and criminals of various backgrounds. There was shouting, cursing and ceaseless shoving to reach the front of the line; there were often violent incidents.

Although Rabbi Levi Yitzchok wore simple clothing and was very unassuming, his noble appearance attracted the attention of these coarse peasants. Even the most boorish among them understood that Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was no ordinary prisoner and they treated him with respect. On more than one occasion they even sneaked him into the front of the line to save him the difficulties of waiting for bread.

After five years of exile and with much effort Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was given permission to resettle him Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan.

On the train ride to Almaty, a crowd of young people gathered around Rabbi Levi Yitzchok. They sensed something unusual about this traveler. Many of them were Jewish students and they spoke to him on a variety of subjects. Afterwards they said that they had never met someone who had such a wide knowledge or such a vast intellect. In Almaty, despite his severe illness and being racked with pain, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok devoted himself to Jewish communal life.

During his last few days, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok lay in bed, hovering on the edge of unconsciousness. He murmured quietly to himself. At one point he suddenly asked for some water to wash his hands. "I have to prepare to move to another world!" he explained.

The next day, 20 Av, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's condition deteriorated even further. He continued to murmur quietly to himself. Someone tried to hear what he was whispering. When he drew close enough, he could hear the words, "Ikvos Moshicha," (the footsteps of Mashiach.) Before the end of the day, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's pure soul had returned to its Maker.

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ISSUE 1359

## WEEKLY VIDEO



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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## The Potential of Today's Youth

I am in receipt of your letter. I was pleased to read in it your impressions of your meetings with the rabbonim [rabbis] you mention, with whom you discussed matters of Yiddishkeit. . . Parenthetically, I note that you qualify the word Yiddishkeit with the term "orthodox." It is surely unnecessary for me to point out to one who chooses his words carefully and interprets them correctly, that "Yiddishkeit" as generally used, is a term synonymous with Torah Judaism. That is to say, "orthodox Yiddishkeit" is a redundancy. "Yiddishkeit" by definition excludes the Reform and Conservative ideologies. Clearly, the very word "reform" denotes something that has been reformed and changed, so that it is no longer the authentic original. Similarly the Conservative school, which advocates changing or modifying the laws of the Torah in accordance with changes of time and place—thereby denying the divine and immutable character of the Torah. Indeed, the Torah is called Torat Emet [the Torah of truth], because the truth cannot be changed or modified or compromised, and once it is, regardless of the extent and the degree, it ceases to be true.

I completely agree with you, of course, about the importance of the role of Jewish youth both in this country and elsewhere. However, I do not agree with you when you take a defensive and almost apologetic attitude towards the great things that can be achieved with Jewish youth. Firstly, how can one judge or measure the greatness and significance of any particular mitzvah which is performed in one's daily life, especially in light of the saying of our Sages that we should "not engage in weighing the mitzvot of the Torah."

Moreover, the infinite importance of a mitzvah has been aptly pointed out by our Sages, and incorporated in the Rambam as a matter of Jewish law (since his work Yad Hachazakah is a Code of Jewish Law), namely that a person should always see himself, and the whole world with him, as being equi-balanced, so that by doing one additional good deed he tips the scale in favor both of himself and of the whole world.

If this has been stated in respect of all of us, it is of particular significance in respect of youth, who represent an untapped reserve of energy and enthusiasm, and who have yet to establish their way of life. At this stage, every improvement is eventually compounded, as is the case for example with a seed or seedling, when proper care at this early stage has permanent effects in producing a healthy fruit-bearing tree, while even the slightest damage to the seed or seedling may blight its growth irreparably. Then, there is the added consideration that each and every youth brought closer to the Torah and mitzvot is likely to form part of a chain reaction, in terms of the positive effects both upon himself as well as upon the society at large.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

### Why Are Some People Deaf?

**Question:** My four-year-old asked me some hard questions that I wasn't sure how to answer, like "Why did G-d make people deaf? Did they do something bad?" I tried explaining that somehow everything G-d does is for the best even if we don't understand why, but I felt it wasn't the best answer I could have given. Could you guide me how to answer her?

**Answer:** No human being is complete on his own. Each of us are lacking in some areas and have strengths in others. A blind person may have an especially keen intellect, and a deaf person, profound emotional strength. No one has it all. This means we need each other.

If you can see, you can help someone who can't. If you are healthy, you can help someone who isn't. If you have money, you can share it with those in need. And if you have emotional depth, you can support those in emotional turmoil.

The Talmud relates that the Roman governor Turnus Rufus challenged Rabbi Akiva with the following question: "If G-d loves the poor, why doesn't He supply them with their needs?" Rabbi Akiva's reply was, "To give us the opportunity to save ourselves from Gehinnom (hell)."

Gehinnom is a world where no one ever helps anyone else, where everyone thinks only about themselves and cares not for another. We are in this world to do kindness. Every lack that one person has is an opportunity for another to fill it with love.

So let's say all of this in the language of a four-year-old:

You are a good sharer. When you share your toys with other kids who don't have those toys, you become friends. You can also share your eyes and your ears, by helping someone who can't see or hear. And they can help you too. Then we can all be friends. That's why G-d created us all with something missing. He is not punishing us for doing something wrong; He is giving us a chance to do something right.

Source:

Talmud, Bava Batra 10a

## A WORD

from the Director

*In this week when we read the Torah portion of Eikev, the yahrzeit of the Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson occurred (Wednesday, 20 Av). The portion of Eikev describes the uniqueness of the tribe of Levi.*

*Maimonides explains that this uniqueness is not reserved only for those whose lineage is from that tribe but includes, "each and every person... whose openness of his heart dictates to rise above the material concerns of this world and make 'G-d his portion and his inheritance,' " i.e., to dedicate himself to the study of the Torah and the performance of the mitzvot.*

*The Rebbe described how his father's life exemplified the desire to make G-d his portion and his inheritance: "Although the Russian government pressured rabbis to issue proclamations declaring their support of the government and their willingness to accept its authority, my father did not succumb to the pressure.*

*"Furthermore, he did this with self-sacrifice. In particular, this is reflected in his journey to the capital to receive permission to bake matzot in a kosher manner. This journey was successful and they agreed to accept his rulings regarding the kashrut of these matzot. Although this caused financial loss to the government - and that was considered a very serious matter - my father refused to authorize the use of any flour that was not supervised by his supervisors, who would not bend despite the pressure they were subjected to. The matzot baked under his supervision were then distributed throughout Russia.*

*"Although he knew of the possibility of severe punishment, he continued his efforts to spread Judaism, and furthermore, did so while in exile itself. Moreover, he was recognized for his wisdom by non-Jews, and when they asked him for advice, he also endeavored to influence them to fulfill their seven mitzvot, and to the extent possible at that time, he achieved this... My father's desire was to spread Judaism in his own community and throughout the entire Jewish people."*

*May we truly learn from Reb Levi Yitzchak the importance of self-sacrifice for Judaism when necessary, and incorporate it into our daily lives until the revelation of Moshiach.*

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED



Precious Tefillin

by Yerachmiel Tilles

David Miller [not his real name], a pious observant Jew, was at Boston's Logan Airport waiting to board his flight to Los Angeles. It was an important business trip on which much depended, so he had been extra careful to get there on time. Finally he boarded the plane, sat down and watched the doors close.

Suddenly he remembered that he left his tefillin in the terminal boarding area. He politely asked the stewardess if he could go back and retrieve his tefillin, which were sitting just a few feet from the gate.

She told him that once the doors of the plane closed, no one was allowed off the plane. Not willing to accept this, he asked if he could speak to the pilot to obtain special permission. Surely the pilot would understand. But the pilot did not comply. He simply restated the policy.

David was not about to let the holy tefillin get lost like that, so, not knowing what else to do, he started screaming at the top of his lungs, "I am going to lose my tefillin!- I don't want to lose my tefillin!" The crew asked him to be quiet, but he refused to stop making a fuss - a rather loud fuss.

Finally, he was making such a ruckus that the flight crew told him that they would let him off the plane, simply because he was a nuisance. But, they told him, even if it were so that it would only take him about 90 seconds for to run out, grab his tefillin, and run back, they were not going to wait for him.

No matter. David was not about to lose his tefillin, even if it caused him great inconvenience or even if it would cost his business a severe loss. He left the plane, resigned to not re-board.

The date was September 11, 2001. The flight was United #175--the second plane to reach the twin towers of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan. David's devotion to a mitzvah saved his life.

But this is not just about 'David Miller', for the consequences of his actions do not end there. The terrorists original plot was for both towers to be struck simultaneously, in order to maximize the explosive carnage. Later it was learned that due to his tefillin tumult the takeoff was delayed, causing a space of 18 minutes between the striking of the two towers. This delay made it possible for thousands more people to escape alive from both buildings.

Literally thousands, if not tens of thousands, of lives were spared because one Jew would not forsake his precious tefillin.

One Mezuzah -- Two Souls

In the 1970's, which is when Perla Cohen took her first steps towards becoming closer to Judaism, she was a student of economics at the University of Lyon. She joined one of the classes that the original local representative of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Lyon, Rabbi Shmuel Gurewich, held on the campus once a week for several other girl students. Since her family lived out of town, she was frequently invited to stay for Shabbat in the house of the Gurewich family and over a period of time she developed a strong and close relationship with Mrs. Gurewich.

On the other hand, she was in no hurry to make a firm commitment to the path of Torah and Mitzvot, despite the numerous study sessions in which she participated. A long period of time would pass between her deciding to keep one mitzvah and taking another upon herself.

Finally the time came for affixing a mezuzah on the door of her home. Responding to the explicit request of Mrs. Gurewich, she agreed to affix a mezuzah at the entrance to her 2nd floor studio apartment. However, after a few weeks Perla Cohen decided to take it down. Some girlfriends had visited her and warned that a Jewish student living alone in a French town, announcing to everybody by means of a mezuzah on her doorpost that she is Jewish, is taking a big risk in these days.

These frightening warnings had their effect on her and one day she took away the "security risk" from the entrance to her apartment.

About two weeks later she found a note from the post office on her front door. The note stated that a package had arrived for her, but since she was not at home, the package had been delivered to the neighbor upstairs on the fifth floor.

She went upstairs and the neighbor, a man in his seventies, said that he had just been passing by in the staircase. When he saw that the postman did not find her at home, he agreed to take the parcel for her. He handed her the package, and when she thanked him and she was about to leave, he suddenly said 'Shalom' to her.

She asked him in a surprised tone: "Are you Jewish?" "Yes", answered the neighbor, "and I'd like to ask you something: why did you take down the mezuzah on your front door two weeks ago?"

When she started to stutter and tried to explain to him the 'security risk', he said that he wanted to tell her something.

"I am a Jewish man who lost my entire family in the holocaust -- my wife and my children. Since then I have been running away from my Jewish religion as much as possible. No Yom Kippur, no kosher food and no observance of any commandment. I looked for a place to live, situated as far away as possible from Jews in order not to see their faces.

About a month ago the elevator was out of order, and on that day I had to climb the staircase by foot. When I came to the second floor, I suddenly saw a door with a mezuzah fixed to the doorpost.

The last time I saw a mezuzah was 30 years ago, and the sight suddenly took me back to the past. Memories began to flood my mind. I stood there for half an hour, touching the mezuzah and unable to control my tears.

Since then I have stopped using the elevator. Every day I descend and ascend the staircase to my apartment by foot so that I may stand in front of the mezuzah for a while, caress it and delve into my thoughts. I felt so strongly that this is the only thing that connects me to Judaism, to my past.

Therefore, I was so shocked and disappointed when two weeks later I no longer found my mezuzah and my Judaism to which I have so longed to return, with a full heart...."

That day, two Jewish souls joined the Chassidic community in Rabbi Gurewich's house in Lyon. The first was Perla Cohen, who later established a magnificent Chassidic home together with her husband, another young returnee to traditional Judaism (they are now happy grandparents).

The second was Mr. Avraham Londert, a Jewish man aged 70, who began a new life in the merit of the mitzvah of mezuzah.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

In the Parshah of Eikev ("Because"), Moses continues his closing address to the children of Israel, promising them that if they will fulfill the commandments (mitzvot) of the Torah, they will prosper in the Land they are about to conquer and settle in keeping with G-d's promise to their forefathers.

Moses also rebukes them for their failings in their first generation as a people, recalling their worship of the Golden Calf, the rebellion of Korach, the sin of the spies, their angering of G-d at Taveirah, Massah and Kivrot Hataavah ("The Graves of Lust"). "You have been rebellious against G-d," he says to them, "since the day I knew you." But he also speaks of G-d's forgiveness of their sins, and the Second Tablets which G-d inscribed and gave to them following their repentance.

Their forty years in the desert, says Moses to the people, during which G-d sustained them with daily manna from heaven, was to teach them "that man does not live on bread alone, but by the utterance of G-d's mouth does man live."

Moses describes the land they are about to enter as "flowing with milk and honey," blessed with the "seven kinds" (wheat, barley, grapevines, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and dates), and as the place that is the focus of G-d's providence of His world. He commands them to destroy the idols of the land's former masters, and to beware lest they become haughty and begin to believe that "my power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth."

A key passage in our Parshah is the second chapter of the Shema, which repeats the fundamental mitzvot enumerated in the Shema's first chapter, and describes the rewards of fulfilling G-d's commandments and the adverse results (famine and exile) of their neglect. It is also the source of the precept of prayer, and includes a reference to the resurrection of the dead in the messianic age.

CANDLE LIGHTING



|            | Shabbos 3 - 4 August |      |
|------------|----------------------|------|
|            | Begins               | Ends |
| Melbourne  | 5:16                 | 6:16 |
| Adelaide   | 5:17                 | 6:15 |
| Brisbane   | 5:02                 | 5:57 |
| Darwin     | 6:23                 | 7:14 |
| Gold Coast | 5:00                 | 5:55 |
| Perth      | 5:24                 | 6:20 |
| Sydney     | 4:59                 | 5:56 |
| Canberra   | 5:05                 | 6:03 |
| Launceston | 5:00                 | 6:02 |
| Auckland   | 5:19                 | 6:18 |
| Wellington | 5:10                 | 6:12 |
| Hobart     | 4:56                 | 5:59 |
| Byron Bay  | 4:58                 | 5:53 |

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS EIKEV • 22 MENACHEM AV • 3 AUGUST

|               |                           |                             |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| FRIDAY NIGHT: | MINCHA                    | 5.25 PM                     |
|               | KABBOLAS SHABBOS          | 5.50 PM                     |
| SHABBOS DAY:  | LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA  | 9.50 AM                     |
|               | SHACHARIS                 | 10.00 AM                    |
|               | MOLAD WILL BE:            | Friday 7.33 (9 chalakim) PM |
|               | FARBRENGEN AFTER DAVENING |                             |
| WEEKDAYS:     | MINCHA:                   | 5.15 PM                     |
|               | SHACHARIS                 | 8.00/9.15/10.00 AM          |
|               | MAARIV                    | 5.25 PM<br>6.10 PM          |