

LAMPLIGHTER

Rosh Chodesh
Adar Beis
Parshas
Pekudei
1390
8 March
5779/2019

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Pekudei, we read that both men and woman donated for the construction of the Mishkan, the travelling sanctuary in the desert. Both men and women participated in its construction. It didn't matter if they were rich or poor. It didn't matter which tribe they were from. Each gave according to their ability, and each participated with their talents that G-d gave them.

They were careful to do everything the way G-d wanted them to, down to the smallest detail. When it was completed, G-d's presence filled the Mishkan, dwelling amongst them once again.

After 210 years of exile in Egypt, 87 of which were fraught with terrible suffering and slavery, it must have been so satisfying and so exciting to see G-d's Divine Prescence fill the Mishkan.

What lessons can we learn from this?

We are here for a reason, to fashion the entire world into a dwelling place for G-d. Each one of us is necessary to ensure success. We are all different. We have different means, different talents and different circumstances.

Yet, we know we can be successful because we've done it once before. The main thing is that we work together and that we do it right. Small details matter. As in every project, it is not complete until each person does his or her part, and until the finishing touches have been completed.

How about us, the Jewish people as a whole, and individual Jews? Haven't we done enough? Haven't we suffered enough? Hasn't the time come for all of the bad news and anguish to end?

Chassidic teachings explain that the level of G-d's presence that we will experience in the Messianic Era will be based on our exile experience and our effort in accomplishing G-d's will.

Perhaps G-d is holding out for just a bit longer because He wants something more, something deeper that He knows we can attain. Imagine how amazing it will be when Moshiach will come. Nevertheless we need Moshiach to come already.

Until then, we must be there for each other. As we proclaim out loud when we finish reading this week's Torah portion in the synagogue on Shabbat, thereby completing reading the book of Exodus: "Chazak chazak v'nitchazeik. Be strong! Be strong! And let us strengthen each other!"

Learning to Love It

By Lazer Gurkow

This week's Parshah continues the theme from the previous Parsha in describing our ancestors' enthusiasm for building the Mishkan (tabernacle), and their exacting commitment to its great detail. After transmitting G-d's detailed instructions for building the Mishkan, the Torah could have simply concluded with the words Vayasu ken, "and so they did." Instead, it describes how the Mishkan was actually made, repeating all the details. Why does the Torah do this, when it is usually so economical with its words?

Every teacher strives not only to transmit their lesson, but also to spark the student's curiosity, to engender within him a desire to follow the instruction. The Torah is no different. The Torah is a book of instruction, thus it endeavors to inculcate within us, its students, affection for its tradition.

It is not enough for us to learn the letter of its law — it is imperative that we also develop an appetite for its spirit. Torah wants to nurture within us a thirst for its information, a hunger for its heritage, a yearning for its compelling atmosphere and an appreciation for its sanctity.

Thus, the Torah dedicates two full portions to describe the atmosphere of yesteryear. To give us a feel for the ambiance that prevailed in the homes of our ancestors, to convey their enthusiasm for the Torah and their adherence to its laws. To teach us not only that they obeyed G-d's commandments, but also why. Why they found it so compelling.

I have talked to many Jewish adults who remember their Talmud Torah years. Those youthful memories are often unpleasant. Teachers frequently used the stick more than the carrot. They were taught to study the Torah, but not to love it. It was assumed that with time they would develop this love on their own, but for many that expectation fell short; their parents and teachers failed them.

When we set out to teach our children, let us remember that commitment is not enough; we must also aspire for conviction.

Slice of LIFE

Why a Nice Suburban Torontonion Joined the Israeli Army

By Joey Fox

I still remember arriving the first day. I'd just received my uniform and put it on. After collecting my equipment, I received my M-16; I turned to the commander leading me through all of this and asked, "What do I do with this?" He said, "Don't lose it."

I grew up in a traditional, although secular home but my parents gave me the greatest gift of all: a Jewish education. I attended Hebrew schools from nursery through grade twelve, learning about Jewish traditions and holidays and about Israel. I developed a strong connection to my country. In grade twelve I went on a Taglit-birthright trip together with my class and finally visited the country I had studied about for so many years.

Upon high school graduation I attended Queen's University, receiving my degree in engineering. Every summer for the duration of my studies, I returned to my homeland—volunteering first for Magen David Adom (the ambulance service), then the Marva Program (2 months of military introduction). I spent the summer of 2006 at the Technion in Haifa. When the Second Lebanon War broke out that summer, and Hezbollah's Katyushas (launched from Lebanon) were raining down on the city, I fled south to Tel Aviv. I utilized my time in Tel Aviv to volunteer for Save a Child's Heart, an organization that rescues children with heart disease from developing countries.

Three summers in Israel and I felt my mission was incomplete. I was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for a cause that was greater than myself. Despite having little support and strong resistance from my family and friends, I made an unpopular decision based on the need to stand up for what I believe in and to do the right thing. I enlisted in the IDF and was placed in the decorated 50th battalion of the Nachal infantry brigade on August 9th, 2007—the day before my twenty-second

birthday.

My experiences in the army can be divided into two categories: training and front line. During training I was yelled at, tear gassed, forced to go days with barely any sleep or food, deprived of showers and clean clothes, and required to sleep outdoors during the miserable desert winters.

Through all this difficulty, I always felt a sense of pride: wearing both my uniform and my kippa, laying down my gun underneath my seat when I went to put on my tefillin every morning, saying kiddush Friday night when the company was stuck on base for Shabbat.

Once we made it to the front line, my battalion was given a mission. I had to recite twice a day: "The 50th battalion will protect within its jurisdiction the Jewish community of Hebron, Kiryat Arba, the immediate surrounding area and those passing within our jurisdiction. We will meet and defend all hostile terrorist attacks. We will enforce law and order. All this in order to provide security to the Jewish community of Hebron and the citizens of the state of Israel."

In short, we had to protect 750 Jews living in a valley between mountains containing 300,000 Arabs.

There were two ways in which we defended the citizens of Hebron. First, we were sent on eight-hour long patrols. We walked through the Arab areas surrounding the Jewish community, areas which the Jewish civilians were banned from for their own safety. During the patrols we performed arrests, roadblocks, searches and lookouts. The area we patrolled used to be inhabited by Jews, but is not safe anymore. Once I was stuck doing a patrol on Friday night and decided to pray Kabbalat Shabbat on a rooftop. It occurred to me that no Jew had prayed Kabbalat Shabbat in this immediate area for years, yet I was doing it wearing a helmet, bullet proof vest and military vest, and carrying a loaded gun.

When we weren't assigned to patrols we were forced to be on guard duty in one of eleven different outposts. We spent twelve hours a day in isolation: not allowed any external communication, not allowed to sit, not allowed to rest, not allowed to read and not allowed to listen to music. They weren't able to keep us from talking to ourselves. We did that a lot.

I spent weeks on end sleeping four hours a day, eating two meals a day and standing twelve hours per day with no one to talk to, with fifty pounds on my back, waiting to be shot at. When we were relieved at the end of the shift, we returned to base, ate a meal and got our four hours of sleep. Then we were woken up for the next shift. Even when we were off duty, we were still on call. We had to remain ready to go within two minutes if anything were to happen. This meant that we had to be

fully dressed at all times. So we went weeks on end forced to wear the same clothes that we were shvitzing in all day, not able to shower, and forced to sleep in stuffy rooms fully dressed including our boots.

On the rare occasion that I didn't have any mission after 6 PM on Friday nights, they let me leave the base and take the five minute walk to the Cave of the Patriarchs for Kabbalat Shabbat. The Cave of the Patriarchs, or Ma'arat Hamachpelah, is the one thing that made all the suffering which we endured worthwhile. The synagogue that is built upon the resting place of Adam, Eve, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah gave me a feeling that I didn't even get when I approached the Kotel. At the Wailing Wall, everyone prays in his own minyan, and you sometimes struggle to focus when the people beside you are not praying with you. At the Ma'arat Hamachpelah, there is one large minyan where people sing louder than I've ever heard. A service which can last half an hour in other synagogues lasted two hours with unyielding singing and dancing. Whenever I pray now, I always think to myself: I wish this prayer will be as good as the ones in Hebron.

My battalion was made up mostly of Jews who were not accustomed to pray regularly in their civilian lives. When we were sent on dangerous missions to stop terrorist attacks and arrest top Hamas officials, I started a tradition to say Tfilat Haderech (a prayer said when traveling) as we set out. This tradition quickly grew and eventually, even secular soldiers who didn't pray at any other time wanted to say that prayer as we set out on our missions.

When the time I had committed to serve in the IDF was completed, I felt I had not given enough. However, I realized I would never feel that I had done enough. I spent over a year of my life enduring conditions which would be considered illegal here in Canada. I'd hurt many people whom I love and left the comfort of my Canadian life for one of the toughest lives, on the other side of the world. I was able to move on knowing that just as I had taken the place of those who have fought before me, there will be those who will take my place and fight for Jews and Israel once I leave.

Generation after generation, brave Jews have stepped up to fight for the one dream we all hold dear: Am Yisrael chai, that the People of Israel lives on.

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the

Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.

Editors: Shmuel Kesselman,
Zalman Serebryanski

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

Email: lampighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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

ISSUE 1390

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

Advice to a group of ritual slaughterers who were journeying to Ireland

Greetings and blessings,

I received both of your letters. When I will be at the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, I will read them. Certainly, he will arouse abundant mercy [from Above] to fulfill all the desires of your heart for the good. Undoubtedly, you will share good tidings with me concerning everything that takes place regarding all of the individuals mentioned in the pan....

With regard to your journey to Ireland: In general, it would be appropriate if you would find a manner in which your journey would also involve your "spiritual livelihood." It is understood how important earning one's material livelihood is, as explained in the revealed teachings of Torah Law, and in particular, in the teachings of Chassidus. Nevertheless, there is somewhat of an unpleasant taste to the matter: A minyan of chassidim who learned in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim travel [to a place] once, twice, and a third time. They slaughter hundreds of animals. They receive their wages in pounds or in francs and then they return home. To our eyes of flesh, it does not appear that they are fulfilling their mission in this world, nor does it appear to be refined conduct.

It is related that in the era of the Mittlerer Rebbe, there was a directive to all the chassidim that as they traveled — more particularly, as they walked — home, they should review teachings of Chassidus in all the places that they passed through. This included even very small villages that were on their way. Now, the purpose of their traveling or going to Lubavitch was to visit Lubavitch and come home. [Nevertheless, their stopping in] all of the places that they passed through was not an interruption of their journey. On the contrary, those [stops] made [the entire journey] one continuum.

I am certain that after you take a strong look — see the writings of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, regarding what it means to look — [you will see] that although the purpose of your journey to Ireland is to earn your livelihood and that of your household, and then to return home, there is what to be accomplished in the places and the situations in between. In these activities, it should be evident that they are being carried out by chassidim who studied in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim and who are bonded with my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe.

May it be G-d's will that you find appropriate work and an appropriate manner to add at least a little light to the darkness of the world even in this journey.

With blessings for a befitting journey and successful work. Greetings to the entire fellowship,

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

Do You Really Believe That the Torah Is Historical?

Question: Do you still hold on to the belief that the Torah is Divine? Literary experts and historians have compared the Bible to other writings of 3,000 years ago (when the Torah was supposedly given by G-d), and say that its style doesn't fit into the literature of that time frame, and must have been written much later. How can you ignore a fact that has been scientifically proven?

Answer: Did you hear the joke about the recent study on frogs? Scientists took a sample of over 100 frogs of various species and did the following test:

They placed each frog on a table, crept up behind it and shouted, "Jump!" The frog jumped.

Then they cut off one leg, and again shouted jump. It jumped, although not as far.

They then cut off a second leg and told it to jump, and then a third, each time observing that the frog responded, but jumped smaller distances.

Finally they cut off the fourth leg and again shouted "Jump!" They were amazed to find that in every case the result was the same. The frog did not move at all.

The conclusion: When you cut off a frog's legs, it goes deaf. It is scientifically proven.

We all come to the conclusions that we want to believe. When the experts find that the Torah is too advanced for its time, they conclude it must have been written later than claimed. When I study Torah, I conclude that it is still ahead of its time, because it was written by G-d for all times and all places. Even the parts that seem archaic and outdated, when explained on a deeper level, have powerful messages that I often feel are speaking directly to me. They are relevant and inspiring to me, right here, right now.

Many have tried to either prove or disprove the Torah's divinity. Neither attempt will be successful. G-d wants us to have free choice. If we listen to His word, it is not by force. To maintain balance, there will always be valid arguments to discredit Him and His Torah. We can choose to buy those arguments, or see beyond them. Then, when we open ourselves to the Torah's message, the choice to do so is coming from within.

G-d has given you a mission. How you respond is totally up to you. You can be as deaf as a legless frog, or you can take a leap in response to your higher calling.

A WORD

from the Director

As this year is a leap year, there are two months of Adar, the first being Adar I and the second being Adar II. We have just entered the month of Adar II. Adar is associated with an increase in joy. The Talmud explains that during the month of Adar, Jewish "mazel" (colloquially translated as fortune) is very potent. The mazel (or source of influence) of a Jew refers to the higher levels of his soul, which are connected to the essence of G-d at all times. In Adar, we have the opportunity to draw down an abundance of holy energy through good deeds that are imbued with joy.

Interestingly, our Sages taught that "Israel has no mazel" ("ein mazel l'Yisrael"), meaning that Jews are above being influenced by the stars and planets, which are known as "mazelot."

By changing the vowels under the Hebrew letters slightly, "ein mazel l'Yisrael" can be read "Ayin - the Infinite - is the mazel of Israel." The Jewish people receive their influence from G-d from a transcendent level, the transmission of which is particularly powerful in the month of Adar.

The name Adar has several meanings, one of which is cloak or mantel. This is a reference to G-d's compassion for the His people, the Jews. The purpose of a garment is to provide us with warmth. In Adar (and Adar II in a leap year), when the holiday of Purim occurs, we experience the warmth and comfort of G-d. A garment also conceals the body of the person who wears it. Similarly, the miracle of Purim was "dressed" in a series of natural events.

The word Adar is a combination of the Hebrew letter "alef" and the word "dar," meaning "G-d dwells." (Just as alef is the initial letter in the alphabet, so too is G-d the "first.") G-d created the earth in order to have a dwelling place in the physical world. Through the study of Torah and the performance of mitzvot, we create an abode for Almighty G-d.

May the positive influence of Adar be expressed in the advent of the true and complete Redemption with Moshiach in the immediate future.

J. I. Gutterman

IT HAPPENED



The Miraculous Downfall of Ivan the Evil

By Miriam Paltiel Nevel

In the early 1900s, Zeide Eliezer and Bubbe Rochel Leah Paltiel lived with their five children in a village in Belarus called Zhudilovo, which was under the rule of the Russian czar. The nearby forest was the source of their livelihood, as Zeide Eliezer was a logger. He rented land from the Russian owner, and he and his sons felled trees and floated the logs down the Dnieper River in long barges to the big cities, where they would be used by builders. My father, Berel, remembers his oldest brother, Yaakov, sometimes seating him on the saddle of his horse and giving him rides between the woods and home. Thus, the sound of the saw, the smell of freshly cut wood, and the tall trees of the forest were as natural to little Berel as the sights, sounds and smells of his own home.

Since Eliezer and his older sons were in the business of cutting trees, and wood was plentifully available to them, they decided to build an addition to their small home. At that time, Yaakov was studying at the yeshivah of the Rebbe Rashab, Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch, so Zeide Eliezer sent a message to Yaakov to ask the rebbe for a blessing to build the addition. Yaakov relayed the rebbe's answer to his father: building two additional rooms to his home would be a blessed endeavor, and he should proceed with his plan.

The head of the Duma (village governing council) in my grandparents' village was a wicked man named Ivan Stepanovich. Like the evil Haman, he was always on the lookout for some excuse to harm the Jews, particularly to pin some crime on Zeide Eliezer, whom he considered a "rich Jew."

The truth is, besides the little house in which he and his family lived, Zeide had almost no material possessions, so why did Stepanovich resent him? Perhaps because when Stepanovich passed by their small home on a Friday night, he heard the family singing; whenever he entered Zeide's home, he saw the family sitting at their festive meal as though they were princes and princesses. In short, the little wooden house was filled with learning, love and joy—the kind of love and joy that no money can buy.

When Stepanovich noticed that Eliezer and his sons were building an addition to their house, he devised a plan to endanger them, and perhaps even incite a pogrom! As head of the village governing council, Stepanovich decided to create a new law in the village. Going forward, whoever built a new house, or remodeled his existing house in any way, needed to apply for a permit to do the work. Not surprisingly, the permit was to be granted by none other than "His Excellency," the village Duma head himself. The new rule was voted on and passed by the village elders, so that now altering one's home without a permit was considered a crime.

An official letter was delivered to Eliezer Paltiel from the village of Zhudilovo, ordering him to stop building immediately and to appear in court in the city of Pochep on an appointed day, as he was charged with breaking the new permit law.

Zeide Eliezer dispatched an urgent message to the rebbe asking how he should proceed, because it was clear to him that the permit issue could turn into a very dangerous situation for his family, as well as for other Jews in the surrounding district. Should he stop building altogether? How should he handle the court date? Zeide Eliezer beseeched the Rebbe Rashab for his advice and blessing.

The answer they received astounded the family. The rebbe simply told Zeide Eliezer and his sons to continue building without fear, as G-d's blessing was with them.

In the meantime, Ivan Stepanovich prepared his case against Zeide Eliezer.

Time seems to have a tendency to fly when you want it to go slowly, and indeed Zeide Eliezer's court date approached rather quickly.

On the day before the trial, Stepanovich came to Zeide Eliezer's house, a large sheaf of papers in his hand.

"I am in possession of a list of all your crimes, Jew Paltiel," he said, waving the stack of papers in Zeide's face. Then he thrust his package under his arm, puffed out his chest, put his hands on his hips and stood waiting for Zeide's reaction.

Zeide Eliezer stood motionless for a moment, facing Stepanovich and considering what to reply to his accuser. It was clear to Zeide that this enemy of the

Jews had a pogrom in mind, and would not be satisfied to simply forbid the addition of two rooms to a little wooden house. Then he replied calmly, "I hope His Excellency knows that the work my sons and I are doing in our house was started before the law was enacted. The law shouldn't apply to renovations that were begun before there was a law. Should men be held responsible for committing crimes that were not crimes when they were done, and only later became illegal?"

While Zeide talked, Ivan Stepanovich's face turned pink, then red, then deep crimson. His pulled himself up to his height, and with his arms bent, hands grasping his waist, he looked as though he were about to dance a kazatzka. "Your end is near, Jew Paltiel!" His Excellency screeched. "I know your Talmud teaches you how to argue, but no argument will help you this time. You will pay! And not only a fine," he wagged his finger ominously at Zeide. "You will lose your house and your business, too." He waved the sheaf of papers tauntingly under Zeide Eliezer's nose.

Bubbe Rochel Leah was standing in the kitchen peeling potatoes for soup, listening to the exchange between her husband and the village head, while tears streamed down her face, half-covered by the kerchief that sat low on her forehead. Her little son Berel, who was then two years old, was holding on to his mother's skirt, his eyes raised to her tear-stained face. He didn't understand why she was crying, nor did he understand his father's conversation with the man wearing brass buttons on his long fancy coat, whose whiskers pointed to both sides of the village.

Berel's sister, 11-year-old Manya, had gone with her friends to the train station to watch the trains come and go. Trains were a new phenomenon then, and therefore an interesting spectacle to all the area's children. With the roar of its engine, its wheels screeching against iron rails, the Pochep-bound train pulled into the station.

Ivan Stepanovich stood on the platform, looking forward to Eliezer Paltiel's trial the next day. This time, he felt certain he would be rid of the rich Jew once and for all. Afterward, the Jew's guilt could easily be used to incite a pogrom that would begin first in his village and then spread to the surrounding villages.

Wanting to appear above others, His Excellency did not board the train when the less important passengers did. After the conductor called out, "All aboard, all aboard," Stepanovich stood chatting with the stationmaster. Only when the train began to move, slowly at first, did he jump on the bottom step, expecting to take the successive steps and land neatly in the moving car. But his long coat with the brass buttons got caught in a spoke of an iron wheel that was rolling faster and faster on its rail.

Manya ran home out of breath, not knowing if she should feel sad that a fatal accident had occurred, or be glad that this man—this Haman, who she knew wanted to harm her father and all the area's Jews—had been dragged by a moving wheel to his death under the train. She sprinted into the house screaming as loudly as she could, "Er iz mer nit doh, er iz mer nit doh!" ("He is no more, he is no more!")

At Ivan Stepanovich's funeral, his wife walked behind her husband's coffin, wringing her hands and wailing, "I told you not to start up with the Jews. I told you to leave the Jew alone. You know their G-d is powerful. You fool! You fool! You fool!"

The new village head did not follow Stepanovich's example. He was an honest man who conducted himself with proper decorum and common sense, and he never bothered Zeide Eliezer. It was obvious to him that his predecessor had created a new law and then brought charges against Zeide Eliezer for no other reason than his eagerness to harm a Jew.

So, with the rebbe's blessing, Zeide Eliezer and his sons added two rooms to their home, and the evil plot of Stepanovich was foiled.

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

An accounting is made of the gold, silver and copper donated by the people for the making of the Mishkan. Betzalel, Aholiav and their assistants make the eight priestly garments—the apron, breastplate, cloak, crown, hat, tunic, sash and breeches—according to the specifications communicated to Moses in the Parshah of Tetzaveh.

The Mishkan is completed and all its components are brought to Moses, who erects it and anoints it with the holy anointing oil, and initiates Aaron and his four sons into the priesthood. A cloud appears over the Mishkan, signifying the Divine Presence that has come to dwell within it.

CANDLE LIGHTING



Shabbos 8 - 9 March		
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	7:33	8:28
Adelaide	7:26	8:21
Brisbane	5:55	6:47
Darwin	6:47	7:36
Gold Coast	5:54	6:46
Perth	6:26	7:19
Sydney	7:05	7:59
Canberra	7:15	8:09
Launceston	7:26	8:24
Auckland	7:33	8:28
Wellington	7:36	8:34
Hobart	7:27	8:25
Byron Bay	7:53	7:45

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, ST KILDA EAST

ROSH CHODESH ADAR BEIS PARSHAS PEKUDEI • 8 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA KABBOLAS SHABBOS	7:40 PM 8:10 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA SHACHRIS MINCHA SHABBOS ENDS	10:19 AM 10:00 AM 7:25 PM 8:28 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS MINCHA MARIV	8:00/9:15/10:00 AM 7:30 PM 8:20 PM