

# LampLighter

4 Nissan  
Metzora  
**977**  
8 April  
5771/2011

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

One of the laws pertaining to the Biblical affliction of leprosy discussed in this week's Torah portion, Metzora, seems somewhat surprising.

If a person discovered an eruption, a bright spot, or a white hair indicative of the disease on part of his body, he was pronounced "impure" by the priest. If, however, the leprosy covered his entire body, he was pronounced pure. "[If] it is all turned white, he is pure," the Torah repeats.

How can it be that when the leprosy is confined to one area, the person is impure, yet once it has spread all over his body, he is pure? There are two possible explanations:

1) The sole reason he is considered pure is because it is G-d's will. According to logic, the person whose leprosy covers all of his flesh should be impure; G-d, however, has decreed that he is pure.

2) The law itself is logical. When the leprosy appears on only a part of a person's skin, it is obvious that he is suffering from some sort of malady. If it covers all of his skin, it is indicative of the individual's constitution and nature, not symptomatic of a disease.

The Talmud cites this law in connection to the concept of redemption, using the affliction of leprosy as a metaphor for sin. "The son of David [Moshiach] will not come until all authority has become heretical," i.e., when G-dlessness is officially sanctioned and widespread throughout the world.

Here we may ask the same question raised regarding leprosy: If the world will be entirely dark, how will it be possible for the light of Redemption to shine through? Why will the Redemption occur precisely when evil is so powerful that it has overcome the entire world?

Again, the above two explanations may be applied to solve our dilemma:

1) There is no logic involved. Moshiach will come when he does only because G-d will have decreed it thus; the Redemption will occur independent of the world's condition. An all-powerful and eternal G-d can certainly bring Moshiach no matter how degraded and evil the world becomes.

2) The fact that evil is ascendant throughout the entire world is proof that something unusual is taking place; were this not so, some pockets of good would certainly have remained. Rather, the absolute supremacy of evil indicates that all the negative forces have become externalized, as they have already been fully vanquished from within.

Thus, the phenomenon of "all authority has become heretical" is actually part of the world's purification, a process of separating good from evil that will ultimately culminate with Moshiach's revelation. At that time, the world will be sufficiently prepared for the light of Redemption.

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

## A Land Beyond Toys

By Shimon Posner

Reality. Something real. I can touch it, see it, feel it. It exists.

Unless you start getting into quantum physics kind of stuff.

Which I don't need to: I have enough real things around me.

Especially toys: big toys because I'm a big kid.

And lots of toys, because "the one who dies with most toys wins" and I want to win.

As long as I have enough toys nothing else really matters. People call me lucky.

As long as I'm sleeping a sweet dream nothing else matters. People call me lucky.

As long as I'm drunk, high, spaced nothing else matters. Unless I wake up.

And because I might wake up, those who aren't drunk and high feel sorry for me.

Are they right, or am I?

"Reality is an illusion brought about by the lack of drugs," a student of mine (a jazz player) quoted to me.

So then, if I stop feeling good because of all my toys, I am... lucky? Well yes, maybe.

Because there is something other than toys.

Whether they are dangerous, bad toys, (drugs, self-mutilation, gang-violence);

Harmless toys (sitcoms and now, some insist, body-piercing);

Or even vaguely worthwhile toys, whose main job is to keep me happy.

If I break through my toy-induced contentedness, I am lucky.

Now I wake up to a whole new world.

Whole: I have seen beyond a fractured, dimensional room to a seamless, timeless life.

New: even if this life was here the whole time, if I just noticed it, then it is new.

Not "new to me": new. My perception counts. Not for a little, but for everything.

He created this whole galaxy-filled, continent-filled, anxiety-filled, strife-filled existence only that I should be able to see through it all and see something different.

Something new.

(Torah speaks of the "new moon," not because the ancients believed that the moon actually disappeared on a monthly basis and came back, but now we know better thanks to the telescope in my backyard, but because if people, particularly Jews, specifically the Sanhedrin, say something, pronounce something, determine something, then from a Divine point of view that pronouncement, that determination, becomes reality.)

Sometimes I wake up to this whole new world by thinking deeply into it—something stirring inside of me. Often because one of my toys broke, forcing me to look elsewhere.

This week's entire parsha speaks of *tumah*, *tahara*, and *mikvah*. If you translate them as "impure," "pure" and "ritual bath" then you are sticking them into a toy world. They only resonate in a land beyond toys. And languages other than Hebrew and Yiddish don't operate as well in this other world. In this supra-rational view from above.

But I don't have to wait for a world transformation before getting to know *taharah* and *mikvah*; just rubbing shoulders with these concepts helps rub off the murky film that shrouds from view everything but toys.

Because, as the Kabbalah insists, we aren't superficial or dimensional. We only think toys are us. Just shake yourself a little and the real you wakes up. To the real world.



## The Kohen Pals

As told by Yerachmiel Tilles

Rabbi Shimon Freundlich, the Rebbe's 'Shliach' (emissary) in Beijing China, and his wife run a successful and very busy Chabad House catering to the Jews that live, visit or come to do business there. His approach is so genuinely friendly that everyone that comes in contact with him or spends any time in his Chabad House is effected.

In 2007, while on a visit to New York, he was invited to be the personal guest of honour at the Tish (public meal) of the Rebbe of Satmar in the Williamsburg district of Brooklyn. Satmer is a very large, wealthy, and influential group of Chasidim that was for a long time at odds with Chabad for various reasons. Nevertheless, because of the many Satmar Chasidim that had benefited from the Beijing Chabad House, the invitation was extended.

Hundreds of Satmar Chasidim were present as their Rebbe whispered something to one of his assistants, whereupon the man pounded on the table and announced: "The Rebbe requests that 'the Lubavitcher' guest should speak."

Rabbi Freundlich began by thanking the chasidim and their Rebbe for inviting him. He discussed an interesting idea from the weekly Torah portion, as is traditional and then asked permission to tell a story, something that had recently occurred in his Chabad House. The Rebbe nodded yes and he began.

"A lot of people come to visit our Chabad House for Shabbat, as you know. Well, one Shabbat evening a few months ago, an older man, maybe about eighty years old, who didn't look very religious, appeared accompanied by a younger man in his forties.

"The old fellow found a seat and just minutes after we began the prayers he put his face in his hands and began to cry. He kept it up for almost an hour; he would calm down for a few minutes, dry his eyes and blow his nose and then begin again.

"I quietly approached him and asked him if everything was all right. He told me not to worry. After the prayers he and his friend joined us all for the Shabbat evening meal.

"There were over fifty people there. I sat him next to me and after he calmed down he asked if he could speak. He wanted to explain the reason for his weeping.

I stood, and after only a few words I introduced him. He cleared his throat and began,

"My name is Sam Katz (pseudonym). The reason that I want to speak now is because I became very emotional this evening and I want to tell you about it. The last time I was in a Synagogue was over sixty years ago in Poland. I was a young man then when the Germans came and took the entire Jewish population of my city to Buchenwald. I was there for four years and in that time I lost everyone; my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, my friends; all killed, some of them before my eyes. But I survived and when the war ended I spent a few years searching for family or friends with no results. Finally, I moved to Australia.

"I was totally alone and angry at G-d. I managed to succeed at business and make a lot of money, and to marry and have children. But my wounds and anger were so deep that I swore to never go into a Synagogue or have anything to do with Judaism again. Nothing!

"But then just yesterday I came to China with my friend and he said we should visit the Chabad House. At first I didn't want to come of course, but he said that he'd been here before and the food is good and anyway there was no better alternative, so I shrugged and agreed.

"But as soon as the prayers began everything suddenly came back to me. I remembered how good it is to be a Jew; how proud and happy my father and mother were. Suddenly it was as if a wall of ice just melted. That's why I cried. I thought I'd never forgive G-d again, but now I feel like a small child that just wants to be home. All thanks to this Chabad House and the Rabbi here.'

The crowd clapped, wiped tears from their eyes and congratulated him for the beautiful story. Then one woman stood up and asked:

"Tell me Mr. Katz. If you were in

Buchenwald until the end, maybe you knew my father. His name is Naftali Kogen (pseudonym); he also was in Buchenwald."

Mr. Katz's jaw dropped, his eyes bolted open and he held his head in wonder "Naftali Kogen!?! What? Naftali is still alive?! Why we were the only two Kohanim in the camp and we were always together. We risked our lives for each other, and not just once. We were like brothers! Oy! Naftali!

"There was such total confusion in those days; everything was upside down. We were put in different recovery camps and got separated. I searched for him for a long time after the war but finally I gave up. I thought he was dead. Now you say he is alive and you are his daughter! It's a miracle!!"

Rabbi Freundlich finished his story by saying that after Shabbat a meeting was arranged between the two old friends, and this is only one example of the miracles that happen in Beijing thanks to the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

At that point, much to everyone's surprise, a head of a Yeshiva in the Satmar community by the name of Rav Yaakov Kaplan (pseudonym) who had listened intently to the story called out! He raised himself in his seat a bit and fell back, his face pale as chalk and his eyes staring wildly at the ceiling. The others were startled and those seated near him rose to help him, but he came to himself in just seconds. He stood up to his full height and yelled aloud to all those present, "Tell them that Yaakov is still alive!"

In the midst of an emotional hurricane, he continued to call out: "There weren't just two Kohanim in Buchenwald, there were three! Sam Katz, Naftali Kogan and me too!"

He was obviously experiencing some sort of emotional hurricane.

"There weren't just two Kohanim in Buchenwald." He continued, "There were three; Sam Katz, Naftali and .... Me!

"We stuck together like brothers.... more than brothers. But just a few days before the end of the war I was moved to another camp. They probably thought I was dead, and I almost was, and I was sure that they were. I never considered it possible that they could still be alive even now!"

Needless to say, soon after this story there was another joyous reunion.

Published by The Chabad House of Caulfield in conjunction with the Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA  
Phone (04) 3039-5770  
Email: lamplighter\_weekly@hotmail.com  
Web: rabbinicalcollege.edu.au/Lamplighter  
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ISSUE 977

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Torah prohibits a kohen (priest) from entering the Holy Temple if he has drunk a reviit (approximately 3.7 ounces) of wine. He must wait about 24 minutes before he can enter the Temple to perform his holy service. There is one opinion in the Talmud (Ta'anit 17a) that even today, when we do not have the Holy Temple, a kohen is still forbidden from drinking a reviit of wine. For, if the Third Holy Temple will suddenly be rebuilt, he would not be allowed to enter the Temple. From this we see that the entire Holy Temple could miraculously appear in fewer than 24 minutes! (*Likutei Sichot, Vol. 2*)

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



11th of Kislev, 5735 [1975]

Greeting and Blessing:

Your letter of the 22nd of Cheshvan reached me with some delay, and this is the first opportunity for me to acknowledge it.

Following the order of your letter, I wish to extend here my prayerful wishes that your wife - should have a normal and complete pregnancy, as well as a normal delivery of a healthy offspring in a good and auspicious hour.

With regard to the business venture about which you write, it is clear that the general conditions which affect the problem, as well as those specific ones that you mention in your letter, are of a nature which change from time to time.

Indeed, as you write, this is also the reason that caused the problem of financing. At any rate, it seems at this moment that the next step does not depend on you, as you don't seem to have any options to choose from.

The only suggestion I can make to you is one that may appear mystical, but it has been borne out by experience and proved quite practical. I have in mind the idea that when a Jew strengthens his bond with the Source of wisdom, which is in G-d, he gains wisdom and understanding also in mundane affairs, which helps him to decide what to do and what not to do in matters of business and the like.

Needless to say, by strengthening one's bonds with the Source of true wisdom and understanding, is meant the actual observance of the Mitzvoth [commandments] which G-d set forth in His Torah, of which it is written, "This is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of all the nations."

As mentioned above, the advice that you should make an effort to strengthen your commitment and actual fulfillment of the Mitzvoth, which will also help you make the proper decisions, is at first glance of a mystical nature. But looking at it from a practical point of view, we know that in everything else the important thing is the actual results which a certain measure brings about. If experience shows that doing such a thing brings such and such results in the vast majority of cases, then it is not so important whether one understands how and why those results are caused, for the important thing is the result itself.

The same applies also to Jews and their commitment to the Torah and Mitzvoth throughout the ages. Our long history has borne out the fact that the well-being of the Jewish people, as well as of the Jew as an individual, is intimately connected with his observance of the Torah and Mitzvoth in the daily life. And although the Torah and Mitzvoth should be observed for their own sake, as the commands of our Creator, it has been revealed that the Torah and Mitzvoth are also the channels and vessels to receive G-d's blessings for Hatzlocho [success] in the material aspects of life.

May G-d, whose benevolent Providence extends to each and every one individually, grant you the wisdom to make the right decisions, and to have Hatzlocho in all the above.

With blessing,

P.S. Noting that you are an attorney at law, I would like to add a point that is no doubt quite familiar to you. This is that in matters of a legal suit, the best and weightiest legal argument is when one can cite precedents of judgment in similar cases, and there is no need to substantiate and explain the reason for the judgment further since the judgement speaks for itself.

P.P.S. Regarding the project in Nicaragua in general - in light of the world economic and political situation, it does not appear to be a practicable and realistic project in the near future.

## A WORD from the Director

*One of the strangest phenomena in the Torah is the house afflicted with tzara'at; a discoloration of the stones of the house. The house owner would inform a Kohain, "there appears to me to be something like a lesion in the house." The Kohain would then have to determine whether it was truly tzara'at, for which the Torah prescribes a process of purification.*

*Rashi takes note of the indirect way he would present his discovery to the Kohain, "like a lesion." He should never state categorically that he saw a lesion. He must wait for the Kohain to do that.*

*Why this ambiguity?*

*As mentioned last week, this unusual affliction was a result of our speaking ill of others; the abuse of the power of speech. One must therefore not only avoid speaking ill of others, but also adopt the most refined way of speaking. The extreme form of sensitivity that we apply to speech helps us to become more refined in all the other areas of life. The person whose speech has been tainted must be even more conscientious in avoiding any use of negative language.*

*In addition, when we examine our own lives, although we should not ignore our deficiencies, neither should we exaggerate them. Thus the owner of the house—who is undergoing the cathartic process of examining his house, both literally and figuratively to cleanse himself from the abuse of G-d's gift of speech—should not be unequivocal in declaring himself an afflicted soul. Wait for the benevolent Kohain to identify and excise that fault with surgical precision, motivated by love.*

*In exile, our "house," figuratively speaking, seems to be afflicted with serious lesions. We are not, however, to be too harsh in our own self-condemnation. We must also see the good in ourselves and in our houses. As our Rebbe taught us, just as it is wrong to deny our faults so must we not deny or minimize our virtues.*

*Honest self-appraisal combined with seeing and activating the positive are the catalysts that will rid our houses of the tzara'at scourge of exile, with the imminent arrival of Moshiach and the final Redemption.*

J. I. Gutnick

### Shabbat Meals

On the weekly Shabbat, we rise above the workweek's distractions and frustrations, and focus on higher goals, such as G-d and family. We delight in the Shabbat by partaking of three meals, when families can bond and be inspired. The first two – Friday night and Shabbat lunch – are lavishly prepared, with sumptuous foods and special dishes. The third, taken towards Shabbat's end, is usually a lighter repast.

#### The Preliminaries:

The table is bedecked with an elegant tablecloth, Shabbat candles, the "special" dishes, and two covered challahs. The first two meals open with the *kiddush*, recited over a cup of wine.

After the *kiddush*, ritually wash your hands for bread. The head of the household takes the challahs, scores one of them with a knife, says the *Hamotzie blessing*, and slices a loaf. Everyone eats a piece of challah dipped in salt.

#### The Food:

Spurging on the Shabbat meals is a virtue. It's a mitzvah to indulge in fine wine and tender meat.

The traditional Shabbat meal is multi-coursed, and includes fish, soup, meat or poultry, and side dishes. (Serve fish and meat/poultry as separate courses, on separate cutlery and dishes.) For the lunch meal, it is customary to eat "*cholent*," a casserole-like dish prepared before Shabbat and kept warm overnight on the stove.

#### Song and Inspiration:

Enjoy quality family time. Get caught up in singing spirited Jewish songs. The special, holy feeling they imbue is indescribable. Share words of Torah. Prepare a thought for discussion, perhaps something on the week's Torah reading. Capture your children's imagination with a Jewish story.

Conclude with Grace After Meals.

*Want an invite to a Shabbat meal? Your local Chabad rabbi will be happy to accommodate you!*

## CUSTOMS CORNER

# It Happened Once...



In 1831, the year of the Polish uprising, Polish patriots organized a rebellion against their Russian overlords.

In a small town near Kovno, there lived a Jewish innkeeper. The innkeeper, whom we'll call Joseph, was well known as an honest, G-d-fearing Jew and members of the Polish nobility frequently visited his inn for good food and wine.

One late Friday afternoon, a Russian General arrived in town with his troops. The General had heard about the reputation of the local Jewish innkeeper, and sent his aide to him.

The aide found the inn but it was closed; the sun had already set. The aide went around to the private entrance and knocked on the door. The innkeeper, dressed in his Shabbat clothes, welcomed the aide into his house.

"The General sent me to buy some of your best wine," the aide said, taking out a roll of money.

"I am sorry indeed," Joseph replied. "We are now celebrating the Sabbath and I do not do any business on this holy day."

Nothing the aide said would change the mind of the loyal Jew, and he therefore returned to the General empty-handed.

The General flew into a rage and immediately sent two soldiers to warn the innkeeper to sell him some wine.

Some time later, the soldiers returned to the thirsty general - without wine.

"Why didn't you bring me wine?" the general roared.

"The Jew said he could not sell any wine to anybody on his Sabbath. However, he sent the key to his wine cellar, and suggested that perhaps the General might wish to help himself to any of the wine as his guest!" the soldiers reported.

"What a queer Jew that is!" the general thought. "He would not sell me a bottle of wine because of the Sabbath, but he is prepared to give away all his wine." The general set out to meet the Jew in person.

When the general entered Joseph's house, the Shabbat atmosphere was everywhere. The table was covered with tasty dishes and the candles shone brightly. Joseph and his family were all dressed in their Sabbath clothes and their faces were all aglow with delight. In fact, the Jewish home and all of its inhabitants looked as if they were entertaining a royal guest. And perhaps they were, for the Sabbath is referred to in Jewish teachings as the "Shabbat Queen."

The general, who had burst into the house with the intention of teaching this Jew a lesson, felt his anger melt away and very politely asked him why he refused to sell him wine. "Don't you know that refusing to sell provisions to the army in times of war is a tantamount to rebellion?"

"Your Highness," said Joseph, "to keep the Sabbath day holy is one of the Ten Commandments given to us by G-d, the Supreme King of Kings. His command we must obey before any command by human kings and princes. However, we shall indeed consider it a great honour if you would join us as our Sabbath guests."

The general accepted the offer and was greatly impressed with Joseph and his family. At the end of a wonderful evening, he warmly shook hands with

his host and departed in a happy mood.

Several years later, Joseph was falsely accused of taking part in a new Polish conspiracy to overthrow the Russians and drive them out of Poland. He was arrested and thrown in jail.

One day, as Joseph sat in his prison cell reciting Psalms, the heavy door of his cell opened and a high official appeared. The official was the Chief Inspector of the prisons and was on a routine check-up of the prison. When the Inspector approached Joseph's cell, he gazed at him, and then exclaimed, "Why, this is my good friend, Joseph the innkeeper. Good Heavens, what are you doing here?"

Joseph looked up in astonishment and realized that this Inspector was none other than the General whom he had entertained in his house that Friday night so long ago!

The general, now Chief Inspector, vouched for the innocence of the Jewish innkeeper and assured the investigating committee that he had nothing to do with the conspiracy.

The Chief Inspector's words had a great influence and Joseph was immediately sent home free. "How did this miracle take place?" his wife asked in astonishment and delight.

"The Queen intervened in my behalf," Joseph said.

"What Queen?" his wife asked.

"The Sabbath Queen, of course," replied Joseph.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**This is the law concerning the metzora leper. (14:2)**

Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel told his servant: "Go buy me something good from the market." He went and bought a tongue. Rabbi Shimon said: "Go buy me something bad from the market." The servant returned with another tongue. Said Rabbi Gamliel: "I told you to buy something good and something bad and you returned with the same thing. How is this possible?" Answered his servant, "From the tongue comes good and bad. When it is good there is nothing better than it, but when it is evil, there is nothing more evil than it." (*Vayikra Raba*)

**The Torah portion is called metzora** - "leper" - though it deals primarily with the purification process of an afflicted individual. This teaches us that the affliction was not only a punishment for slander, but to cause one to repent. Accordingly, the leprosy was actually part of the purification process, for once detected one was prompted to change. (*Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS METZORA • 5 NISSAN • 9 APRIL

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:47 PM
	MINCHA:	6:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:30 PM
<b>SHABBOS MORNING:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:31 AM
	MINCHA:	5:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:42 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	6:00 PM
	MAARIV:	6:45 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 8 APRIL 2011

Begins	Ends
5:47	6:42
5:44	6:39
5:21	6:13
6:28	7:17
5:20	6:11
5:47	6:40
5:25	6:18
5:32	6:27
5:36	6:33
5:49	6:44
5:45	6:43



Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נבג"מ ז"ע

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