

LAMPLIGHTER

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Parshas Chayei
Sarah Shabbos
Mevarchim Kislev
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

As we read in this week's Torah portion, Chayei Sara, after Sara passed away and Abraham wanted to bury her in the Cave of Machpelah, the sons of Chet offered to give Abraham the land for free. "A mighty prince you are among us," they said, "in the choice of our tombs bury your dead." However, Abraham refused their offer, and insisted on paying "the full price."

Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator explains: "The full price" means "its full value." Abraham was adamant about paying the full value of the field in order to completely dissociate it from its former owner, Efron. Had Abraham received it as a gift, Efron would have still retained a certain claim on the land, even though it now officially belonged to Abraham. By paying "the full price" for the Cave of Machpelah, Abraham severed any connection it might have had to its previous owner.

King David did the same thing many years later after he conquered Jerusalem. Jerusalem had been already captured and was under his control, yet David did not wish to receive it as a gift from Aravna. Like Abraham, David insisted on paying "the full price" for the site, in order to possess it in the absolute sense.

The spiritual service of every Jew is to refine and elevate his surroundings, through learning Torah and observing mitzvot, to the point that he becomes the true "owner" of his particular corner of the world. Just as Abraham paid "the full price" for the field he bought from Efron, so too is it necessary for every Jew to pay "the full price" - to expend real effort and exertion - in his service of G-d.

A Jew must never say to himself, "I have been blessed with a good head and many talents. Why should I have to work hard if everything comes to me easily? Even my Evil Inclination isn't so powerful that it has to be fought all that vigilantly."

In the same way that Abraham and David refused to accept what was easy, rejected "gifts" and insisted on paying "the full price," so too must we invest real effort on the spiritual "labor" of Torah study and observance of mitzvot (commandments). For it only through hard work and a little "elbow grease" that we will truly succeed in refining our surroundings and by extension, the entire world.

Remaining Focused

By Naftali Silberberg

Isaac was forbidden to leave the Holy Land, because he was consecrated to G-d when Abraham offered him as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah. Abraham, however, wasn't willing to consider a Canaanite girl for Isaac, so he sent his faithful servant Eliezer to his own hometown of Aram Naharaim (modern-day northern Syria) to find a suitable girl for Isaac. Eliezer successfully discharged this mission and returned to Canaan with Rebecca.

The Torah relates the entire account of Eliezer's mission in great detail, repeating entire segments of the story several times. Generally speaking, the Torah is "stingy" with words; many laws of the Torah are derived from a seemingly superfluous word, or even an extra letter. The Midrash therefore concludes that "beautiful are the words of the servants of the Patriarchs more than the Torah of their children."

What is so special about the "words of the servants of the Patriarchs"? What is the lesson the Torah wants us to derive from Eliezer's mission?

One characteristic of Eliezer's mission which is quite blatant is his tremendous focus. When he arrived in Aram Naharaim, he didn't first go around town to see the local attractions. In fact, he didn't even check in to the local Hilton to rest from his journey. Instead, he went straight to work, immediately starting the search for Isaac's future wife. Even after he found Rebecca and deemed her worthy for his master's son, he still didn't allow himself to relax. When he was invited to Rebecca's home, and the entire family sat down to eat, he proclaimed, "I will not eat until I have spoken my words . . . I am Abraham's servant . . ."

He didn't feel compelled to comply with societal norms or standards; he knew that his mission would succeed, because he was so focused on his duty, constantly aware that he was merely an envoy of Abraham, he realized that he had all of Abraham's miraculous powers at his disposal. Therefore, instead of hiring a private investigator to find the best and most virtuous girl in town, he went to the well and beseeched G-d for a sign from heaven which would identify the right maiden. And he succeeded. When Rebecca's family requested that she be given several months to prepare herself for marriage — a seemingly reasonable demand — Eliezer responded: "Do not delay me . . . Send me away, and I will go to my master." And he got his way. He didn't feel compelled to comply with societal norms or standards; he knew that his mission would succeed even if he were asking for the impossible.

We, too, are emissaries. We were sent to this world by the Almighty to create a marriage, to bring together two opposites — Creator and creation. We can and will accomplish this task, because we go not with our own powers, but with the G-dly powers which G-d invested within us in order to accomplish this feat. We can transform ourselves, our families and acquaintances, and indeed all of creation into spiritual entities, suitable to be G-d's bride. We must, however, always remain focused on the mission. We must always have proper priorities, always remembering what is really important in life.

This is the lesson we learn from Eliezer, a lesson the Torah deems worthy of repeating several times.

Slice of LIFE

A Dollar from Brother to Brother

By Tuvia Bolton

The Garbovskis were typical Russian Jews. They lived in the Ukraine near Kiev in a modest home with their two sons Vladimir and Igor, were as ignorant about Judaism as a Jew can be and they had a strong desire to immigrate to Israel.

But they had differing ideas about how to do it.

Vladimir, always the idealist, didn't want to wait. He figured that with his degree in engineering he would surely succeed there and wanted to leave immediately. But Igor and his parents wanted to wait until there were sufficient funds and then move together.

But Vladimir wouldn't hear of it. One day he announced that he had purchased his ticket and would go alone... and before they knew it he was gone.

At first Vladimir phoned home once a week and was full of good news: He became a citizen and was living temporarily in one of the immigration centers. He was learning Hebrew and he had been promised a job as an engineer as soon as a position was available.

But a half a year later he didn't sound so enthusiastic as before: The engineering job never materialized, he was working 'temporarily' as a gardener and he had moved out of the Immigration Center to a dingy apartment in the city of Romley.

He sounded depressed. His parents suggested that he return home and Igor began pressuring him; come home and in a year or so we will all move together and help each other.

But Vladimir would have no part of it. In fact it made him angry; bad enough that the Israeli Government wasn't helping him, now his family was against him?!

He began calling home less frequently and his conversations were tense and often ended in quarrels.

Until Vladimir decided to stop calling altogether.

Igor tried to call him back, but the phone had been disconnected. He called the Israeli police and the immigration service but they were of no help.

He felt guilty; perhaps it was his fault; maybe he had been too forceful, too negative? Perhaps if he had been more friendly etc. etc. until finally he decided there was no other way to calm his conscience than to travel to Israel and locate Vladimir himself. With a heavy heart his parents agreed and he was off.

Igor unlike his brother already knew Hebrew fairly well and in no time he settled in. He found himself an apartment in Tel Aviv got a successful job as an apartment broker to Russian immigrants and began looking for Vladimir.

But it wasn't so simple.

He went to the immigration center but they had lost contact with him. Then he located the apartment in Romley only to discover that Vladimir had moved out several months ago and all the landlord and neighbors could say was that he looked depressed.

He went to the company for which his brother had worked as a gardener and they told him that he had been fired. He had been a good worker for the first month or so but then he said it wasn't fair that an engineer should do such menial work and since then, three months ago, they hadn't seen him.

Igor contacted the police again, got on the radio, spoke on the Russian stations, put ads in the Russian newspapers with his brother's picture and even printed advertisements and put them on telephone poles in the streets. But nothing worked. And he began to suspect the worst.

After a year of fruitless searching in Israel suddenly an idea popped into his mind, maybe his brother moved to America. After all a lot of Russians that didn't make it in Israel went there. And, although Igor realized the irrationality of his thinking; if he couldn't find Vladimir in little Israel he certainly wouldn't succeed in the U.S.A., nevertheless he bought tickets and flew to Los Angeles... He wanted a vacation.

But as expected, despite a month of praiseworthy efforts he came up with nothing. So he decided to try in New York for a week or two and then if nothing turned up he would return to Israel.

But in New York he fared no better. He put ads in the Russian papers, even got his plea announced on a few Russian radio stations but with no results.

Then on Friday, three days before his return flight on Sunday night, he met someone in the hotel where he was staying told him what he was doing in the U.S. and his acquaintance replied,

"Your brother? Why, if I was you I would go to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and ask for a blessing."

Igor had no idea what the man was talking about. "Rebbe? Lubavitch?" he replied, "No, I'm sure that my brother would never go any Rebbe. Vladimir wasn't religious at all."

But his acquaintance explained how

this Lubavitcher Rebbe was known to help people in the most miraculous ways, especially Jews. He even told him a story or two and added that the Rebbe personally gives out one dollar bills, blessings and advice every Sunday from his headquarters in Brooklyn to anyone that comes.

Igor had heard stories of Chassidic Rebbes doing miracles but he was sure that they were fables or fairy tales. He couldn't believe that this fellow was telling the truth.

But then he thought to himself that he really had nothing to lose and was free Sunday morning. Not only that but according to his fellow the Rebbe was very friendly, and spoke Russian.

So that Sunday morning Igor found himself standing in a huge line of several thousand people that wound around a large red brick building in Brooklyn and an hour later he was face to face with the Rebbe.

Just as the man in the hotel said; the Rebbe was not austere at all, exactly the opposite, he seemed very warm and friendly. So Igor said in Russian, "I'm looking for my brother who has been lost for a year. Can you help me?"

The Rebbe smiled, gave him two dollars and said, "One is for you and the second give to charity and you will find your brother."

Igor took the dollars, said thank you and moments later was in the subway back to his hotel trying to understand what happened. He finally figured that it the dollars were probably some sort of good-luck, mystical thing. In any case he put them in his pocket, didn't give it much thought, packed his bags, rested for a few hours, went to the airport and forgot the whole thing.

When he arrived in Israel he already had a few meetings planned and he took a cab to Jerusalem directly from the airport.

Once in Jerusalem he got out of the cab and immediately five 'poor people' surrounded him for donations. Usually he would simply ignore them but suddenly he remembered the Rebbe's words, dug his hand into his pocket and begrudgingly gave the Rebbe's dollar to one of them thinking to himself, 'At least I'll see if that Rebbe's blessing was real'.

But he didn't have to wait long. The bum that he gave the dollar to had tears in his eyes.... He took a good look. It was none other than his Brother!!!

Needless to say both of them decided to learn more about Judaism and today are much more active Jews.

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INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

“At the same time, one must create a vessel on the natural plane and follow the doctor's orders.”

By the Grace of G-d
3 Sivan, 5712 [1952]
Brooklyn
Greetings and Blessings!

In reply to the letter in which you ask my opinion as to whether you should continue consulting doctors or place your trust in G-d:

It goes without saying that you should [both] be strong in your trust in G-d, Who “heals all flesh and performs wonders”. At the same time, one must create a vessel on the natural plane and follow the doctor's orders. May G-d bring the desire of your hearts to a good fulfillment, so that you and your wife will be blessed with healthy and viable offspring.

Your pidyon nefesh was duly read at the holy resting place [of the Rebbe Rayatz].
With blessings that the Torah be received joyfully and internalized,

“If a person thinks that his livelihood is meager, he should donate more tzedakah than previously.”

By the Grace of G-d
2 Sivan, 5712 [1952]
Brooklyn
Greetings and Blessings!

Your letters of 9/4 and 2/5 reached me after having been delayed on their way here, and I was very happy to read that your wife's confinement went well and that she gave birth to a son who is named [...].

May G-d grant that you, together with your wife, should raise him and your older son to the study of Torah, to the marriage canopy, and to the practice of good deeds, and may you be granted an ample livelihood.

Your letter mentions your anxiety about your income. You ought to keep in mind something that is written in the holy books — that when a son is born, this is an auspicious sign of blessing in the household. That includes one's livelihood. In order to accelerate this, one needs to be strong in one's trust in G-d, for it is He Who “provides nourishment and sustenance for all”. And seeks to do so “from His full hand”.

Another thing to keep in mind is that one has to fashion vessels that will contain G-d's blessings. In general terms, this means studying Torah and observing the mitzvot; in particular, it means contributing tzedakah. If a person thinks that his livelihood is meager, he should donate more than previously. In that way he shows G-d that his charitable needs are greater [than heretofore], and as a matter of course He will then provide a greater income than heretofore.

May G-d grant that you and your wife both be firm in your trust, and that you will soon see the fulfillment of G-d's blessing for an ample livelihood.

With blessings for sound health for yourself and your wife and children, and for a happy Shavuot festival,

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

Is There a Logical Proof That There's Only One G-d?

Question: I accept that some sort of “Higher Being” created the universe. But why couldn't there be many such beings? Is there any logical reason to say that there is only one god?

Answer: The definition of G-d is: “a Being without definition.” G-d cannot be defined, because if I define Him then I limit Him. And something limited is not G-d. By defining something, I give it borders. If, for example, I define an apple as a sweet round fruit that is green or red, then when I find a long purple fruit, I know that it can't be an apple. An apple is limited to being round and red or green. That is its definition. G-d can't be defined, because by defining Him you are saying that there's something He can't be; but this could not be true, because G-d is unlimited.

That's why there can be only one G-d. Because if you don't have a definition, then there is nothing outside of you. There can be no “other.”

An example: two neighboring countries can be called two countries only when there is a border between them. But if a country has no borders, if there is no defined place where it ends and another country begins, how can you say that there are two countries?

G-d has no borders, so how can there be more than one god? Where would one god end and one begin, if there is no dividing line between them?

The act of creation is the act of making borders and drawing definitions: this is an apple and not a banana, this is land and this is sea. Creation has definitions. The Creator doesn't have a definition. That's what makes Him G-d. And that's why there can be only one.

A WORD

from the Director

In many of the Torah portions read during the upcoming month of Kislev, dreams play a significant role. From Jacob's dreams about the ladder ascending to heaven and the speckled sheep, we move on to Laban's dream in which G-d warned him not to harm Jacob. Next, Joseph dreams that the sun, moon and stars bow down to him, and that all the sheaves in the field bow down to his sheaf. As a result of these dreams, Joseph is sold into slavery and brought to Egypt. Years later, he is released from jail when he successfully interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's servants. When Pharaoh dreams about the seven lean cows, Joseph predicts the seven years of famine that will plague Egypt.

All of the dreams mentioned in the Torah are connected with prophecy, but a person needn't be a prophet in order to dream. What, then, does Judaism say on the subject of dreams?

Sleep is one of the most wonderful phenomena of nature. A person climbs into bed completely exhausted, and wakes up a few hours later invigorated and refreshed. When a person sleeps, his natural body functions slow down. As explained by Chasidut, his soul ascends to its G-dly source, where it derives new strengths for the coming day. The mind, too, is at rest during sleep, but its faculty of imagination continues to function. A person “sees” and “hears” visions and events that are often quite fantastic upon awakening.

According to our Sages, most dreams are a reflection of whatever we were thinking about during the daytime. In the Talmud, Rabbi Shmuel Bar Nachmani states, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan, “A person is only shown the thoughts in his heart.” Similarly, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, author of the Zohar, used to say that there is no dream without extraneous and irrelevant elements.

In light of the above, the best advice to ensure pleasant dreams is to recite the “Shema” prayer before going to bed. A kosher mezuzah on the doorpost also “protects” us from unsettling nightmares. Secure in the knowledge that “the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps,” we can then put our heads down on the pillow with true serenity.

J. I. Gutterman

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

The Emissary of Hebron

By Yerachmiel Tilles

Rabbi Amram Ben-Diwan was sent to Morocco in 5523 (1743) by the other rabbis of Hebron to collect money for the yeshivas of the Holy Land. After ten productive years of teaching Torah in Quazzane, Morocco, Rabbi Amram felt a great longing for the Land of Israel.

When he arrived back in Hebron, he became friends with Rabbi Hayyim Bagoyo and Rabbi Avraham Gedalia, the Rabbis of the city. Together they studied Torah and penetrated many of its wondrous secrets, ascending day by day the rungs of perfection in Torah study and Divine service.

However, Rabbi Amram's stay in Hebron was short-lived. An unfortunate incident caused his departure, forcing him to take up the mantle of sojourner once again and return to Morocco.

At that time, Jews were not permitted to enter into the tomb of the Patriarchs. However, for Rabbi Amram, this prohibition did not in the least quench his fervent desire to pray by the tomb of our Fathers. He therefore disguised himself as an Arab, and without being noticed he entered the cave with the rest of the Muslims who had also come there to pray.

Imagine his emotions when he approached the tomb of the Patriarchs! As his face became drenched with tears, he quietly uttered his prayers, beseeching the Creator of the world to hasten the Final Redemption. No one suspected that this "Muslim", so absorbed as he was in his prayer, was actually a Jew. However, as Rabbi Amram was preparing to leave, one of the Arabs recognized him and immediately ran to the Pasha and informed him of the offense.

Rabbi Amram incurred heavy suffering for such a sacrilege. A friend of Rabbi Amram, who was also a servant of the Pasha, hurried to warn him that they intended to arrest him. In the middle of the night, Rabbi Amram, accompanied by his young son, Rabbi Hayyim, left their home.

They feared returning to Jerusalem or a neighboring country because during that era Turkish power held sway over the entire region. He therefore decided to return to Morocco.

Not long after his arrival, Rabbi Amram with his son Rabbi Hayyim traveled to all the towns of Morocco in order to spread the teaching of Torah. They arrived in Sefru, where they lodged in the Elbaz home. Having no children of their own, the Elbazes asked Rabbi Amram for a blessing to have a son. Rabbi Amram blessed them and promised that in the following year, at the very same time of year, the wife would give birth to a son who would later become a great Torah scholar.

The blessing of the tzadik came to fruition. The son who was born to the Elbaz family was given the name of the Tzaddik, Amram, and afterwards the name of Rabbi Amram of Sefru became famous as a Gaon and great Torah Scholar.

While Rabbi Amram was staying in the Elbaz home in Sefru, his son Rabbi Hayyim fell deathly ill. The doctors gave him no chance at recovering. Rabbi Amram prayed to the Creator of the world that He take his soul in place of his son's.

His son, Rabbi Hayyim, indeed recovered from his illness, and they continued on their journey to all the towns of Morocco. But when they arrived in Quazzane, Rabbi Amram himself fell gravely ill, and soon afterwards rendered his soul to his Creator.

The tomb of Rabbi Amram became a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco. Each year on Lag BaOmer, thousands of Jews come to Quazzane to make the pilgrimage to the grave of the saint. Numerous miracles are said to have occurred on his tomb: Incurable illnesses have been healed, the blind have regained their site, the mute have found their voice, the paralyzed have returned home on their own, and infertile women have had children after having prayed there.

It is told that a non-Jewish French military sergeant had a son who remained paralyzed after a serious illness. This sergeant had a Jewish friend that advised him to take his son to the tomb of Rabbi Amram Ben-Diwan in Quazzane. At first, the sergeant was skeptical and refused, but then later promised that if a miracle were to happen and his son would be healed, he would build a road with his own money in order to facilitate access to the tomb of the tzadik. The miracle occurred: As soon as his son approached the tomb of Rabbi Amram, he was healed. The happy father kept his promise and constructed a road that leads to the tomb of Rabbi Amram.

The great poet, Rabbi David Ben-Hassin, composed a liturgical poem especially in his honor, a song that is sung by the Jews of Morocco on the day of his Hilula/yahrzeit.

His son, Rabbi Hayyim Ben-Diwan, continued his father's work. He traveled from town to town with the goal of instructing Torah. He died at a ripe old age and rests in the village of Anranz, south of Marrakech. His tomb has also become a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Sarah dies at age 127 and is buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron, which Abraham purchases from Ephron the Hittite for four hundred shekels of silver.

Abraham's servant Eliezer is sent, laden with gifts, to Charan, to find a wife for Isaac. At the village well, Eliezer asks G-d for a sign: when the maidens come to the well, he will ask for some water to drink; the woman who will offer to give his camels to drink as well shall be the one destined for his master's son.

Rebecca, the daughter of Abraham's nephew Bethuel, appears at the well and passes the "test." Eliezer is invited to their home, where he repeats the story of the day's events. Rebecca returns with Eliezer to the land of Canaan, where they encounter Isaac praying in the field. Isaac marries Rebecca, loves her, and is comforted over the loss of his mother.

Abraham takes a new wife, Keturah (Hagar), and fathers six additional sons, but Isaac is designated as his only heir. Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried beside Sarah by his two eldest sons, Isaac and Ishmael.

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 2 - 3 November	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	7:37	8:39
Adelaide	7:28	8:27
Brisbane	5:49	6:44
Darwin	6:29	7:20
Gold Coast	5:48	6:44
Perth	6:24	7:22
Sydney	7:06	8:04
Canberra	7:16	8:16
Launceston	7:36	8:40
Auckland	7:37	8:37
Wellington	7:45	8:49
Hobart	7:38	8:44
Byron Bay	6:48	7:44

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, ST KILDA EAST

PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH SHABBOS MEVARCHIM
KISLEV • 24 CHESHVAN • 2 NOVEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	7.45 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	8.15 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	TEHILLIM	8.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.35 AM
	SHACHRIS (Followed by a Shabbos Mevorchim Kiddush/Farbrenge)	10.00 AM
	MOLAD THURSDAY	9.45 (12 chalakim) AM
WEEKDAYS:	MINCHA	7.30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS	8.39 PM
	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	7.45 PM
	MAARIV	8.35 PM