

# Lamplighter

16 Shvat  
Yitro  
**966**  
21 January  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah reading, Yitro, narrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. About this central event in the history of the Jewish people the Torah states, "And G-d spoke all these words, saying." Our commentators ask a logical question: What is the meaning of the seemingly superfluous word "saying"?

Throughout the Torah, wherever the word "saying" appears, the intent is for those words to be transmitted and repeated to those Jews who were not present at the time when G-d uttered them.

However, at the giving of the Torah, every single Jew was present. Everyone was there at Mount Sinai, everyone heard the Ten Commandments - even the souls of Jews yet to be born in future generations were present. Why then, in this instance, does the Torah employ the word "saying"?

The Maggid of Mezeritch, Rabbi Dov Ber, successor of the Baal Shem Tov, answered this question as follows:

"Vayedabeir - And G-d spoke" alludes to the Ten Commandments.

"Leimor - saying" alludes to the Ten Utterances by which G-d created the world.

The intent of the verse "And G-d spoke all these words, saying" is that the Torah was given for the purpose of drawing down the Ten Commandments into the Ten Utterances of the physical world, i.e., that the light of Torah would illuminate the world to such an extent that it is perceived on the physical plane of existence.

This job was given to the Jewish people when G-d gave them His Torah. Our task as Jews is to cause the light of Torah ("And G-d spoke") to illuminate the world ("saying"). We must never think that the Torah and the world are two separate entities. It isn't enough to conduct ourselves according to Torah when studying and praying. Rather, the light of Torah must be brought down to even our most mundane affairs. Everything a Jew does, no matter how worldly, must be carried out in accordance with the Torah's dictates and performed in a spirit of holiness.

This, then, is the core of the giving of the Torah: bringing the light of Torah, the Ten Commandments - "And G-d spoke" - not only into the realm of Torah, but also into the realm of physical existence, into the world that was created by the Ten Utterances - "saying."

*(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

## Is G-d Religious?

*By Simon Jacobson*

The polls are mixed on that count. Recent surveys show that as much as 80-90% of Americans will say that they believe in G-d, but 40-50% will say they do not practice a religion.

Indeed, if G-d is all-powerful and infinite, and religion is a set of laws and rituals and a list of things that one must or must not do, it would seem that G-d could hardly be described as "religious." Nor would it seem that being religious will bring a person closer to G-d. If G-d transcends all limitation and definition, why would the way to relate to G-d be to impose further restriction and definition on our already finite and constricted lives?

Yet this paradox is not confined to the religious-spiritual aspect of the human experience. Throughout the ages, whenever man has endeavoured to escape the bounds of the mundane and the everyday, he did so by submitting to a structured, even rigid, code of behaviour.

My favourite example for this is the discipline of music. There are just so many musical notes on the scale, and no one—not even the greatest musician—can create additional notes or subtract any. Anyone who wishes to play or compose music must conform to this absolute, immutable system.

And yet, by submitting to this framework, the musician will create a piece of music that touches the deepest place in a person's heart—a place that cannot be described, much less the defined. By using this very precise, mathematical formula, the musician will create something that transports the listener to a place high above the confines and fetters of everyday life, high above the strictures of physics and mathematics.

Imagine, then, a musical discipline whose laws are dictated by the inventor and creator of life—by the one who has intimate knowledge of life's every strength and every vulnerability, of its every potential and its every sensitivity.

The only question remaining is: but why so *many* laws? Why must this discipline dictate how we are to wake and how we are to sleep, and virtually everything in between?

Because life itself, in all its infinite complexity, is our instrument of connection with G-d. Every "scale" on its "range" must be exploited to achieve the optimum connection.

Music being our metaphor, we cannot but quote the famous anecdote in which Archduke Ferdinand of Austria reputedly says to Mozart, "Beautiful music, but far too many notes." To which the composer replied, "Yes, your majesty, but not one more than necessary."



## The miracle of Dr. Frankl

In 1995, an elegantly dressed, elderly woman, entered the office of Rabbi Yakov Biederman, the Rebbe's emissary to Austria. She introduced herself as Marguerite Kozenn-Chajes, a retired opera singer and the first emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Vienna! "I know you think you are the Rebbe's first one here," she quipped, "but in fact I am!"

Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes began her story. Her ancestors had been the holy Vishnitzer Rebbe's. As a young woman she left her home in Czernowitz and travelled to Vienna where she eventually became a successful opera singer.

Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes performed during the 1930s in the Salzburger Festspiele. When German troops marched into Austria and the annexation of Austria was complete, all Jewish artists were banned from performing. Somehow, Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes was overlooked and actually performed in the Festspiele of 1939. When WWII broke out, friends smuggled her out to Italy and she made it on the last boat to the U.S. She and her husband, a descendant of the famous Maharatz Chajes, settled in Detroit, Michigan.

Years passed. Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes was offered the opportunity to have a private audience with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. "I walked into the Rebbe's room," she related to Rabbi Biederman, "I cannot explain why, but for the first time since the Holocaust, I felt that I could cry. Like so many others who had lost everyone, I had never cried. We knew that if we would start crying, we might never stop. I began sobbing like a baby.

"I shared everything with the Rebbe: Innocent childhood; leaving home; becoming a star in Vienna; performing in front of Hitler (may his name be erased); escaping to the U.S.; learning of the murder of my relatives and friends. I also mentioned my strong desire to visit Vienna. The Rebbe asked that before my

trip, I meet with him again.

"A few months later on my way to Vienna, I went to the Rebbe. He asked me to visit two people in Vienna and to give them his regards. The first was Viennese Chief Rabbi Akiva Eisenberg and the second was a Jewish professor, Dr. Frankl, at the University of Vienna. The Rebbe asked me to tell Dr. Frankl in his name that he should not give up. He must remain strong and continue his work with vigour and passion. If he continues to remain strong, he will prevail. The Rebbe spoke in this manner for quite a while.

"Once in Vienna, finding Rabbi Eisenberg was simple, but meeting the professor proved far more difficult. When I arrived at the university they informed me that he had not shown up for two weeks and refused to give me more details. I decided to travel to the professor's home.

"A woman opened the door. I asked if the professor was at home. Moments later, a middle aged man came to the door. He looked extremely tense and I felt very awkward. 'I have regards from Rabbi Schneerson in Brooklyn, New York,' I told him.

"'Who is this?' he asked impatiently.

"'Rabbi Schneerson asked me to tell you in his name that you must not give up. You must remain strong and continue your work with unflinching determination and you will prevail. Do not fall into despair. If you march on with confidence, he promised that you will achieve great success.'

"The professor looked at me as if he had seen a ghost; his eyes opened wide in disbelief. He broke down, sobbing like a baby. I did not understand what was going on. I just saw him weeping uncontrollably.

"'I cannot believe this!' Dr. Frankl said repeatedly as he motioned for me to enter. He calmed down a bit and said, "This rabbi from Brooklyn knew exactly when to send you here. It is a miracle! You have saved me!"

"'I survived the German death camps,' Dr. Frankl exclaimed, 'and I retained my spirit there. Still I could not survive the merciless derision and taunting of my colleagues undermining my every attempt at progress.' Freud's ideas reigned supreme and Dr. Frankl's were dismissed as unscientific notions of conscience,

faith and obligation. It was unpopular for students to attend his courses. 'I was drained and depressed. I fell into a melancholy and decided to quit. I began drafting my resignation papers.

"And suddenly, in walks a woman and gives me regards from a Rabbi Schneerson in New York! Somebody in Brooklyn, no less a Chasidic Rebbe, knows about me! He knows my predicament! This is a miracle!"

"Indeed," concluded Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes, "the Rebbe's words came true. Dr. Frankl continued his work and shortly thereafter, he was given a chair at the University. His book 'Man's Search for Meaning' was translated into English and he became one of the most celebrated psychiatrists of the generation. This all happened some 40 years ago. So you see Rabbi Biederman," Mrs. Kozenn-Chajes said with a smile, "I was an emissary of the Rebbe to Vienna many years before you arrived here."

Rabbi Biederman was intrigued. He began investigating and discovered that Victor Frankl was still alive. In fact he had been sending an annual donation to the Chabad House in Vienna! Rabbi Biederman recalls, "I phoned him, introduced myself and asked him if he remembered the regards Marguerite Kozenn-Chajes gave him from Rabbi Schneerson in Brooklyn some 40 years earlier."

"I do not remember the woman's name but of course I remember that day! I will never forget it. My gratitude to Rabbi Schneerson is eternal,' He answered emotionally. 'That is why when, a number of years ago, Chabad-Lubavitch established itself here in Vienna, I became a supporter.'

In 2003, Rabbi Dr. Shimon Cowen, a Lubavitcher Chasid from Australia, who is also an expert on Frankl, went to Vienna to visit his son-in-law and widow, a Catholic, born Eleonore Katharina Schwindt. They spoke at length and in response to Rabbi Cowen's question about Frankl's personal observance, she took out a pair of *Tefilin* and *Tzitzit* and showed it to him. "My late husband would put these on each and every day," she said to him. "He would also say Psalms in bed at night."

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ISSUE 966

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Redemption is intrinsically related to women. Kabala explains that the Sefira (Attribute) of Malchut ("sovereignty") reflects the feminine dimension. During exile, Malchut is in a state of descent and does not receive direct influence from the other Attributes. Conversely, in the Era of the Redemption, "a woman of valor [will be] the crown of her husband" (Proverbs 12:4). The higher source of Malchut will be revealed, the direct bond between Malchut and the other Attributes will be re-established, and Malchut will become a source of vital influence, renewing the totality of existence.

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## A WORD from the Director

*This Thursday (Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>) is the anniversary of the passing of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson, wife of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and daughter of the Previous Rebbe. Extremely modest, queenly in bearing, sensitive, compassionate and intelligent, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka was the embodiment of Jewish womanhood.*

*After the Rebbetzin's passing in 1988, the Rebbe began to speak about "a new era" having commenced. Although the Rebbe had always stressed our generation's unique role in preparing the world for Moshiach, at that point the Rebbe declared that the only thing left in our Divine service is to actually greet Moshiach himself.*

*As the Rebbe further explained, this "new period" we are now in is especially significant for Jewish women and girls, whose task is not only to establish a "dwelling place for G-d in the lower realms" (as is every Jewish person's), but to ensure that it is a "beautiful" dwelling. When a "beautiful dwelling" is established, G-d "puts Himself" into the dwelling in an entirely different manner, not just "dwelling there" but uniting with it, as it were. G-d's dwelling place in the lower worlds becomes not only nullified to the "Owner," but one with Him.*

*This is reflected in the special mitzvot of Jewish women and girls, with their emphasis on light (Shabbat and Yom Tov candles), purity and holiness (kashrut and the laws of family purity), and warmth (providing children with a Torah-true Jewish education, the main objective of which is to instill enthusiasm for Judaism). In other words, Jewish women and girls are the ultimate "interior decorators" in establishing a "beautiful dwelling."*

*J.I. Gutterick*

2 Tammuz, 5730 [1970]

After the long interval, I was pleased to receive your letter of last week, with the enclosures.

For various reasons, I am replying in English, one of them being that you may wish to show the letter to some of the friends of Chabad in your community, for whom Hebrew text may not be so easy.

Referring to the main topic of your letter, namely the dissemination of Yiddishkeit [Judaism] among the Jewish women, I can hardly overemphasize that this activity is one of the most basic and vital efforts for the general strengthening and spreading of Yiddishkeit. The role of Jewish women in Jewish life goes back to the time of Matan Torah [the giving of the Torah], as is well known from the commentary of our Sages on the verse, "Thus shalt thou say to the House of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel - the 'House of Jacob' meaning the women." (Mechilta on Yisro 19:3 quoted Rashi on this verse.)

In other words, before giving the Torah to the whole people of Israel, G-d told Moshe Rabbeinu [Moses] to first approach the women, and then the men. This emphasizes the primary role of the Jewish wife and mother in preserving the Torah. Ever since, and throughout the ages, Jewish women have had a crucial role in the destiny of our people, as is well-known. Moreover, the Jewish housewife is called the Akeres Habayis - "the foundation of the house." In addition to the plain meaning of this term, namely, that she is the foundation of her own home, the term may be extended to include the whole "House of Israel," which is made up of many individual homes and families, for, indeed, this has been the historic role of Jewish womanhood.

Being acutely aware of this role of Jewish women in Jewish life, especially in the most recent generations, my father-in-law of saintly memory, frequently emphasized this, so much so that immediately after his liberation from Soviet Russia in 1927, when it became possible for him to publish his teachings, he published a number of discourses, talks and addresses in Yiddish, in order to make them more easily accessible to Jewish women and daughters. There is no need to elaborate further on the obvious. In the light of the above, and since this has been the consistent policy of all Chabad activities, it is hardly likely that any Chabad worker would not be interested in this area, and there can only be a misunderstanding if this is the impression in the particular case. I am confident that by discussing the matter together, it will soon be discovered that there has been a misunderstanding, and the reasons that have given rise to such a misunderstanding could be cleared up and easily removed.

Needless to say, you may show this letter to whom it may concern. I may add, however, that judging by your writing, that person seems to have a heavy burden of activity on his shoulders, and this may be the explanation why little has been done in the area of disseminating Yiddishkeit among the women as you write, simply for lack of manpower and time, etc. At any rate, I trust that you will get together and clear this matter up, in accordance with the verse - Az Nidbiru Yirei Hashem ["So shall those who fear G-d speak"], etc....

I was pleased to read in your letter about the advancement in your position, and may G-d grant that you continue to advance from good to better and best, since there is no limit to the good. In our days there is the additional important consideration, and that is when a Jew, a Shomer Torah and mitzvot [one who observes the Torah and its commandments], attains prominence in his field, regardless what his field may be, this gives him an additional opportunity and capacity to spread and strengthen Yiddishkeit, all the more so a person who is already active in the dissemination of traditional Yiddishkeit of the Torah and mitzvot.

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in all above, and together with your wife, to bring up your children to a life of Torah, Chuppah [marriage] and Good Deeds, in good health and happy circumstances.

With blessing,

P.S. Acting on your request, this letter is being sent to you on a priority basis.

### Washing our hands before eating bread

By Naftali Silberberg

There is a Torah commandment that when one has a harvest of wheat, wine or olive oil, a small percentage is given as *Terumah* (a "separation") to the Kohen.

*Terumah* must be kept pure, and the Kohen who eats it must be pure. Since a person's hands are active and might have come in contact with something unclean or impure, a Kohen must wash his/her hands before consuming *Terumah*.

This applies only to bread, for olive oil and wine are not generally eaten directly with the hands.

In order to keep us ready for the time when we will once again be eating *Terumah* - with the coming of our righteous Moshiach, our rabbis instituted the washing of hands before eating any bread.

In order to insure that the Kohanim wash, the Sages applied this rule to all Jews, kohanim and ordinary Israelites alike.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

# It Happened Once...



One day, the great Chassid Rabbi Hillel of Paritch (1795-1864) was struck with an immense longing to spend Shabbat with his Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch. But to realize this desire was quite another matter: it was already late in the week, and many miles separated Babroisk (where Rabbi Hillel lived at the time) from Lubavitch. There seemed no way to make it to the Rebbe in time for Shabbat.

But then a young Chassid offered to make the trip. His sleek new coach and superb horses could do the job, he insisted. However, time was short, so Rabbi Hillel must agree to two conditions: they would take the highway (as a rule, Rabbi Hillel refused to make use of the paved roadway constructed by the wicked Czar Nikolai) and Rabbi Hillel would not take too much time with his prayers. Under the circumstances, the elder Chassid agreed.

That night they slept at a wayside inn. In the morning, the young fellow prayed and breakfasted and then looked in on Rabbi Hillel. Still praying. After a while he checked again — same story. Hours went by, and still the old Chassid continued to pour out his heart before his Creator.

When Rabbi Hillel finally finished, his companion was quite upset. "I don't understand," he complained. "You wanted to spend Shabbat with the Rebbe, and you promised to hurry with your prayers. Now you've ruined all our chances of reaching Lubavitch on time!"

Answered Reb Hillel: "Let us say that you wished to journey to the Leipzig fair to purchase some rare merchandise, available nowhere else. But on the way you met another merchant, who is offering the very same wares at a good price. Only a fool would say, 'But I must go to Leipzig!' The purpose of the journey is not some town or another, but the sought-after merchandise.

"Why does one go to the Rebbe, if to not seek his counsel in how to arouse oneself to the love and awe of G-d in prayer? So if on the way to Lubavitch my praying goes well, should I dump the merchandise and run to Leipzig?"

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A man once came to the Chassidic master Rabbi Yerachmiel of Pshischa with his tale of woe:

"Rebbe, I am a tailor. Over the years, I have earned quite a reputation for my expertise and the high quality of my work. All the nobles in the area order their livery and their ladies' dresses from me.

"Several months ago, I received the most important commission of my life. The prince himself heard of me and asked that I sew him a suit from the finest silk to be gotten in the land. But when I brought him the finished product, he began yelling and cursing: 'This is the best you can do? Why, it's atrocious! Who taught you to sew?' He ordered me out of his house and threw the garment out after me.

"Rebbe, I am ruined. All my capital is invested in the cloth. Worse still, my reputation has been totally destroyed. No one will dare order

anything from me after this. I don't understand what happened! This is the best work I've ever done!"

"Go back to your shop," advised Rabbi Yerachmiel. "Remove all the stitches in this garment, sew them anew exactly how you sewed them before, and bring it to the prince."

"But then I'll have the same garment I have now!" protested the tailor.

"Do as I say, and G-d will help."

Two weeks later, the tailor was back. "Rebbe, you saved my life! To be honest, I had little faith in your strange idea. But having nothing to lose, I did as you said. When I presented the result to the prince, his eyes lit up. 'Beautiful!' he cried. 'You have more than lived up to your reputation. This is the finest suit of clothes I have ever seen.' He rewarded me handsomely, and promised to send more work my way.

"But I don't understand — what was the difference between the first suit and the second if the cloth was cut and sewn in exactly the same way?"

"The first suit," explained Rabbi Yerachmiel, "was sewn with arrogance and pride. The result was a spiritually repulsive garment, which, though technically perfect, was devoid of all grace and beauty. The second suit was sewn with a humble spirit and a broken heart, investing in the garment an inner beauty that evokes awe and admiration in everyone who beholds it."

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**Because the L-rd descended upon it in fire. (Ex. 19:18)**

The fire that accompanied the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai teaches us that everything connected with Torah study, the performance of *mitzvot* and the worship of G-d, must be done with the warmth and enthusiasm that are derived from that original blaze. (*Likutei Sichot*)

**Moses spoke (yedaber), and G-d answered him. (Ex. 19:19)**

The word "yedaber" is actually in the future tense, implying "Moses will speak." It is also etymologically related to the word "yadber," meaning "he will lead and guide" - a reference to the "reflection of Moses that exists in every generation." (*Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*)

**You shall not make of Me gods of silver, gods of gold... (Ex. 20:20)**

Don't make silver and gold your gods, that they should rule over you. Don't worship your money.

(*Rabbi Yaakov Aharon of Zalvazin*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS BO • 17 SHEVAT • 22 JANUARY

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:24 PM
	MINCHA:	8:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9:05 PM
<b>SHABBOS MORNING:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:56 AM
	MINCHA:	8:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:26 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	8:30 PM
	MAARIV:	9:20 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 21 JANUARY 2011

Begins	Ends
8:24 ..... MELBOURNE .....	9:26
8:12 ..... ADELAIDE .....	9:12
6:29 ..... BRISBANE .....	7:25
7:02 ..... DARWIN .....	7:54
6:28 ..... GOLD COAST .....	7:25
7:07 ..... PERTH .....	8:05
7:49 ..... SYDNEY .....	8:49
8:01 ..... CANBERRA .....	9:01
8:25 ..... LAUNCESTON .....	9:30
8:22 ..... AUCKLAND .....	9:24
8:34 ..... WELLINGTON .....	9:39



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.