

# LampLighter

21 Adar I  
Vayak'hel  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In the previous Torah portions of Teruma and Tetzaveh, G-d commanded Moses to build the Mishkan (Sanctuary) and make all its vessels. This week, in the Torah portion of Vayakel (and next week in the portion of Pekudei), G-d's command is transmitted to the Jewish people and carried out in full.

Without exception, everyone participated in the building of the Sanctuary. Their contributions, however, were not equal in value. As no specific amount was required, some donated less and some donated more, according to their individual inclination and financial ability. Thus there were contributions of gold and silver and contributions of oil and wood, if that was all a person was capable of donating.

Significantly, the type of contribution a Jew offered had nothing to do with his connection to the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary belonged to every Jew in equal measure: the rich man whose donation was extremely valuable, and the poor man whose donation was more humble. Every Jew was connected to the Sanctuary to the same degree.

"Both the one who gives more and the one who gives less, provided that he does so for the sake of heaven." Although the individual contributions may have varied, the intention behind the offering was always the same. All Jews wanted to build a House for G-d; all Jews therefore shared an equal portion in its construction.

Moses emphasized this equality among Jews, regardless of their donations, when he said, "See G-d has called by name Betzalel the son of Uri, the son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah... and Oholiav the son of Achisamach, of the tribe of Dan... He has filled them with wisdom of heart... of those who do any work, and of those who design artistic work." Betzalel and Oholiav were both in charge of all the artisans who worked on the Sanctuary.

Betzalel came from a very well-connected family. The grandson of Miriam, his tribe of Judah was one of the most prestigious. Oholiav, by contrast, was not distinguished by his lineage. A grandson of one of the maidservants, his tribe of Dan occupied a much lower rung on the social ladder.

And yet, both men were appointed to oversee the holy work, as it states, "Betzalel and Oholiav, and all those filled with wisdom of heart... did all kinds of work for the service of the Sanctuary."

In building the Sanctuary all Jews are equal. It makes no difference whether one is rich or poor, a descendent of the most exalted parentage or a child of the simplest people. The only qualifier is that the Jew's heart be directed toward heaven!

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

## Shabbat: The Inside Story

By Simon Jacobson

G-d created us as physical beings in a physical world. He created a world wherein we could be independent and make free choices, a world where the higher realities of spirit are obscured and the physical reality becomes paramount.

In a sense, therefore, there are two realities occurring simultaneously. In Kabbalistic and Chassidic terminology, one reality is called *da'at elyon*, the view from Above (the spiritual viewpoint), and the other reality is called *da'at tachton*, the view from below (the physical viewpoint). These perspectives are perhaps better described as the view from "inside-out" and from "outside-in," respectively. We see the universe from the outside-in. When we meet people, the first thing we perceive are their external features. Then we study their body language and try, through communication and other methods, to pierce the surface to discover what is within.

The only existence on the earth that we truly experience from the inside-out is ourselves. We don't need to look in a mirror to know what mood we're in.

The Torah and Kabbala say this phenomenon is true with the entire universe. G-d made a world that is outside-in, and asked us to reveal its G-dliness by transforming it inside-out.

Now, if we are looking at life with an outside-in perspective, that which is spiritual, more internal, can easily be misperceived as nothing. But from the inside-out perspective, the exact opposite is true: that which is taking place on the outside is really nothing. From this perspective, what we call nothingness is really something (the somethingness of the spiritual reality), and what we call somethingness (the external achievements of the material world) is relatively nothing.

Shabbat is the day that reveals to us the nothingness of something and the somethingness of nothing. When we sit at our Shabbat table and have to come up with a discussion that's not about the stock market or sports or gossip, we're forced to reach deeper and discover our true selves. We have the opportunity to experience the beauty of family, spend time with our children, talk about things that really matter, and relate to G-d in song, study and prayer. What emerges is an inside-out reality, a nothing reality that is really something.



## Go Home He Is There

*Here is a story heard from Rabbi Yehuda Leib Groner who in the forty some years he served as chief personal secretary for the Lubavitcher Rebbe, witnessed many miracles. Here is one of them.*

The Rebbe was truly the Moses of this generation and just as Moses' main job was to take the Jews from Egypt and give them the Torah, so the Rebbe spent thousands of hours and millions of dollars saving Jews from their problems and spreading Torah.

Besides sending emissaries and opening 'Chabad Houses' throughout the world for this purpose every Sunday he would stand for hours in his headquarters in Brooklyn and hand out dollar bills and blessings to the tens of thousands of people that waited patiently in line.

Everyone that passed before the Rebbe was affected positively in some way. Some were encouraged to give charity, others to learn Torah and many adapted a completely Jewish lifestyle. For some it took years before the change was noticed but some were affected immediately as in the following story:

This woman was an estranged mother with several mouths to feed that had saved up money for a year to fly from her home in Israel to seek advice from the Rebbe in Brooklyn.

Her story was a sad one indeed. Over five years ago her husband had simply disappeared. At first she thought he had been kidnapped and even called the police. But when they checked the house for a clue they discovered that all his clothes and belongings together with two large suitcases were also gone. He had abandoned her.

She was devastated. He had always seemed content, didn't have any bad habits, addictions or even debts that would make him do such a rash thing. They had an ideal home; there was no reason for him to leave. But after several weeks of waiting in vain for him to knock on the door again, it became clear that he wouldn't.

He was gone.

So the poor woman, who was not religious at all, began going to various fortune tellers and 'seers' for advice and comfort. But

it wasn't long before she discovered them to be empty pretenders and eventually she became attracted to the local Chabad house and found true Jewish spirituality.

She sent her children to Chabad schools and it wasn't long before she too was becoming more and more observant.

But now the problem of her missing husband was magnified; according to the Torah she was an 'Aguna'; a 'living widow' and was forbidden to re-marry until her husband either appeared and divorced her or could be proved dead.

Her only hope was the Lubavitcher Rebbe. She heard that he was a great miracle worker who lived only to help people, especially Jews. If anyone could free her it would be him.

So she saved money, dollar on dollar until she finally had enough for a round-trip ticket, put her children up with her parents and flew to Brooklyn. She would go every Sunday to 'dollars' no matter how long it took, until the Rebbe helped her. She simply could not go on like this.

She arrived in Brooklyn on Friday morning, spent the Shabbat in Crown Heights and early the next day got in line. Finally, an hour later it was actually happening! She was standing before the Rebbe pouring out her heart.

"My husband left me alone with our children over five years ago. It's very hard for all of us. Please, Rebbe, please give me a blessing or tell me what to do."

The Rebbe waited for her to finish, gave her a few dollar bills and said.

"Here is money to give to charity in Israel. You must return home immediately. Your husband will be waiting for you there. Bracha v' Hatzlacha" (Blessing & Success).

She took the dollars and before she knew it the line moved on and she was outside. She realized what she had to do. She returned immediately to her host's home contacted her travel agent and the very next day she was on a flight back home.

It happened so quickly it was almost as though she had never left but as the taxi pulled up to her address, there, standing on the front porch with his suitcases was her husband!

When he saw her in the taxi he ran to meet her, crying and begging forgiveness.

They sat on the front porch and he tried to explain. He didn't really know why he left back then but suddenly yesterday he was overcome with such guilt, remorse and longing

for the beautiful life that he abandoned ..... that he realized his tragic mistake. He packed his things and returned.

She wasn't really expecting this and was overwhelmed. One thing for sure, it was the Rebbe. Whether he caused her husband to repent or not wasn't important. But now, as she came to her senses she realized there was another problem.

She was now an observant Jew while he remained just as they were years ago completely ignorant of Judaism. It would be impossible for them to continue together.

But to her total amazement he readily agreed to any conditions she set. He swore he would go to classes and do whatever the Rabbi told him, anything. Indeed, the main reason he ran away in the first place was because he had no meaning to hold him down.

And so it was. He began attending classes, in a very short time he completely changed all his priorities in life and actually enjoyed every minute of it! Joy and peace returned to their household.

But the story wasn't over.

Several years later trouble again struck. The woman suddenly became crippled. Her legs simply did not work and she couldn't stand on her own two feet.

They went from doctor to doctor sparing no costs but after all, even the best professors couldn't seem to pinpoint the problem. It was incurable.

Finally their local Chabad House director urged them to write to the Rebbe and the strange answer was soon in coming. The Rebbe wrote:

"Her husband's Tefillin and the Mezuzot should be checked and the results given to ... the doctor!"

Without hesitation he gave his Tefillin and Mezuzot to be checked and the results came quickly; they were all 'kosher'. All the letters, parchments etc. were completely in order.

The only problem was some minor fault in the sinews used to sew up the leather boxes of the Tefillin.

Of course the sinews were corrected. But now was the problem of giving the results to the doctor. What would the doctor understand about the results of a Tefillin check?

But to everyone's surprise the doctor immediately understood the message. He had extensive tests done on the ligaments in her legs and, sure enough, that was the problem and the solution was soon in coming.

So, because of the Rebbe's blessing both her husband and her health were returned.

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ISSUE 971

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Unity is the key to G-d's blessings. Thus, in our daily prayers, we say "Bless us our Father, all as one." Chasidism explains that the very fact of being together "all as one," makes us worthy of blessing. And this unity will lead to the ultimate blessing - the coming of the time when G-d will "sound the great shofar," and together "with our youth and with our elders... with our sons and with our daughters," the entire Jewish people will proceed to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, and to the Third Holy Temple. May this take place in the immediate future. (From the last public address of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, 25 Adar 1, 1992)

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



I am in receipt of your letter in which you write about various recent events in your life - which were not in the category of obvious good - and you ask what your reaction should be.

In general, as you surely know, Jews are guided by the Torah, the "Torah of Life," which is to say that Torah is the Jew's true guide in everyday life. The Torah is also called Torah Or, the "Torah of Illumination," since it illuminates the Jew's life and its instructions are as clear and lucid as light itself.

One of the best-known portions of the Torah, which Jews recite daily in both morning and evening, is the portion of the Shema [prayer], in which the Torah tells us to love G-d "with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

The Hebrew word *m'odecha*, generally translated as "your might," also conveys the meaning of *middah* - "measure" or "dimension," as our Sages explain. This means that a Jew has to love G-d regardless of the kind of "deal" he thinks is meted out to him by Divine providence.

This profound love is to express itself, as the text indicates, in the study of Torah and the observance of its mitzvot (commandments), particularly the mitzvot of tefillin and mezuzah which are mentioned specifically, and particularly so since tefillin is symbolic of all the mitzvot.

Moreover, inasmuch as the hand tefillin is placed on the left arm facing the heart, the seat of the emotions, and [the head tefillin] on the head facing the brain, the seat of the intellect, tefillin symbolizes that a Jew is to be totally involved - both emotionally and intellectually - in serving and fulfilling His commandments.

In other words, whatever happens in a Jew's life must not in any way affect his love of and devotion to G-d, nor his everyday life and conduct in accordance with the Torah and mitzvot. (Needless to say, the mitzvah of reciting the Shema daily is not reserved for exceptional Jews, but is for each and every Jew.)

The question now arises: Is the above something that can really be implemented, and if so, how is one to explain how this can actually be implemented?

To be sure, the human intellect is limited and cannot possibly fathom the Divine wisdom that is in the Torah. On the other hand, the Torah itself describes the Jewish people as a "wise and understanding people," and it provides at least some explanation that helps us to understand, -in however a limited degree,- G-d's ways.

One of the basic teachings of the Torah is that G-d does not expect anything of a human being that is beyond the human capacity to carry out.

This, in fact, is eminently understandable: Even a human being, who is a very long way away from absolute perfection, would not expect a tool that he has fashioned to perform in a capacity greater than its original design. Certainly G-d, the Creator of man, knows man's capacities.

From this it naturally follows that when a Jew faces any kind of a test of faith, it is certain that he has been given the capacity to overcome it. And the more difficult the test, the greater are the individual's capacities.

The reason that an individual is tested is not that G-d wants to know how well he will conduct himself, but in order that this person be afforded the opportunity to realize his potential, even that which is unknown to him. And when one's potential capacities are released and activated, they become part and parcel of his or her arsenal, to be used for personal as well as communal benefit. ...

*From Healthy in Body, Mind and Soul, compiled by Rabbi Sholom B. Wineberg, published by Sichos in English*

# A WORD from the Director

*The last time we were privileged to hear the Rebbe's words spoken in public, the Rebbe emphasized the theme of Vayakhel "And he gathered"—the unity of the Jewish people.*

*For eleven months the Rebbe spoke to us consistently and persistently about the imminence of Moshiach's coming and the true and complete Geulah. The Rebbe also illuminated the straightforward path we ought to take to prepare ourselves for the Messianic Era; by learning the Torah's teachings about Moshiach and translating this knowledge in our daily lives. In the final Shabbat before the Rebbe suffered a stroke, his final instruction to us was Vayakehl: Jewish unity.*

*Moshiach represents the introduction of a revolutionarily measure of G-dly light and goodness to the world. It is the ultimate manifestation of blessing that will engulf the world, bringing perpetual peace in its wake. However, to be receptive to the phenomenal blessing of Moshiach we need peace and unity that is based on genuine Ahavat Yisrael.*

*The Rebbe's message of unity as the vessel for Moshiach echoes that of our Sages in the end of the Mishnah, symbolizing the end of our existence in exile: "G-d could not find a vessel that contains blessing other than peace, as it says, 'G-d will give His people strength; G-d will bless His nation with peace.'"*

*May we all take the Rebbe's message to heart and focus our collective energies on that which unites us. And may we march towards the final Redemption as one unified nation with boundless joy!*

J.I. Gutnick

Is Diversity Good for the Jews?

By Tzvi Freeman

**Question:** Can you see a time when all Jews will follow the same customs? For example, sephardic Jews eat *kitnyot* (legumes) on Passover, while I, as an Ashkenazic Jew, am not allowed to eat some kosher legumes and plain white rice on Passover. I believe that if some Jews say it is okay, there should be no problem with it for all Jews!

**Answer:** Once upon a time, in the isle of Ireland, many people thought it was a good idea for everyone on the island to grow the same sort of potato. That way, everyone could use the same farming techniques, everyone would plant and harvest at the same time and all potatoes would taste the same.

The result? One little bug came along, and within a week or so wiped out the entire crop of Irish potatoes. To this date, Ireland has never returned to its population size before that.

The Jewish People has managed to survive every sort of physical, social and spiritual blight, plague and persecution in the book for three and a half thousand years. Perhaps, just

maybe, diversity of custom might be a factor in their survival strategy.

Of course, the Torah sets limits. Just as the rules of harmony set limits on what makes harmonious music and the rules of colour and symmetry set limits on what makes an attractive design, so too Jewish law provides us the parameters to determine what is kosher and what is not, what is healthy for the soul and what is detrimental, what it is that G-d wants to see in His world and what He wants booted out. But within those guidelines, don't you think He might enjoy a little variety? Or just Irish potatoes all day long?

So each of us keeps the customs of our family and our community. They are very special, even sacrosanct to us. And at the same time, we appreciate and respect the customs of every other Jewish community and family. It just makes G-d's dinner plate that much more colourful.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

# It Happened Once...



A chassid came to see the Karliner Rebbe because he was depressed. "I don't know what to do," he said, "I'm not a good Jew, I don't study enough, I don't know enough, all I do is work, work, work. But I want to study more. Rebbe, I have a question. What do our great and holy rabbis study on Friday night?"

"Well," said the Karliner, "some study kabbalah."

"Oh," said the chassid, "that is not for me."

"No," said the Karliner, "that is not for everybody. But I am sure you study Talmud regularly? How does it go?"

"Rebbe, I am ashamed to admit it, I do not study Talmud regularly. You see, I grew up poor. I had to work from an early age to help out my family. I did not get much of an education. I find the Talmud very difficult."

"And if you study together with a friend?" asked the Karliner.

"My friends also work very hard, they don't know much either. Besides, I have no time to sit in the study hall for hours. What else can I do?"

"Working hard for your family is a mitzvah," said the Karliner. "You can study the weekly Torah reading with Rashi's commentary and with Midrashim."

"Oh no," said the man, "I always found Rashi very difficult. As I told you, I hardly got an education. I struggle through the parshah each week, but it doesn't uplift me. I am a failure. Besides, I am really not a scholar. I prefer to work with my hands. My family is big, I work long hours."

"No Jew is a failure," said the Karliner sternly. "Every Jew can learn. And every Jew should learn. I know something for you. You certainly will enjoy telling beautiful stories about our great sages and tzaddikim (righteous people) with your friends and with your family!"

"I am bad at telling stories," objected said the chassid. "I always forget the important points, I mix them up and I am not a good talker either. Please, I can't do that..."

The Karliner leaned back in his chair. He closed his eyes and he began to hum. He hummed and he swayed back and forth and the chassid listened in amazement. This was beautiful. What a melody! And he began to sing along. He never had felt so wonderful before, so close to G-d.

After a long time the singing stopped. The Karliner opened his eyes and looked at the chassid intently.

"Rebbe," the chassid exclaimed, "I understand. Oh yes, I do! I don't feel depressed any more. Thank you, thank you!"

And he went home and every Shabbat he sang the most beautiful niggunim (songs). But most of all he loved the niggun (song) of the Karliner Rebbe. And he did not feel depressed anymore.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**Every one with a willing heart brought earrings and nose rings, and rings, and bracelets, every article of gold. (Ex. 35:22)**

Earrings: Jewish parents must listen to the Torah's directives concerning the Jewish education of their children. They should also overhear their children's conversations with their friends, in order to guide them properly. Nose rings: Parents should develop a keen sense of "smell" to make sure their children's playmates are appropriate. Rings: Parents must be able to "point" their children in the right direction. Bracelets: In addition to explaining things in a pleasant manner, parents must also stand firm (symbolized by the arm) when it comes to Jewish education. The child should always feel that this is his parents' priority. (*Likutei Diburim*)

**They came, the men with the women, whoever was generous of heart, and every man who waved a wave offering of gold unto G-d. (Ex. 35:22)**

The Jews were so eager to make donations to the Sanctuary that they didn't stop to calculate the amount of gold they were contributing. Rather, they "waved it about" and gave with an open hand, like a rich benefactor who disburses his charity liberally. (*Be'er Mayim Chaim*)

**And on the Menora itself were four cups, shaped like almond blossoms, with its knobs and flowers. (Exodus 37:20)**

According to Maimonides' detailed drawings, the 22 cups of the Menora were "upside down," that is, the wider, open part of the cup was on the bottom, while the closed, narrower part was at the top. The windows of the Holy Temple were similarly inverted - narrower on the inside and wider on the outside. Why? The function of the Menora was to illuminate - not just its immediate surroundings, but the entire world. Light did not filter in from without; rather, light spread from the Temple outward. A regular cup is a vessel for drinking; an inverted cup pours its contents out for others - hence the symbolism of the Menora's cups. (*Likutei Sichot Vol. 21*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS VAYAK'HEL • 22 ADAR I • 26 FEBRUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:49 PM
	MINCHA:	8:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:30 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:17 AM
	MINCHA:	7:45 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:46 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:50 PM
	MAARIV:	8:40 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 25 FEBRUARY 2011



Begins	Ends
7:49	8:46
7:41	8:37
6:07	6:59
6:54	7:43
6:06	6:58
6:39	7:34
7:20	8:15
7:30	8:25
7:45	8:44
7:49	8:45
7:54	8:53

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

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