

Lamplighter

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Tzav, we read, "A perpetual fire shall always be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." The fire on the altar of the Holy Temple burned continually. It was never extinguished, as explained in the Jerusalem Talmud: "Perpetual-even on Shabbat; perpetual-even when the Jews were in a state of ritual impurity."

Every aspect of the physical Temple and its service has a counterpart in the spiritual Holy Temple that exists in the heart of every Jew. Accordingly, the verse "A perpetual fire shall always be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" applies in both the spiritual as well as the literal sense.

The "altar" of the Jew's inner Sanctuary is his heart. And just as there were two altars in the Temple in Jerusalem, an inner and an outer one, so too is there an inner and an outer aspect to the Jew's heart.

The "perpetual fire" mentioned in the verse was lit on the outer altar of the Holy Temple. This fire, in spiritual terms, refers to a Jew's enthusiasm and ardour for serving G-d, his excitement when performing mitzvot and the joy with which he does them. This fire must be open and apparent and burn "perpetually," at all times. The Jewish heart must always be consumed with a fiery love for G-dliness and holiness.

On Shabbat we are commanded to refrain from working. It is forbidden to engage in any labour or involve ourselves in business affairs. Nonetheless, the fire on the altar of the Holy Temple continued to burn - "even on Shabbat." No matter how elevated a Jew feels on the Sabbath, no matter how intensely he experiences the holiness of the day, he must never assume that it is unnecessary to serve G-d with a fiery enthusiasm. His passion and fervour must not be permitted to die out, regardless of his level of spirituality.

The same principle applies to the opposite, if, G-d forbid, a Jew should feel himself estranged from G-d and His commandments, like the person in a state of spiritual uncleanness who was prohibited from entering the Holy Temple. A Jew must never fall into despair. He must never be discouraged by his low spiritual standing and surrender the "perpetual fire" in his heart. For as we saw in the Holy Temple, even spiritual uncleanness is incapable of extinguishing its flames.

"Perpetual - even in a state of ritual impurity." A Jew who finds himself in a compromising spiritual condition must take special care to guard his Jewish spark, fanning its glowing embers till it erupts in a roaring conflagration that consumes his entire being. As the Magid of Mezeritch explained, doing so will ensure that "it shall not go out." The negative forces in his life will disappear automatically, extinguished by the holy flames and nullified into nothingness.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Do You Believe in Miracles?

By Mendy Herson

Do you believe in miracles?

Have you ever experienced any? Think back to this morning, to the moment when you first opened your eyes. Have you experienced any since then?

Before you answer, consider this:

You opened your eyes! Is that anything less than a miracle? How about your mobility, hearing, cognition? Are these things that "just happen," or are they cause for a swell of gratitude?

How about the loved ones in your life? Are they anything less than a miracle?

The real question is: How do you view your life?

Every life takes twists and turns. Today, some things will go right and some things won't. Which takes up more space in my eyes? The good or the not-so-good? How do I see my day/life as a whole?

When I genuinely appreciate the good, it helps me see my journey – in its *totality* – as a blessing.

Once I see I see my life as a gift, the aggravating bumps take on a different, more manageable, context. They become lessons, exercises in self-betterment, tests of character.

(I don't mean to diminish the pain of our individual problems; on the contrary, I pray that G-d give us all tranquillity and revealed good. But – until then – we need to find a productive way to deal with our obstacles).

This is the powerful lesson of Purim.

We have holidays like Passover, which celebrates the open miracles we experienced in the course of our Exodus from Egypt.

In our lives, that corresponds to the "over the top" moments of good fortune we may experience in the course of our lives. We each have our own special days, our individual "splitting of the sea," and hopefully turn to G-d and thank Him for our good fortune.

That's Passover. Purim is different.

Purim doesn't have any blockbuster miracle to celebrate. In the Purim story, things turned out positively, and we *chose* – we had the *consciousness and vision* – to see it as a miracle.

In the scope of your life, the "Passover miracles" will probably be few and far between. Most of your life is like today, a "regular" day with nothing "special" to celebrate; unless you have vision and choose to appreciate and celebrate.

Then, every day is a holiday.

Time to celebrate!



A Three Month Old Hamantash

Shortly before the Six-Day war the Lubavitcher Rebbe announced to his Chassidim that, since every Jew is essentially holy and that the commandment of Tefillin not only brings out this holiness but also puts fear into the heart of our enemies, therefore they should see to it that every Jew in the world, especially those in Israel and more especially the Israeli soldiers should put on Tefillin.

The idea worked; his Chassidim went into action and hundreds of thousands of Jews in Israel and elsewhere put on Tefillin, many for the first time in their lives. The rest is history; the ridiculously outnumbered Israelis miraculously destroyed all their enemies and a clear sign was given to the entire world that G-d is with us and wants us to inhabit the Holy Land.

But after the war the Rebbe told his followers to continue with the Tefillin campaign.

Our story begins shortly after the Six-Day war. A young Chassid from Australia came to visit the Lubavitcher Rebbe in his headquarters and Yeshiva at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn.

The students there implemented the Campaign by going out with Tefillin every Friday for a few hours to unaffiliated Jews. The Australian fellow, who we will call Avraham, announced that he would buy some refreshments for the road. He ran to the nearby grocery store, bought some kosher cookies, fruit and drinks and jumped into the car with a bunch of fellows that were going to a nearby hospital and they were off.

No one had eaten breakfast so he began pulling out food from his bag. But to his chagrin one thing he bought; a small box of Hamantashin (triangular cookies filled with chocolate or jam that are traditionally eaten on Purim) was avoided by everyone. Purim had passed almost three months ago!

Needless to say no one even opened the box and the Hamantashin were left behind in the car untouched while they went to do the work of the Rebbe.

They met with much success; many Jews in the hospital agreed to put on Tefillin, some for the first time in years, and some for the first time since they had left concentration camps in Poland.

But then they came up against Max.

Max must have been close to ninety and as soon as they entered his room he shouted, "What do you want here? Get out! Go jump in the lake!!" They explained that they were only asking people to put on Tefillin"

But he didn't let them finish. "I'm just as close to G-d as you! I don't need your boxes and your rituals!! I have my own commandments. Now get out!!" And he rolled over with his back to them."

The young Chassidim didn't want to leave on such a bad note so one of them held out some of the fruit the Australian had bought and said in the most friendly way he could muster up, "Hey, no hard feelings. We're leaving, we're leaving! Okay? But maybe you'd like a piece of fruit before we leave?"

"Fruit?" The old man turned to them and scoffed. "What, you think they don't have fruit here? Why don't you bring me something good? You know what? You want me to put on Tefillin? Well then" he said mockingly, "bring me a Hamantash!! I haven't had a Hamantash for forty years!! That's right! A Hamantash from Purim."

He was sure that the last thing they would have was a three month old cookie.

All the fellows stared silently and unbelievably at Avraham who got the hint and ran from the room like a jet. Less than five minutes later he returned, out of

breath, with the box of old Purim cookies that he had almost thrown into the garbage.

The old man couldn't believe his eyes as Avraham opened the box and handed him a Hamantash. He took it, examined it, sniffed it (it was still edible!) and even took a small bite (the fellows reminded him which blessing to make beforehand) and, for the first time in forty years, actually began to smile...!

The Chassidim broke out in a Purim song and danced.

"Nu?" The old fellow said as he rolled up his sleeve. "I don't know where you got that hamantashin but you got me in a corner! Where are the Tefillin?"

It was the beginning of a long friendship. Chassidim came to visit him every day thereafter until he announced that he bought a pair of Tefillin for himself.

A Short Story about a Long Life

The man was totally depressed.

He was standing by the side of the road speaking through the open window of my car. His wife had left him. He had no job. Each day was a burden, and worse yet, he was a burden to the world. In his words, he was "totally useless."

I tried to cheer him up with some words of hope, but he was firm in his belief. I left him with some optimistic thought and darted into a U-turn, happy to go on to something more cheerful.

Suddenly he screamed, "Stop!" I slammed on the brakes just in time to see an extremely fast moving car whiz by. I said to him: "If you hadn't called out, I would have been dead now. A few seconds ago you felt useless without purpose, and now you have saved my life! From this moment on, every good deed I do will also be credited to your account." His face lit up, as the many months of depression fell away.

There is a dawn, and even the darkest nights do pass. No one knows what the next moment holds and to deny hope is to deny the constantly demonstrated fact that, "This too will pass."

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ISSUE 974

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Our Sages relate the holiday of Purim with the Jews' maintaining in actual deed the Torah which they accepted at Mount Sinai. On a basic level, each person should realize that no matter how complete his service was until now, he must make an increase. This will lead to the ultimate elevation of the Jewish people. Haman and his entire household will be obliterated; the remembrance of Amalek will be wiped out entirely and all the seventy nations will assist in the ingathering of the exiles of the Jewish people who will proceed to the Third Holy Temple. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe, 13 Adar 5752 - 1991)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



What is the Secret of our People's Survival?

By the Grace of G-d
7th of Adar, 5713 [1953]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

... The story of Purim, as related in the Book of Esther, gives us a clear analysis of the "Jewish problem." Being dispersed over 127 provinces and lands, their own still in ruins, the Jews undoubtedly differed from one another in custom, garment and tongue according to the place of their dispersal, very much in the same way as Jews in different lands differ nowadays. Yet, though there were Jews who would conceal their Jewishness, Haman, the enemy of the Jews, recognized the essential qualities and characteristics of the Jews which made all of them, with or without their consent, into "one people," namely, "their laws are different from those of any other people" (Book of Esther 3:8).

Hence, in his wicked desire to annihilate the Jews, Haman seeks to destroy "all the Jews, young and old, children and women." Although there were in those days, too, Jews who strictly adhered to the Torah and Mitzvot, and Jews whose religious ties with their people were weak, or who sought to assimilate themselves, yet none could escape the classification of belonging to that "one people," and every one was included in Haman's cruel decree.

In all ages there were Hamans, yet we have outlived them, thank G-d. Wherein lies the secret of our survival?

The answer will be evident from the following illustration. When a scientist seeks to ascertain the laws governing a certain phenomenon, or to discover the essential properties of a certain element in nature, he must undertake a series of experiments under the most varied conditions in order to discover those properties or laws which pertain under all conditions alike. No true scientific law can be deduced from a minimum number of experiments, or from experiments under similar or only slightly varied conditions, for the results as to what is essential and what is secondary or quite unimportant would then not be conclusive.

The same principle should be applied to our people. It is one of the oldest in the world, beginning its national history from the Revelation at Mount Sinai, some 3300 years ago. In the course of these long centuries our people has lived under extremely varied conditions, in most different times and different places all over the world. If we wish to discover the essential elements making up the cause and very basis of the existence of our people and its unique strength, we must conclude that it is not its peculiar physical or intrinsic mental characteristics, not its tongue, manners and customs (in a wider sense), nor even its racial purity (for there were times in the early history of our people, as well as during the Middle Ages and even recent times, when whole ethnic groups and tribes have become proselytes and part of our people).

The essential element which unites our "dispersed and scattered people" and makes it "one people" throughout its dispersion and regardless of time, is the Torah and Mitzvot, the Jewish way of life which has remained basically the same throughout the ages and in all places. The conclusion is clear and beyond doubt: It is the Torah and Mitzvot which made our people indestructible on the world scene in the face of massacres and pogroms aiming at our physical destruction, and in the face of ideological onslaughts of foreign cultures aiming at our spiritual destruction.

Purim teaches us the age-old lesson, which has been verified even most recently, to our sorrow, that no manner of assimilationism, not even such which is extended over several generations, provides an escape from the Hamans and Hitlers; nor can any Jew sever his ties with his people by attempting such an escape.

On the contrary: Our salvation and our existence depend precisely upon the fact that "their laws are different from those of any other people."

Purim reminds us that the strength of our people as a whole, and of each individual Jew and Jewess, lies in a closer adherence to our ancient spiritual heritage which contains the secret of harmonious life, hence of a healthy and happy life. All other things in our spiritual and temporal life must be free from any contradiction to the basis and essence of our existence, and must be attuned accordingly in order to make for the utmost harmony, and add to our physical and spiritual strength, both of which go hand in hand in Jewish life.

With best wishes for a joyous Purim, and may we live to see a world free of Hamans and all types of Amalekites, the enemies of the Jews, of their body, soul and faith,

Cordially yours,

[Signed: Menachem Schneerson]

A WORD from the Director

There is a cryptic Midrash on this week's parsha: "The student of Rabbi Yosi ben Kisma asked him, 'When is the Son of David coming?' His response to them was, 'This is the law of the burnt-offering.'"

The connection between the coming of Moshiach and the law of the burnt-offering can be found in a comment in the Talmud on this same verse: "Whoever studies the laws of the burnt offering is as if he had actually brought the burnt offering." When we study the section of the Torah that deals with the offerings in the Temple that we cannot bring in the current day and age, it is as if we have actually made that offering.

Inherent in that statement are two lessons:

First, the study of Torah takes the place of those commandments that we cannot physically perform in the present period of galut since the destruction of the Temple.

Second, the study of these laws is the very catalyst that will help bring about the Redemption and the rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash. Studying Torah in general and, particularly, when we study the laws of Torah concerning Moshiach, Geulah (Redemption), the Beit Hamikdash and the offerings in the Temple, hastens the arrival of Moshiach and the final Redemption at which time we will see the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem amidst world peace, universal harmony and G-dly light.

This notion echoes that which our Sages told us that Mordechai—the hero of Purim—gathered 22,000 children and studied the laws of the Omer (barley) offering in the Temple. When Haman saw the way Jews were so conscientious about their return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash with its offerings, he realized that he would be defeated. The catalyst for the miracle of Purim was the hope and confidence in the imminent rebuilding of the Temple.

May our Torah study—particularly the study of the Torah's teaching about Geulah related subjects—hasten the fulfillment of the words of the Megillah: "The Jews had light, happiness, joy and honour." And as we say in the havdalah service: "so shall it be for us."

J.I. Gutnick

How is Purim celebrated? By Yossi Marcus

Purim is celebrated this Saturday night and Sunday the 19th - 20th of March.

1. Take a Scroll

Go to your local synagogue and listen as the whole story of Purim is read from a hand-written scroll of parchment called a Megillah. The megillah is read once on Purim eve and a second time the next morning, Purim day. During the reading, make sure to make lots of noise when the name of Haman is mentioned. You might want to get hold of a "gragger" a special noisemaker for the occasion. (If you are unable to make it to synagogue, contact your closest Chabad Centre. It's quite likely they can get someone to come read the megillah for you.)

2. Food Gifts

Send a gift of at least two ready to eat food-types to at least one friend on Purim

3. Gifts to the Poor

Give a monetary gift to at least two poor people. It is best to give directly to the poor on Purim but if that is not possible, give to a charity organization or place money in a charity box.

4. Eat

Some time on Purim day, have a great feast. The Talmud instructs us to get so "spiced" (drunk) that we know not the difference between blessed is Mordechai and cursed is Haman. Obviously this does not apply to minors or those sloppy with their drinks. The idea is to celebrate in a way that you're coasting on a plane that takes you beyond your natural inhibitions and constraints. Let loose and celebrate. (Remember: Purim practitioners drink responsibly. Don't drink and drive.)

5. Thank G-d

We add a short section of thanksgiving to the Amidah and to the Grace After Meals called "Al HaNissim".

CUSTOMS CORNER

It Happened Once...



There was a chassid who, whenever he was approached with the request for a donation for charity, would stick his hand into his pocket and take out a few coins. Then, with a hastily mumbled "just a minute...", he would again dig into his pocket and come up with another few coins.

Someone who noticed his custom once asked him: "Why do you always give in two installments? Could you not take out the full sum you want to give at once?"

"Every act of charity is a victory over our selfish nature," replied the chassid. "I just can't resist the opportunity to score two victories for the price of one..."

Chassidic master Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Stepinesht once observed his students playing checkers on Chanukah. "Can you tell me the rules of the game?" he asked. When none of the students spoke up, the Rebbe answered his own question:

"There are three basic rules. 1) Don't go backwards, 2) don't take two steps at one time, and 3) when you reach the top you have the power to go anywhere.

"Remember: these 'rules of the game' are for the rest of your lives!"

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

A perpetual fire shall be burning on the altar, it shall not go out (Lev. 6:6)


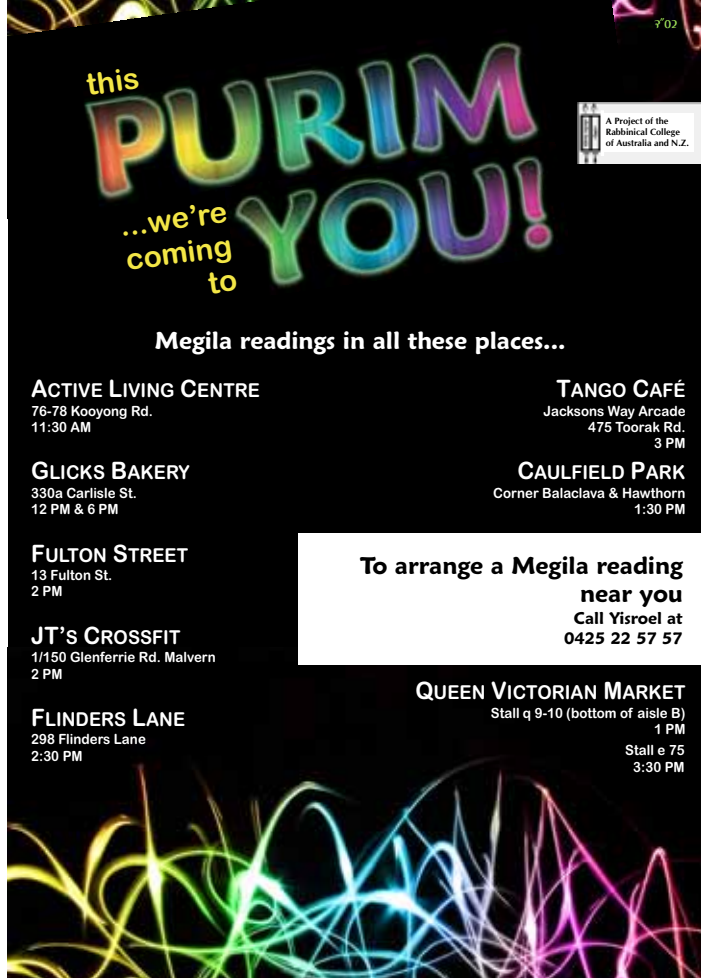
A Jew must be careful to preserve the spark of his attachment to G-d throughout the day, thus ensuring that the love he feels for the Creator can be easily rekindled at any time. If, however, the spark is allowed to cool off, the "fire" must be re-lit whenever he wishes to pray or study Torah. (*The Baal Shem Tov*)

One who reads the Megillah backwards has not fulfilled his obligation (Talmud, Megillah 17a)

On Purim we read the *Megillah* (Book of Esther), which recounts the events which led to the establishment of the festival. Among the laws which govern the reading procedure is a requirement that the chapters of the *Megillah* be read in order. In the words of the Talmud, "One who reads the *Megillah* backwards has not fulfilled his obligation."

Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, founder of the Chassidic movement, offered an alternate interpretation for this dictum: "One who reads the *Megillah* backwards"—one who reads it as a record of some past occurrence—has missed the point. The purpose of the festival is that "These days are to be remembered and enacted." Purim is more than an inspiring piece of history to be "commemorated"; it is an ongoing event, to be perpetually re-experienced and reapplied to our daily lives. (*Based on an address by the Rebbe, Purim 5742 (1982)*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 18 MARCH 2011	
Begins	Ends
7:19 MELBOURNE	8:14
7:14 ADELAIDE	8:08
5:45 BRISBANE	6:36
6:42 DARWIN	7:30
5:43 GOLD COAST	6:35
6:14 PERTH	7:07
6:53 SYDNEY	7:47
7:02 CANBERRA	7:56
7:11 LAUNCESTON	8:08
7:19 AUCKLAND	8:14
7:20 WELLINGTON	8:18

this PURIM ...we're coming to YOU!

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Megila readings in all these places...

ACTIVE LIVING CENTRE 76-78 Kooyong Rd. 11:30 AM	TANGO CAFÉ Jacksons Way Arcade 475 Toorak Rd. 3 PM
GLICKS BAKERY 330a Carlisle St. 12 PM & 6 PM	CAULFIELD PARK Corner Balaclava & Hawthorn 1:30 PM
FULTON STREET 13 Fulton St. 2 PM	
JT'S CROSSFIT 1/150 Glenferrie Rd. Malvern 2 PM	
FLINDERS LANE 298 Flinders Lane 2:30 PM	

To arrange a Megila reading near you
Call Yisroel at **0425 22 57 57**

QUEEN VICTORIAN MARKET
Stall q 9-10 (bottom of aisle B)
1 PM
Stall e 75
3:30 PM

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS TZAV • 13 ADAR II • 19 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:19 PM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:00 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:25 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:14 PM
	MEGILAH READING:	8:30 PM
SUNDAY - PURIM:	SHACHARIS:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	3:00 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	MAARIV:	8:05 PM

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.