

# LampLighter

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Masei, Moses recounts the Jewish people's travels through the wilderness. In connection with their encampment at Mount Hor, the Torah provides us with the details of Aaron's passing.

Actually, this is the second time we are told of Aaron's passing. The first account appears earlier, in the portion of Chukat, which relates the Jews' journey toward Mount Hor.

However, there is a difference in the two accounts. The first account does not elaborate; the second informs us that Aaron died "at the commandment (literally "at the mouth") of the L-rd," i.e., that he died by Divine kiss. Additionally, we are told the date of his passing ("in the fifth month, on the first day of the month" - the first day of the month of Av), the year ("in the fortieth year after the coming out of the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt"), and the age Aaron had attained at the time of his passing ("And Aaron was 123 years old when he died at Mount Hor").

An obvious question is raised: Why does the Torah wait until the second reference to Aaron's passing to fill us in on all the details? Indeed, including this information in the portion of Chukat would have seemed a more logical choice, as the events it relates are chronologically closer to the actual time of Aaron's passing.

One of the explanations offered is that the Torah portion of Masei is always read on or around Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, the Yartzeit (anniversary of the passing) of Aaron the priest.

On a spiritual level, the original event that occurred on a particular date is "reawakened" and "relived" each and every year. Accordingly, the Torah relates the details of Aaron's passing precisely in Masei, as the week in which it is read coincides with the actual date of Aaron's death.

From this we learn the importance of studying the daily Torah portion as instituted by the Previous Rebbe - Chumash (the Five Books of Moses with Rashi's commentary), according to the division of the seven Torah readings of the forthcoming Shabbat, i.e., the first reading on Sunday, the second on Tuesday, etc.

Just as Masei is relevant to the season in which it is read, so is each portion that corresponds to a given day specific and timely; it pertains to that particular day and should therefore not be postponed.

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

## Milestones or Tombstones

By Mendel Kalmenson

This is how the closing Torah portion of Numbers opens: "These are the journeys of the children of Israel..."

Forty-two encampments of the Israelite camp are then enumerated, documenting their travels from Egypt to the banks of the Jordan.

But why are these forty-two pit stops referred to as "journeys," rather than "encampments"? Didn't they serve primarily as places of rest, not just points of departure? And weren't each of these destinations milestones reached, not just locations left behind?

Herein lies one of Judaism's revolutionary teachings.

It's not the milestones we reach, but the stones we encounter along the mile, that define us, and make us who we are.

In other words: The journey itself is part of the destination.

Ironically, it's often the achievements placed under our belts that squeeze the air of progress out of us. And it's the honorary medals that hang around our necks that choke and stifle our growth.

Rather than define us, accomplishment can confine us.

A principal who was active in growing his Hebrew school's enrolment once wrote a very proud letter to the Rebbe listing all of his successes.

The Rebbe responded. Between his blessings and remarks, he also added in one word: "Success?"

The principal was stunned! A short while later found him in the Rebbe's room for a private audience.

"What was the comment on my letter supposed to mean?" he asked the Rebbe.

The Rebbe gently asked him to define success. The Rebbe then asked him whether one can herald as a success having a few dozen children enrolled in a school—when there are so many more children who still are receiving no Jewish education.

"But I tripled the enrolment," the individual protested, "is that not considered success?"

The Rebbe explained to him, "Success means exerting effort, and consists of the continued struggle to do what is right..."

*What's in It for Me?*

Milestones often act as tombstones; both (can) bury away a life of vitality.

Success shouldn't be measured by how far we get in life, but by the depth of life we get.



## Sorbonne Kindnesses

Yehuda Schwartz was a truck driver in Paris for the meat importing firm of Daniel Amram, which distributed kosher meat throughout France. Both men are Chabad Chasidim. One day, Yehuda was driving a large truck that Amram had just bought second-hand from a well known used car company. As soon as he began the trip he sensed something was wrong; the brakes and steering wheel seemed to be unusually stiff. He told himself that it was probably because the truck had been refurbished before sale. Reassured, he loaded up and drove off.

Near the end of the day he was riding on a bridge high above a river at about fifty miles per hour when it happened. He began braking for a traffic light in the distance, but when he pushed on the pedal it just sank limply to the floor and stayed there! He had no brakes!

He had to think fast. There were cars in front of him. He tried downshifting but he was going downhill too fast for that to help—in a second he would plough into the car in front of him. To the left was oncoming traffic, there was no time. He had to act fast.

He grabbed the steering wheel, yelled 'Shema Yisroel' and, at the last moment, turned it sharply to the right. The truck swerved crazily and shook, hit the curb and flew through the air. His safety belt held him down but he bounced wildly as the truck ploughed through the barrier-railing (lucky no one had been on the sidewalk!) and arched over the water! In a second he would plunge into the cold, murky current far below - he could almost feel the impact! He braced himself and prayed to G-d for help and shuddered.

But the truck didn't fall! It just hovered in the air — in mid-air!!

The next day all the newspapers in France carried the picture of his truck: balanced like a seesaw on the edge of the bridge, half way through the railing over the water. It was a miracle!

But it was an expensive one. The city of Paris presented Daniel Amram with the bill. Damages to the bridge were over ten thousand dollars worth of francs, the towing was another thousand and the traffic ticket another thousand - not counting the damages to the truck.

Daniel was used to miracles and was thankful for this one too - but now he was angry. That used-car company had signed and sworn that the truck was in 100% working order. If anyone was to blame it was them! He decided to take them to court.

A week later he appeared in court for the pre-trial hearing accompanied by his lawyer. It wouldn't be an easy case, he would have to prove that the brakes didn't work when they bought the truck, but he was ready for a fight.

The defendant entered the courtroom alone — an elderly, well-dressed gentile. He glanced at Amram as the charges were read.

But to everyone's surprise, after hearing the charges, the old man turned to the judge and announced that, although he was wealthy and could easily win the case by hiring the best lawyers in France, because he sees that his opponents are chasidic Jews he decided to forfeit and will pay all damages including the fine.

Daniel was amazed; such a miracle he never expected. The judge and police were so surprised and impressed that they cancelled the fine on the spot and the case was dismissed.

As everyone was leaving the courtroom the gentile walked over to Daniel and said that he would be willing to have the truck towed to his garage, some three hours away, and fixed at his expense as well. He even offered that when the truck would be finished, he would take Yehuda the driver back with him to pick it up the next time he would be in Paris.

Daniel could not believe his ears, but afraid that the fellow might change his mind he just smiled, shook the man's hand, said 'thank you' over and over again and kept quiet.

Three weeks later the old man returned to Paris and picked up Yehuda. About an hour into the ride back to the garage he turned to him and asked "You are a follower of Lubavitch aren't you? And so is your boss Mr. Amram. Correct?"

Schwartz answered in the affirmative.

"So I thought! Well, how is your great Rabbi Schneerson? I hope he is well. ...Ahh! I see you are surprised. Well it so happens that I know your Rabbi very well."

He saw that Schwartz was all ears so he continued.

"You see, in the late 1930's, even before the Nazi invasion, things were terrible here in France. Everything was upside down. But I decided that I wouldn't succumb to the insanity and I enrolled in the Sorbonne to learn mathematics.

"It was there that I got to know your Rabbi. He was in my class. He was truly a different type of human being. Besides being very polite and charming, he was incredibly intelligent and there was something royal about him. He didn't speak much but when he spoke everyone listened. The most incredible thing was that he never seemed to listen in class or even look at the lecturer; he was always reading some Hebrew book that was on his lap.

But he always knew the answers.

"The classes were very difficult, but in those terrible times our financial situation was worse. In fact, the only way some of us, me included, could make ends meet was by going into the country early every Monday morning and buying baskets of produce that we would sell wholesale to the vendors for market day. But it meant we had to miss the Monday lecture which was the main lecture of the week.

"So the first time your Rabbi Schneerson saw that we were missing, he took notes for us in great detail and gave them to us when we returned. It was terribly kind and thoughtful of him. In fact, if it weren't for him, none of us would have passed.

"Well, at the end of the semester the final test was so difficult that the professor announced that he would give us five hours to finish instead of the allotted three. So we were all surprised when your Rabbi gathered all his papers after a half an hour, put them in the envelope and handed them in.

"Everyone was watching. The professor must have figured that he didn't know the answers so he pulled out the papers and had a look. Well, when he saw they had all been filled out he scoffed aloud and said incredulously to the Rabbi before the entire class, "What, were you cheating or is this some sort of sorcery?"

"The Rebbe just looked at him, did not say a word and left the room.

"Well, you can imagine how amazed everyone was when the tests were checked and it was discovered that the Rebbe had answered everything 100% correctly!!

"It was the talk of the University. In fact on graduation day the professor actually apologized to him in front of the entire student body. And even then the professor could not contain his wonder. On the stage, he asked the Rebbe if he could please explain how it was humanly possible for him to finish the exam so quickly and accurately?"

"I'll never forget the Rebbe's answer. He said:

"The Jewish people have a book of wisdom called the Talmud and one who learns it properly can understand and answer all of the test questions."

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Zohar describes the First and Second Holy Temples as "the building of mortal man which has no lasting existence," while the Third Holy Temple, "the building of the Holy One, blessed be He," will endure forever. The First Holy Temple corresponds to Abraham; the Second Holy Temple corresponds to Isaac; the Third Holy Temple corresponds to Jacob. And since the dominant characteristic of Jacob is truth which can be neither interrupted nor changed, the Third Holy Temple will stand forever. (*Likkutei Sichot, IX, p. 26*)

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ISSUE 993

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



26th of Tammuz, 5718 [1968]

I was pleased to receive the news of your forthcoming Bar Mitzvah. I send you my prayerful wishes that this great day in your life, which makes you a full-fledged and fully responsible Jew, will bring you inspiration and an increased determination to observe all the Mitzvos [commandments] and to continue to study the Torah with increased diligence and devotion.

Since you are a student of a Lubavitcher Yeshivah, I am sure you realize that to become Bar Mitzvah does not mean a graduation or completion, G-d forbid, even of preparations and training. On the contrary, it is the beginning of a full life as a fully qualified Jew, and all your studies and training up to the Bar Mitzvah were only a preparation for it.

Obviously, when one undergoes a period of training and preparation for a certain thing, it would be rather foolish and illogical to let all that preparation go down the drain when the time comes and one has become fully qualified. I am therefore certain that you will make full use of your preparation before your Bar Mitzvah and will continue your studies of the Torah and the observance of the Mitzvos in the fullest degree.

I am sure you know that the portion of the week which will be read on your Bar Mitzvah Shabbos contains the important portion of Shema - "Hear O Israel, G-d, our G-d, G-d is One." This portion of Shema, which is also contained in the Tefillin, is the declaration of the whole Jewish people and the basis of our faith throughout the generations and accompanies the Jew everywhere, as is stated: "When thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." For the Torah and Mitzvos are eternal for all times and all places.

I am sure that if you will fulfil the above you will be happy in every way and your parents will have real Nachas from you.

Moreover, I trust that your parents will encourage you to their utmost to continue along this way, which is the way of real happiness, not only spiritually but also physically and materially.

With blessing.

## A WORD from the Director

*This coming Monday (August 1 this year), is the first day of the Jewish month of Menachem Av. With the beginning of Av, the three week mourning period over the destruction of the Holy Temples in Jerusalem intensifies.*

*The first of Av was also the day on which Aaron, the High Priest and brother of Moses, passed away.*

*Concerning his passing, the Torah tells us that "All of the house of Israel wept for Aaron for thirty days." But only the men wept for Moses and not the women. Why was this? Because Aaron had made peace between a man and his wife, and between a person and his friend, so all of the Jewish people mourned him.*

*We have much to learn from Aaron and his passing. But, most importantly, we must learn to emulate the wonderful example he showed us, that of doing everything in our power to bring peace and harmony amongst our fellow Jews. When this happens, we will no longer mourn the passing of Aaron, nor the destruction of the Holy Temples, for we will all be united, together as one, in the Third and everlasting Holy Temple, may it be rebuilt NOW!*

J.I. Gutnick

### The "Nine Days"

The first nine days of the month of Av, (starting this Monday) and also the morning of the tenth, are days of acute mourning for the destruction of the first and second Holy Temples.

During this time, we don't:

- Eat meat or drink wine, (except on Shabbos or as part of a meal that celebrates a mitzvah, such as a circumcision, Bar Mitzvah, or the completion of a tractate of Talmud).
- Launder clothing (except for a baby's).
- Swim or bathe for pleasure.
- Remodel or expand a home.

- Plant trees to be used for shade or fragrance (as opposed to fruit trees).
- Buy, sew, weave, or knit new clothing—even if they will only be worn after the Nine Days. Exceptions to this rule: a) If you will miss a major sale or if the garment will be unavailable later. b) For the purpose of a mitzvah, e.g., purchasing new clothing for a bride and groom.
- Cut nails during the actual week of the fast of Tisha b'Av, i.e., starting from the Saturday night before the fast until the conclusion of the Nine Days.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

## It Happened Once...



Rabbi Aharon-Moshe was a follower of R. Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz, the Seer of Lublin. He always made an effort to spend as little time as possible in the company of Jewish sinners. This was not because he looked down upon them, or even that he did not have feelings of love for them as his fellow-Jews. Neither was the case.

Rather, his level of purity was such that with one glance his penetrating spiritual vision could detect their most intimate secrets, including every physical sin they had done. This awareness made him so uncomfortable that he avoided such encounters whenever he possibly could.

One time he happened to be in the same place as Rabbi Avraham-Yehoshua Heschel, the Rebbe of Apt, known to one and all as the "Ohev Yisrael" - "Lover of Jews." The Chasid seized the opportunity to consult with him, and asked, plaintively, "What shall I do that I am able to see into the hearts of others and what I see distresses me so?"

The Rebbe (who often referred to himself in the plural) replied, "My dear Aharon-Moshe, in our youth we also saw things. When a Jew would come before us, we would immediately know what he was and what were his deeds. How many incarnations he had been through, and what were his mistakes and blemishes in each lifetime.

"Later on, we came to the realization that it is not appropriate to see into another Jew's heart and the mysteries that are concealed there, in order to perceive things that are not positive. So we prayed to the Merciful One that He remove from us this ability. Since then, whenever a Jew comes before us, we see only the good deeds and the soul-rectifications that he accomplished in each incarnation.

"So you too, Aharon-Moshe, should request this of the Al-mighty, and thereby cease to perceive what is not necessary to see."

"The secret things are for G-D, our G-d, while the revealed belongs to us and our children." [Deut. 29:28]

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Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz was renowned for his wisdom and piety. He is most famous for his Lecha Dodi hymn, "Let's go forth, my beloved," which quickly became universally incorporated into the Shabbat Evening prayers, where even today it is as beloved as ever.

As time went by, his saintliness aroused jealousy among some of the Arab residents of Safed. They plotted against him. Knowing that the rabbi was accustomed to go out to the mountains seeking solitude for his meditations, they decided that one of them could follow him and murder him with no fear of witnesses.

One day shortly thereafter, Rabbi Alkabetz was ambushed by an Arab farmer and murdered. The farmer buried him in his courtyard under a fig tree. The following day the tree blossomed and bore fruit — exceptionally large and delicious figs...yet it was out of season!

Soon news of the miraculous occurrence reached the ears of the Turkish provincial governor. He summoned the Arab farmer. "What is your secret of outstanding horticulture?" the governor asked. "This is the first I've ever heard of a tree bearing fruit before its appointed time."

The farmer remained silent. He was afraid of the consequences should he confess.

The governor asked again, more firmly this time, more demanding of an explanation. The farmer remained mute.

Finally, the governor ceased to tolerate the farmer's insolent silence, and ordered that he be tortured. The Arab finally confessed to killing Rabbi Alkabetz, and admitted that from the day he had buried him the fig tree had begun to bear fruit.

Startled and impressed by this revelation, the governor commanded that the farmer be hung from that very fig tree as punishment for slaying a holy man of Israel.

This posthumous miracle renewed the faith of the Jews of Safed in how great their beloved rabbi had been, for he had succeeded in pointing the accusing finger at his murderer even after his death.

# Lampighter

## Issue 1,000

With G-d's help, we will be publishing our **1,000th issue of the Lampighter.**

We are preparing a special expanded edition. We would be pleased to receive from you, our dear readers, your feelings, greetings and thoughts about our publication, which will be included in that special edition. Please write how you use this publication and how it may have influenced you in your spiritual journey. Please include any anecdotes in which the Lampighter has played a role in changing the lives of your friends and acquaintances.

Please email us at:  
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### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS MASSEI • 28 TAMMUZ • 30 JULY

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:11 PM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:55 PM
<b>SHABBOS:</b>	TEHILIM:	8:30 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:54 AM
	THE MOLAD OF THE MONTH OF MENACHEM AV IS:SHABBOS (JULY 30, 2011)	3:40 & 12 CHALAKIM PM
	MINCHA:	5:10 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:12 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	MAARIV:	6:10 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 29 JULY 2011

Begins		Ends
5:11	MELBOURNE	6:12
5:13	ADELAIDE	6:12
4:59	BRISBANE	5:54
6:21	DARWIN	7:13
4:57	GOLD COAST	5:52
5:20	PERTH	6:17
4:55	SYDNEY	5:53
5:00	CANBERRA	5:59
4:54	LAUNCESTON	5:57
5:14	AUCKLAND	6:14
5:04	WELLINGTON	6:07



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.