

# LampLighter

6 Tammuz  
Balak  
**990**  
8 July  
5771/2011

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The period of the Jews' exile began, to a certain degree, with the destruction of the First Holy Temple in Jerusalem, and will only end with the arrival of Moshiach. Although the Temple was rebuilt and existed for a long time, this period is also considered part of exile, for the Second Temple was missing five key elements that the First Temple had.

Bilaam, the gentile prophet, alluded to the years of exile in his prophecy in this week's Torah portion, Balak. "He crouches and lies down as a lion and as a leopard; who shall make him rise up?" During the period of exile, the Jews have assumed a position of "crouching" and "lying down," as if they are bowed and resting. The Jewish People is not in full possession of its faculties and powers, and is bent and slumbering. Bilaam's words accurately describe the period of exile.

But even as the Jews are in exile, they are still likened to the lion and the leopard. When a lion crouches down, it is not in a position of weakness; the animal retains its power and potential to pounce even in this position. It is the lion's desire to lie down; it was not forced to by an outside power.

Even during the long exile among the nations, the gentiles do not have true control over the Jewish People. For, the exile only applies to worldly affairs; the exile has no influence over a Jew's performance of Mitzvot (commandments). There is nothing in the world that can prevent a Jew from serving G-d and fulfilling His commandments.

The Previous Rebbe said: "Only the body of the Jew was subjected to exile and domination by the nations; the soul was not. It is our duty to make it clear to all that strangers have no authority over anything having to do with our religion, with Torah, Mitzvot, and Jewish customs, and nothing in the world can change this fact."

It can sometimes appear to us that the world does indeed rule over the "lion" and the "leopard" - over the Jewish nation. This is because of the concealment of G-dliness which is characteristic of the exile, making it possible for us to be deceived into thinking that others can truly rule over the Jewish People. That is why, from time to time, G-d shows us open miracles and wonders - to remind us that "there is nothing else but Him."

These miracles, which occur in every generation, include those signs and wonders which are revealed through the righteous and serve to dispel the darkness and reveal the holiness in the world. They allow us to see, with our own eyes, that the Jewish People are indeed "lions" and "leopards," though "crouched" and "lying down." In reality, the Jew remains a free agent and the Galut (exile) has no dominion over his true essence.

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

## Balak's Bad Day

*By Levi Avtzon*

Moses was having a bad day. He was about to wage war against Og, king of the Bashanites, and he was afraid. After all, Og had long ago done a favour for Abraham, informing him of his nephew Lot's kidnapping, and Moses was afraid that this good deed would stand Og in good stead and turn the tide of victory against the Jewish people.

Although afraid "in his heart," Moses put on a brave face. "Righteous people are in control of their hearts." There was nothing to gain by sharing his worries with the people, so he kept them to himself.

The result: the Jewish people were calm and relaxed and were, indeed, victorious in battle.

On the flip side:

Balak was having a bad day. The Moab State Department had just sent him a memo that the two mighty kings in the region, Og and Sichon, had been defeated and killed by the invading Hebrews. "And Balak saw all that the Jews have done to the Emorites."

Consumed with panic, he called a press conference. With a pale face and broken voice, he broke the news of the invasion to all the citizens of Moab, hyping them up about the "Jewish problem." The heart was in control of the mind.

The result: "And [the nation of] Moab was afraid."

What was there to gain by terrifying the people? Nada. The people of Moab didn't take up arms or send messengers of peace. They just sat at home biting their nails.

Although Balak and his advisors did summon the prophet Balaam to curse the Jews, that had nothing to do with the rest of the citizens of Moab! So why did Balak frighten his nation? "Wicked people are in the control of their hearts."

Our emotions are who we are. They can either turn molehills into mountains, causing us to lose control and creating unhealthy emotions such as hate and jealousy—Balak.

Or, when controlled by the mind, they can fill us with healthy emotions such as love and devotion to G-d, family, community and endangered dolphins—Moses.

Let's be a Moses.



## Shabbat Candles in Auschwitz

By Olga Fin

I was born and grew up in an Orthodox home in the USSR, in the Carpathian Mountains (before this place was Hungary). We lived a double life. At home one thing, and in the school something different.

My parents were telling different stories about life before the war and during the war, specifically about the concentration camp. My mother was in two concentration camps. The first one was Auschwitz and the second one was Bergen Belsen.

They arrived in Auschwitz on the second day of Shavuot, and from that day they were counting the days to Shabbat. Every Friday she made two little candles from the margarine she saved and did not eat, and took some threads from the bottom of her dress and lit them. My mother encouraged all the other women in the barrack to do the same, and they all did it, so the barrack was lit every Friday night with these candles. She never lost her faith, and even after the war she was a very religious lady. She claimed that she survived only due to her Shabbat candles.

When in 1972 my parents made *aliyah*, moved to Israel, they went from house to house to teach the Russian Jews how to pray and how to light Shabbat candles. This was very important to my parents. I was taught from childhood how important Shabbat candles are.

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## Not to Miss A Friday Lighting

By Eli & Malka Touger

In 1974, the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, launched his famous Shabbat candle-lighting campaign to encourage every Jewish woman and girl to light Shabbat candles. As part of the campaign, the Lubavitch Women's Organization organized a series of radio ads encouraging women and girls to fulfil this mitzvah. Because federal law required that every ad contain a commercial aspect, the ads mentioned that if the listeners sent one dollar to the candle lighting division of the Lubavitch Women's Organization at 770 Eastern Parkway, they would be sent a special set of Shabbat candlesticks.

Thousands of these candlesticks were distributed. At times, people would err, and instead of addressing their letters to the Lubavitch Women's Organization, they would address them directly to the Rebbe (whose office is at that address).

On one occasion, a woman living on Ocean Avenue in Brooklyn wrote to ask for the Shabbat candlesticks. She, too, addressed her letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe received the letter in the Friday mail. On Friday afternoon, he had his secretary, Rabbi Binyomin Klein, call Mrs. Esther Sternberg (who ran the Shabbat candle-lighting campaign) and ask her to see to it that this woman had the opportunity to light Shabbat candles *that very Friday*.

Mrs. Sternberg is not one to take a request from the Rebbe lightly. With 45 minutes left before the start of Shabbat (once Shabbat has begun, the Shabbat candles can no longer be lit), she tried to get the woman's phone number, but was told it was unlisted. Then, noting that the woman's address was not far away, she resolved to deliver the candlesticks personally. If the woman was not home, she would leave them with a neighbour.

Taking two of her daughters along, Mrs. Sternberg drove (flew!) to the woman's apartment. She rang the bell and knocked several times, but there was no answer. She tried several of the neighbour's apartments, but they too did not answer. Finally, a woman from an apartment down the hall replied that, yes, she knew the woman who had asked for the candlesticks. She was an elderly lady, said the neighbour, and hard of hearing. That's probably why she had not answered her bell; she hadn't heard it ringing.

And so Mrs. Sternberg, her two daughters, and the neighbour all knocked hard on the woman's door. Eventually, an elderly Jewish lady answered. She was grateful to see visitors, and even more grateful when she found that she would be able to light Shabbat candles that week.

Mrs. Sternberg was happy to give the woman the candlesticks, but couldn't help wondering: The woman seemed sincerely committed to the mitzvah; why then hadn't she lit candles before? "Don't you have candle holders of your own?" she asked.

"Of course I have Shabbat candles," the woman told Mrs. Sternberg, taking her into her kitchen and showing her a large silver candelabra on top of one of the cabinets. "But when my children moved me here," she explained, "they put my candelabra up there. Neither I nor any of my neighbours can reach it! That's why I haven't been able to light." (Apparently, this woman mistakenly thought that Shabbat candles need to be lit in a ritual candelabra.)

One of Mrs. Sternberg's daughters climbed up and brought down the woman's candlesticks. And Mrs. Sternberg was able to report to the Rebbe that the woman welcomed the Shabbat into her home by lighting candles in her own candelabra that very Friday.

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ISSUE 990

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Create the Right Environment

... Quality of life depends on the quality of the air one breathes... The first general step in healing is to purify the atmosphere. (HaYom Yom, 11 Teves)

One of the most basic achievements that will be reached during the Messianic Era will be the spiritual purification of the environment. In order to bring this achievement about, we must do whatever we can to purify our own environment and create a wholesome spiritual atmosphere. We do this primarily by learning, thinking, and speaking words of Torah.

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## Does Chasidism Shun the World?

5724

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Toronto 19, Ont., Canada

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter.

It is surprising to me to note in your letter that it is your impression as though Chassidim do not participate in the outside world, etc. As a matter of fact, the reverse is true, for there is hardly any sphere or area in the world at large which Chassidim exclude from their interest. This attitude is the direct result of the emphasis in Chassidut on the true concept of Monotheism. The Chassidic concept of the Oneness of G-d goes much further than the generally accepted view that there is only One Deity and no more, but that there is only One G-d and nothing else. For, inasmuch as G-d's word (whereby he brought the world into existence) constantly and without interruption creates and vitalizes the whole Universe and every particular of it, and without this creative force, which is the true essence of every existing thing, nothing could exist, it follows that there is no true reality other than G-d, and there is actually nothing but G-dliness. Chassidus emphasizes that it is one of the central aspects of man's purpose in life to establish this truth and to spread it to the utmost extent of his influence. This is not merely an idea, but a way of life which is expressed in the daily life, and which permeates the whole inner being of the Chossid.

A corollary of this viewpoint is another fundamental principle in the teachings of Chassidut, namely that Divine Providence extends to each and every particular in the Creation, not only to each individual of the human race, but each particular in the realm of the animal world, the vegetable and even the mineral, as is well known to everyone who studies Chasidut.

Thus it is fundamental for the Chassidic philosophy and way of life not to exclude any part of the world from its sphere of interest.

As for your writing that you have not come across any names of Chassidim who participate in certain movements, such as civil rights, etc., this is also surprising, inasmuch as many have taken an active part in this and other constructive movements. Many more, however, among those who participate in such constructive movements do so while avoiding publicity and headlines in the press.

With blessing,

# A WORD from the Director

This coming week, on the 12th of Tamuz (this year Thursday, July 14) we commemorate two events in the annals of Chabad history. It is the birthday of the previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. The 12th of Tamuz is also the date on which Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was released from imprisonment by the Bolshevik government.

When the Rebbe was taken into custody one month prior to his release, he knew that he was being arrested on trumped up charges of anti-government activities. His real crime: teaching Torah and bringing Jews closer to Judaism.

Before being taken off to the infamous Spalerno Prison, the Rebbe said: "I demand permission to put on Tefilin and pray and also that kosher food be made available to me from my own home."

He was answered, "You may take your Tefilin, religious books, paper and pen, and I give you my sincere assurance that no one will disturb you from your prayers, from reading and from writing. This very day you will return home."

The Rebbe knew that these promises were lies, just as all the charges upon which he was being imprisoned were lies. Indeed, he informed his family before being taken away, "Ask all of my followers to recite Psalms during the first days."

Once in jail, the Rebbe was, in fact, not given his Tefilin. He went on a hunger strike until he received all of his religious articles.

The Rebbe's sentence was commuted from the death sentence to ten years of hard labour in the Arctic, and then to three years of exile. After just a few days in exile, he was told that this punishment, too, had been commuted, and he was to leave Russia immediately.

The Rebbe left Russia a broken man physically, having been tortured in Spalerno. But they were not able to touch him spiritually in the least. When he settled in New York, some 20 years later, he set about establishing the first Jewish Day Schools in the United States. Many other groups followed the lead of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, thus ensuring that the flame of Judaism remains alive.

J. I. Gutnick

### Bedtime Shema

Psychologists who study dreams tell us that the last five conscious minutes of our day determine what we'll be dreaming about at night. And we all know that how we slept at night determines a lot of how we perform the next day.

That's one good reason to get into the "Bedtime Shema" routine. Find it in your prayer book. Do it like this:

**Relax** Don't try to rush through this like you did rush-hour traffic. Pause. Let go of the maddening thoughts of the day. Empty your mind.

**Re-examine** Let the highlights of your day flash through your mind. Look for the sparks of beauty you came to this world to find. Discard the dross, the mess-ups. Next time, you'll do it right.

**Refresh** You want those mess-ups to be forgotten. The best way to accomplish that is by forgetting the mess-ups of others that affected you. As Rava, the Talmudic sage, would say, "Those who ignore the impulse to get even, all their sins are ignored in the heavenly record." That's why we preface the Bedtime Shema with a short paragraph composed by Rabbi Isaac Luria, declaring

our forgiveness for all who may have slighted us.

**Refocus** Now you say the *Shema Yisrael*, declaring that behind all that happened today there is only One G-d. Say it with intense mental focus and it cleanses the soul.

**Repent** Ponder G-d's kindness that allows you to start each day anew. Say the *vidui* (confession) prayer that follows the Shema. Move your soul closer to Him and further from that which ties you down.

**Re-entrust** Finish with the *Hamapil* blessing, requesting a peaceful night, entrusting your soul into G-d's faithful hands, and praising Him for that which you witnessed today, that His glory illuminates the entire world. Once you've said that blessing, avoid food or drink until you've reawakened.

Having difficulty falling asleep? Try saying, thinking or visualizing the words of Shema.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

# It Happened Once...



The following is excerpted from the diary of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe at the time of his arrest in Communist Russia

"Hurry into the car!" shouted an agent of the GPU (the dreaded Soviet secret police, later called the NKVD, the MGB, and finally the KGB).

I replied in Yiddish: "That's one of the things which in Russia's current situation one can't miss.... Even those who arrest others may rest assured that their turn, too, will come. One mustn't hurry; no one is going to miss out!"

I put on my coat, received farewell blessings from my revered mother, my wife, and my daughters Chanah, Chayah Mushka and Sheina, before I set out for the Spalerka prison.

I then said goodbye to the household staff.

I kissed the *mezuzah* at the entrance to my home and sat down on a bench, while armed henchmen surrounded me from all sides in keeping with prison regulations.

One travel bag contained my [3 pairs of] *tefillin* (of Rashi, Rabbeinu Tam and Shimusha Rabbah), my *tallis*, and a *gartel*; a *Siddur*, *Tehillim* and *Tanya*; as well as a change of clothes, a handkerchief, some food, Valerian, and a small pillow. This bag, marked with the initial letters Sh. Sh., was bought and used by my revered father for all his travels from the year 5673 [1913]. I was also given a blanket.

Not wanting to carry these things myself, I handed the bag to one of the guards. Lulav [of the Lulav family of Riga, and aide to the agent in charge, Nachmanson, who was a Jewish lad from Nevel whose father used to visit Lubavitch; he himself had gone to school in Nevel] sprang forward and said: "Give it to me; I'll carry it. Chassidim remain chassidim! My grandfather carried parcels for your grandfather, and I want to carry your parcel."

Taking it from his hand I said: "Your grandfather was a chassid, so he had the good fortune to carry my grandfather's parcels wherever my grandfather went; you want to carry this parcel so that I should go (G-d forbid) where you want me to go. No, that cannot be! I'm not going to go your way. You're right: chassidim remain chassidim...!"

I returned the bag to the hands of the guard, kissed the *mezuzah*, and left, with armed guards surrounding me on all sides.

On the way down the stairs I could hear the entreaties of my family: "Let us accompany my son; ...my husband; ...our father!" As I reached the waiting vehicle in the courtyard I turned around and saw an armed guard barring their way. I called out aloud to Lulav: "Why don't the guards let them accompany me? Do you have permission to prevent that?"

My self-assured words made an impact. Lulav ordered the guard to leave, and allowed my family to walk together with me. I was even able to exchange a few words with my son-in-law, R. Shmaryahu Gourary.

The courtyard was quiet. There was no one to be seen apart from my family, the guards, and their officers, Nachmanson and Lulav.

"Here, at the entrance," said Nachmanson with a smirk, "you will have to kiss each other goodbye, as aristocrats are accustomed to do, because I will not allow you to go out into the street."

I turned to him: "For a high-ranking official who demands a signature to testify that he visited and searched the house with all due politeness and respect, it is inappropriate to prevent family members from accompanying someone dear to them."

"Go!" roared Nachmanson. "It seems that you can't yet get used to the idea that you are under arrest and have to take orders from your commander!"

"Who is the commander," I asked, "and what is the command? You can see that with all your tough words you are not going to intimidate me. I ask you again: Fulfil my family's request!"

He immediately stepped aside and we all went out to the street.

The van was surrounded by armed men. Inside sat a dignified foreign traveller of about forty, his face white as snow, and his eyes filled with terror. An armed guard faced him.

I caught sight of the big clock in the window of the watchmaker over the road, its face as white as the faces of my family. Its crow-black digits told me that it was 2:20 am [Wednesday, 15 Sivan, 5687 (1927)].

In the course of the last two hours and ten minutes, I thought, how much pain, fear and distress had my family undergone! And the cause? - A false libel; an informer; and my efforts for the preservation of Judaism, of Torah study!

After we had stood together for a few moments, one of the guards helped me up and I took the seat in the rear that I had been shown. Nachmanson sat next to the driver. Lulav sat in the back seat facing me. He held his revolver in hand, no doubt in keeping with prison regulations.

"Be well," I called out to my family, "and keep your spirits strong! May G-d grant that we all meet soon in good health!"

And off we drove.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**You shall see but the utmost part of them, and shall not see them all.** (*Deut. 23:13*)

It is only if one looks at a "part" of a Jew, a small detail of his make-up, that one might notice any flaws; if he is considered as a whole, no defects will be visible. (*Ohel Torah*)

**Lo, it is a people that shall live alone, and among the nations shall not be reckoned.** (*Num. 23:9*)

When the Jewish people are "alone," separate and distinguished from the gentiles, their existence is secure and they are respected by the nations. If, however, they begin to assimilate and copy their non-Jewish neighbours, they "shall not be reckoned" - they lose their importance and high esteem. (*Divrei Eliezer*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS BALAK • 7 TAMMUZ • 9 JULY

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:57 PM
	MINCHA:	5:05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:40 PM
<b>SHABBOS:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:59 AM
	MINCHA:	4:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:58 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:05 PM
	MAARIV:	5:55 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 8 JULY 2011

Begins	Ends	
4:57	MELBOURNE	5:58
5:00	ADELAIDE	5:59
4:49	BRISBANE	5:45
6:16	DARWIN	7:08
4:46	GOLD COAST	5:43
5:08	PERTH	6:06
4:42	SYDNEY	5:41
4:47	CANBERRA	5:46
4:37	LAUNCESTON	5:42
5:00	AUCKLAND	6:01
4:47	WELLINGTON	5:51



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.