

LampLighter

28 Cheshvan
Toldot
955
5 November
5771/2010

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Toldot, contains the famous story of Esau's sale of his first-born rights to his brother Jacob for a pot of porridge.

Subsequently, Jacob listens to his mother's advice and dresses up as Esau in order to receive the blessing of the first-born from his father, Isaac. "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau," Isaac tells his son Jacob when Jacob comes to receive the blessings.

Our Sages comment on this verse that against the "voice of Jacob," Esau has "no hands," that is, he has no power or authority. When the "voice of Jacob" - the voice and sound of Torah learning - is heard, the "hands of Esau" - the threats of the enemies of the Jewish people - have no power over us.

The same holds true in reverse. When the voice of Torah is weakened, G-d forbid, the "hands of Esau" are able to overcome us. This latter alternative has already come to pass with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple, as stated by the prophet Jeremiah: "For what reason was the land lost? Because they had forsaken My Torah."

In our times, too, nearly 2,000 years after the destruction of the Holy Temple, it must be emphasized that Jerusalem's existence still depends on the study of Torah. To be sure, we cannot change the facts of the past, but we are able to remove its cause and thus hasten the rebuilding and restoration of Jerusalem.

Our Sages state: "Any generation in whose days the Holy Temple is not rebuilt, it is reckoned against that generation as if it was destroyed in its time." The destruction is thus not simply an historical event that happened in the distant past. Its consequences extend to this very day, and the event, therefore, must be seen as something which is happening even now — as if the Holy Temple, as it were, were being destroyed this very moment. It follows, then, that it is our duty (and we do have the ability) to rid ourselves of the cause of the destruction and prevent its present recurrence.

How can this be accomplished? Through the study of Torah.

The study of Torah is the antidote to the destruction, and will bring about the restoration of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, and the immediate revelation of our Righteous Moshiach!

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Getting Healthy

By Baruch Epstein

It has been said that the difference between a healthy person and an unhealthy person is that the former is working on his issues, while the latter is resigned to them.

How did Jacob and Esau end up so different? Same parents, same upbringing, same mother's milk, and yet so drastically different from each other that they become the paradigm of all of literature's accounts of "the evil twin."

In fact, they provide a metaphor for the endless struggle within each of us: the G-dly Jacob and his desire for transcendence vs. the instinctual Esau, with his insatiable drive for self-satisfaction.

A look at their lives. Esau is born red and as hairy as an adult, and so he remains: *Edom*—red, intense, driven, violent. From the day of his birth, he sees himself as a static creation; that's who he is, and that is who he will be until he dies. He sees no reason to work things out with his brother, to address the "other side." He is simply Esau.

Jacob is born with his issues as well. Timid, a bookworm, Mama's boy. Yet he is willing to acknowledge and confront Esau. He dresses up in Esau's garb and tells his father he will hunt meat. Jacob stares Esau in the eye.

It's scary. Can one dress up like Esau and not become Esau?

Jacob succeeds, impressing his father enough to secure the blessing, and then is left alone to deal with his newfound self, to bring it into the rough world outside the tent, where Esau is comfortable. He spends years as a shepherd in Laban's house. He thrives, despite the bumps along the way. Eventually, he is sufficiently empowered to meet the brother he once feared.

We all have our issues, our places we'd rather not go. The easiest way is to let sleeping dogs lie, to just let them be. Uncovering wounds only seems to evoke painful feelings. Yet if we don't address our issues, we simply drift along. If we don't tackle Esau, we become Esau.

That was the difference between them. Jacob and Esau each had their "other side"; Jacob was willing to acknowledge his and deal with it, while Esau chose to ignore it.

We are given the choice. As Shem told Rebecca when she was pregnant with the twins, "Two ruling forces are within you; when one rises the other falls" (Rashi's commentary, Genesis 25:23). If we choose to rock the boat, we can mature through our struggles, emerge stronger. If we sweep the opposing forces within us under the rug, they will pile up until we trip over them.

We've all been there—something is said, and there is an awkward silence. We have a choice: We can address it, like Jacob, or we can resign ourselves to it, like Esau.

When we go where we fear most to tread, we come out the other side as "Israel"—we have struggled and we have succeeded. As the defeated angel tells Jacob (*ibid.*, 32:29): "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have commanding power with [an angel of] G-d and with men, and you have prevailed."

Let's be Jacob, not Esau.



Shining a Light in a Dark Place

This week marks the 2nd Yartzeit of the 6 Mumbai Kedoshim (Holy Souls)

By Jay Lurie

I remember my first Jewish experience in India. I arrived in Mumbai in June 2008, contemplating both the monsoon weather and the possibility of Jewish life in India.

On my first Shabbat, I stumbled through the narrow walkways of Kala Ghoda in historic South Mumbai until I heard the familiar sounds of Hebrew prayer emanating from the pale blue, late-19th-century Kneset Eliyahoo synagogue.

After the service ended, the young, bearded rabbi wished me “*Shabbat Shalom*” and struck up conversation in a Hebrew-inflected American accent, developed from years of praying in Brooklyn, I imagined. The rabbi introduced himself as “Gavi” and invited me to the Chabad House for dinner. When I declined his offer, as I already had plans, he generously told me I could come any time.

I never did take Gavi up on his offer, caught up as I was in my work, social life, and other outlets of Jewish Mumbai. Five months later, when I was home in Cleveland, Ohio for Thanksgiving, I learned shocking news from CNN. This young rabbi, Gavriel Holtzberg, and his wife Rivki were tragically murdered on Nov. 26 along with four others in a three-day standoff with Pakistani terrorists at the Chabad centre. The attack was part of a terrorist siege that also included two Mumbai luxury hotels, a hospital and a café, which paralysed India’s largest metropolis and left more than 160 dead.

My friend and fellow Clevelander Ethan Kay lamented to me at the time that he had lost two friends in the attacks. I didn’t realize then I would come to know those he lost so well after their demise.

On my emotional return to Mumbai after the attacks – the first terrorist attack on Jews in India and possibly the first major public act of anti-Semitism there – I knew I would need the Jewish community by my side more

than ever before. Instead of avoiding the community that was targeted, I again journeyed to the old synagogue for Friday night prayer. There I met Rabbi Dov from Paris, the temporary replacement. Just like Rabbi Gavi, he approached me after the service and invited me to Shabbat dinner at Chabad. This time I accepted, participating in the first Chabad Shabbat in Mumbai after the attacks.

Because the Chabad House was severely damaged in the attacks, the dinner was held in makeshift quarters. We walked for about 30 minutes through side streets and major thoroughfares. I kept the *kipah* on my head, following the rabbi and his entourage. He was dressed in full beard, tall black hat, and long black robe. Only weeks after terrorists had targeted the Chabad House, we walked confidently through the dark streets, signalling to Mumbai that, like the rest of the city, we, too, would be resilient.

Standing in the basement restaurant of a clandestine hotel in what could have been 1930s Munich or 1980s Moscow, I recited the *kiddush*. So began my eight-month journey into post-Gavi and -Rivki Chabad Mumbai.

I didn’t go to Chabad every week, but I went with some frequency. I observed Shabbat at three different locations and was served hot kosher meals by at least 10 different rabbis. The scene around the table was never the same from one Friday to the next. There were a few regulars whom I got to know, but otherwise the seats were filled with Israeli backpackers and diamond dealers, European businessmen and at times American and Australian tourists.

In this sea of change though, there was one constant. Aside from the regular prayers in memory of Gavi and Rivki, their traditions were practiced with great vitality. After the meal but before *bentching* (saying the grace after the meal), the rabbi would ask everyone around the table to introduce himself or herself – name, hometown, and then do one of four options: 1) Discuss the *parshah* (weekly Torah portion); 2) tell an inspirational story; 3) sing a Hebrew song (with help from the table); or 4) pledge to do a mitzvah. Because it was Gavi’s tradition, everyone willingly obliged.

As Mumbai geared up to commemorate the anniversary of the attacks, I called Ethan.

Together we attended Shabbat dinner in Mumbai on Nov. 27, 2009 – one year and one day after the attacks began.

On many occasions I had attended Chabad meals with little more than two rabbis and three other observers. On this night, however, we were greeted at the new, temporary clandestine quarters by a long table of 25-30 people. Among them were the parents and brother of Gavi Holtzberg and the sister of his wife Rivki. Sitting across from Mrs. Holtzberg, I read the pain in her eyes. I felt both the anger and pride emanating from Meir Holtzberg, back in the place where his elder brother had sacrificed his life.

When it was Meir’s turn to speak, he related a portion of the *parshah* to his brother and sister-in-law and their work in Mumbai. He talked about how shining a light in a dark place makes a far larger impact than shining a light in an already well-lit space.

My spine shivered as Rabbi Holtzberg, Gavi’s father, spoke about a young Australian couple whom Gavi and Rivki had hosted in Mumbai little more than a year before, advising them to marry. On the occasion of their marriage, the couple invited Gavi’s parents to take the place of Gavi and Rivki.

Ethan stood up next to me, reminiscing about his last Shabbat in Mumbai, which had occurred at the old Chabad House and was hosted by Gavi and Rivki. He recalled the warmth of his hosts and the empty feeling he experienced when learning of the tragedy. Many others relived their fond memories of the couple.

And then I stood up, unsure if I had anything inspirational to say. After all, I had only met Gavi once for a few minutes. I never knew Chabad Mumbai before Nov. 26. I glanced in the direction of Rabbi Holtzberg, imagining that he gave me a nod of approval passed on from his son.

I reiterated his point about the couple being alive through the actions of others. Over the past while, I felt as if I had gotten to know Gavi and Rivki quite well. I had heard so many stories about how they worked tirelessly for five years building a community and a sanctuary for Jewish residents and visitors alike. Through Gavi and Rivki, I had found a home away from home, and because of them, I never knew Mumbai to be a dark place. They had already brought the light by the time I arrived.

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MOSHIACH MATTERS

Jewish teachings state that there will be ten famines that will come to the world at different points in history. There will be one additional hunger, though, during the times of Moshiach. This final hunger will be different from all previous ones as it will be a hunger to hear the words of G-d. It will lead to the time when “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the water covers the ocean.” (*Bereshit Rabba quoted in Discover Moshiach*)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



Freedom of Choice vs. G-d's Omniscience

By the Grace of G-d
25th of Adar, 5721 [March 13, 1961]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter, which is an acknowledgment of my letter.

I was pleased to read in it about your Shiurim [Torah study program], and I hope that you make additional efforts from time to time in accordance with the precept of our Sages that all things of holiness should be on the upgrade.

With regard to the discussions and debates and questions about which you write, it is not the right way to engage in this kind of futile discussions which are endless and useless. There is only room for discussion among people who are studying together and a question comes up now and again, and even then they should be of minor consideration.

Generally speaking, all the questions which you mentioned have already been answered in our sacred books, and those who continue to argue about them do so mostly either because of ignorance or mischief. Some people simply fear that if they accepted the Torah and Mitzvoth fully, they would be obliged to commit themselves in their daily life and conduct, and give up certain pleasures, and the like. Therefore, they try to justify their misguided views by futile arguments.

By way of example, I will take one question which you mention in your letter and which apparently was impressed upon you as something complicated, but in reality the matter was discussed and solved very simply in our sacred literature. I refer to the question of how can man have free choice of action if G-d already knows beforehand what he is going to do? The answer to this is simple enough, as can be seen on the basis of two illustrations:

1. Suppose there is a human being who can foretell the future of what is going to happen to a person. This does not mean that this knowledge deprives that person from acting freely as before. It only means that the knowledge of the forecaster is such that it is the knowledge of how the person will choose freely and of his own volition. Similarly, G-d's knowledge of human actions is such that does not deprive humans from their free choice of action, but it only means that G-d knows how the person will choose to act in a certain situation. To formulate this in scientific terms, we can say that the opposite to free choice is not pre-knowledge but compulsion, for there is such knowledge which does not entail compulsion (as for example, knowledge of the past).

2. Every believer in G-d, and not Jews only, believes that with G-d the past, present and future are all the same since He is above time and space. Just as in the case of human affairs, the fact that Mr. X knows all that happened to Mr. Y in the past, this knowledge did not affect Mr. Y's actions in the past, so G-d's knowledge of the future, which is the same as His knowledge of the past, does not affect the free choice of human action.

From the simple solution to the above question, you can draw an analogy in regard to all similar questions and be sure that there is an answer to them, and very often a simple one. But the proper Jewish way is to fulfil the Torah and Mitzvoth without question and then to try and find out anything that one wishes to find out about the Torah and Mitzvoth, but not, G-d forbid, make human understanding a condition of performance of G-d's commandments.

I trust that you participated in a Purim Farbrengen [Chassidic gathering], and I hope that the inspiration and joy will be lasting throughout the year.

Hoping to hear good news from you,
With blessing

A WORD from the Director

In Chasidic circles, and particularly Chabad Chasidic circles, the upcoming month of Kislev is known as the "Month of Redemption" for it contains many events of good news and Redemptive qualities.

This weekend is the "Kinus HaShluchim," when thousands of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's emissaries from across the globe gather in Lubavitch World Headquarters.

The first day of Kislev, Rosh Chodesh (Monday, Nov. 8 this year), marks the anniversary of the Rebbe's first public appearance after suffering a heart attack in 1977.

The second of Kislev is the anniversary of the actual return of the holy books to their rightful owner - the library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad - following their illegal removal from the library. After a prolonged civil court-case, which decided to whom the library of the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe belonged, the verdict was rendered on the day when the Torah reading stated, "I shall return in peace to my father's house."

On the 10th of Kislev, the second Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Dov Ber, was released from prison where he had been interred on false charges.

On the 19th of Kislev, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad, was released from his Czarist imprisonment. During his interrogation, he impressed the investigators, including the Czar himself, with his wisdom, scholarship and piety. Thus, the entire Chasidic movement was exonerated and its teachings could be spread freely. Ever since, the 19th of Kislev has been celebrated as the "New Year of Chasidut."

Of course, last but not least, the holiday of Chanuka, begins on the 25th of Kislev, Wednesday evening, Dec. 1 this year. It, too, is a holiday of redemption. On Chanuka we thank G-d for the miracles and for redeeming us from the oppressive rule of the Greeks.

May this month truly be a month of redemption for the entire Jewish people, with the coming of Moshiach, NOW.

J. I. Gutnick

Hey, just ate something? Feelin' good? Go ahead—say "Thank you!" to G-d for lubricating the ecosystem that got that stuff on your plate. Birkat Hamazon (pronounced BEER-kaht hah-MAH-zone), commonly translated as Grace After Meals, is what Jews say when they're done chowing down. However, Grace after Meals is a faulty phrase in that it sounds too religious. There's no mindless obeisance in Judaism, and the appreciation expressed to G-d after a hearty meal would be better simply titled just that: Appreciation.

Birkat Hamazon is a series of prayers to G-d, and only after a meal that contains bread. When a group of three or ten people eat together, introductory statements are recited as well. Also known as benching, from the Yiddish *bentch*, or *bless*, Birkat Hamazon takes about three minutes to do.

1. How do I thank G-d after I eat?

Luckily, The Rabbis asked that question long before you did, and they answered it as well! They instituted a four-section set-format thank-you to be recited after every meal. Birkat Hamazon may be easily found in your siddur's Table of Contents.

2. The Idea Behind It

If you do lunch at Frank's, you'll thank Frank when you leave: you'll say, "Thanks, Frank!" If you do lunch at Frank's and the food was funky, you'll say, "Thanks, Frank—the food was funky!" And if you do lunch at Frank's and the food is funky and the fried fish is fabulous, you'll say, "Thanks, Frank—the food was funky and your fried fish is fabulous!" Bottom line is, the more you enjoy it, the more details you add. And that's why Birkat Hamazon is not a one-liner—there's a lot to thank G-d for.

3. What It's All About

In Birkat Hamazon, one will find many expressions of gratitude for having food to eat, as well as for the land of Israel, the Exodus from ancient Egypt, our Jewishness, the Torah, the good things in life that we have, and of course, the food. And while you have your host's ear, you may as well ask for a couple of favours. That's why the majority of Birkat Hamazon actually consists of prayers for redemption, the return to Israel, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple, health and well-being, sustenance, and dignified self-sufficiency.

CUSTOMS CORNER

It Happened Once...



Yaakov always had difficulty with his livelihood, and so numerous times he was forced to relocate with his wife and young son, until ultimately settling in the small Ukrainian town of Sosov. His luck was no better there, and shortly after, he tragically fell ill and died.

Moshe Leib, the young son, abruptly deprived of the possibility of a peaceful childhood and a decent education, never stopped dreaming of the day when he might dedicate himself to his studies. Instead, he was forced to work in order to support himself and his mother.

One day, his mother acquired a huge sum of money that enabled him to quit working—but there was no one in the town to teach him, an uneducated lad, the basics of Torah. And so Moshe Leib, with the permission of his mother, left town.

His travels brought him to Nikolsburg, where a great school of Talmudic learning was established. But Moshe Leib did not know how to learn or where to begin. It would take someone special to assist him.

The home of the beloved chief rabbi of Nikolsburg, Shmuel Horowitz (1726-1778), known as "Shmelke of Nikolsburg," was always open. Many guests would enter daily and the rabbi and his wife would greet them all happily and assist them with their needs, be it with a kind word of advice or some food.

Young Moshe Leib found his way there, where he was welcomed and treated like a son. He joined the great academy the rabbi founded and became the rabbi's protégé. He continued living happily with the Horowitz family and took part in their activities and chores.

One day, the rabbi's wife removed her ring so that she could ritually wash her hands prior to eating bread. As she was washing, a known local robber and swindler swiped the ring and ran off. As she was unable to speak and call for help prior to taking a bite of bread, as dictated by Jewish law, the robber was able to make his escape. Once she took a bite from the bread, she shrieked that the robber just made off with her ring. "It is worth 100 coins!" she moaned.

Seeing his wife's frantic distress, the rabbi told Moshe Leib, "Swiftly run after the man. Once you grab him, tell him that the ring is a present for him, but it's worth 100 coins and no less!"

Moshe Leib obeyed his beloved teacher and sprinted after the thief. His mission, he knew, was to relay the rabbi's message and nothing else. His youthful feet outdid the thief's, so it was only a short while before he caught the robber and told him what the rabbi said.

The robber was shocked. He was expecting the young lad to grab him, give him a good beating and force him to shamefully return the ring to the rabbi's wife.

Confused and dismayed by what Moshe Leib told him, the robber said, "If the rabbi is such a person, I do not want to take any of his property. I will return the ring."

Moshe Leib looked at him thoughtfully and said, "I think you are mistaken. For the short amount of time that I know him, I have come to learn that every word from the rabbi is significant and uttered with complete honesty."

Moshe Leib explained that the rabbi had not said those words in order to convince the robber to give back the ring. The rabbi meant every word he said. He would not accept the ring back—it was a present and belongs to the thief.

"Listen to me," said Moshe Leib, "take the ring, but don't sell it for less than 100 coins. And with the money, purchase jewellery for orphaned brides."

"Then the rabbi will be happy," he concluded.

Moshe Leib's words entered the robber's heart. He listened to the boy's advice and purchased jewellery for orphaned brides.

The town robber was a poor man who found it easier to rob others rather than get a job to support his family. He had never learned the value of money, because he never earned it.

But as he handed out charity for the first time in his life, the robber experienced an enormous satisfaction. He thought about what it would be like to earn a normal living, survive off his own money and regularly give charity.

The town robber took the lesson to heart. From that time on, he toiled to learn a trade and worked hard to earn an honest living. But what he most enjoyed was handing out his hard earned money to charity and keeping his door open for the hungry.

As for Moshe Leib, he not only grew in Torah scholarship and Chassidic warmth, but the powerful lesson he learned that day was embedded in him for life.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

That my soul may bless you (Gen. 27:4)

Why did Isaac want to bless Esau instead of Jacob? Jacob was "a pure man, a dweller in tents (of Torah)" and even without a blessing he would stay away from evil. Esau, however, was very likely to fall into bad ways, and needed the assistance of his father's blessing. (*Ohr HaTorah*)

And one people shall be stronger than the other (Gen. 25:23)

Rashi comments: When one rises, the other falls. Jacob and Esau symbolize the struggle between the G-dly soul and the animal soul, between a person's good and evil inclinations. When a Jew's G-dly soul is dominant and exerts itself, there is no need to combat the animal soul - it "falls" by itself. Light does not have to fight darkness to illuminate - as soon as it appears, the darkness vanishes. So too, does the light of holiness dispel all evil. (*Sefer Hamaamarim*)

And his hand was holding on to Esau's heel (Gen. 25:26)

Esau is symbolic of the animal soul and the yetzer hara (evil inclination); Jacob is symbolic of the G-dly soul and the yetzer tov (good inclination). The function of the G-dly soul is to perfect the physical body while guiding and correcting the animal soul, "holding on" as it directs it along the right path. (*Likutei Sichot*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS TOLDOT • 29 CHESHVAN • 6 NOVEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:40 PM
	MINCHA:	7:50 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:20 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:35 AM
	THE MOLAD OF THE MONTH OF KISLEV IS	
	SHABBAT NOVEMBER 6 9:04 (3 CHALAKIM) PM	
	MINCHA:	7:40 PM
SHABBOS ENDS:		8:41 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:50 PM
	MAARIV:	8:40 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 5 NOVEMBER 2010

Begins	Ends
7:40	8:41
7:30	8:30
5:50	6:46
6:30	7:21
5:50	6:46
6:26	7:24
7:08	8:07
7:19	8:18
7:38	8:43
7:39	8:40
7:47	8:52



Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נב"מ ז"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.