

# LampLighter

12 Menachem-Av  
Va'etchanan

995

12 August  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Va'etchanan, Moses addresses G-d: "O L-rd G-d," Moses opens his prayer, "You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand..." With these words, Moses establishes that it wasn't until his generation that G-d began to reveal His greatness in the world.

The Zohar asks how this can be possible. Many years before, it points out, there was a great Tzadik (righteous person) named Jacob, who was one of the three Jewish Patriarchs. In fact, Jacob is called "the chosen" of the Forefathers, and he merited to see many G-dly miracles. So how could G-d have first begun to show His greatness only in Moses' time?

The Zohar answers its own question: "That which Moses had, was had by no other human being: many thousands and tens of thousands of Jews, etc."

In Jacob's time the Jewish people was very small in number, far fewer than the several million who existed in Moses' generation. From the "seventy souls" that went down to Egypt at the beginning of the exile, by the time of the Exodus they had already multiplied to 600,000 men between the ages of 20 and 60, not counting women and children and men in other age groups.

It was not until Moses' generation, when the Jewish people had become "great" also in number, and stood together in unity and oneness, that the true "greatness" of G-d was manifested.

This contains a practical lesson for the Divine service of every Jew: Every individual, regardless of age, must do everything he can to strengthen Jewish unity and make the Jewish people more cohesive. Every person must strive to increase his love for his fellow Jew, and connect himself to as many Jews as possible.

This is one of the reasons we preface our daily prayers with the words "I hereby accept upon myself the positive commandment of 'You shall love your fellow as yourself.'" Before we ask G-d to fulfil a personal request, we identify and connect ourselves to the totality of the Jewish people.

Indeed, it is then that the "greatness" of the Jew is expressed. A single Jew is not alone, nor is a single Jewish family or Jewish community. Every Jew is connected to every other Jew, and to all Jews throughout the generations.

As the Zohar explains, the process of showing G-d's "greatness," initiated by G-d in the generation of Moses, will reach its culmination with the coming of Moshiach, who will redeem not only the Jewish people but also the entire world. At that time we will experience wonders and miracles far greater than those witnessed during the Exodus, and indeed, incomparable to anything experienced in history.

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

## Making Judaism Relevant

By Avraham Plotkin

Nine-year-old Joey was asked by his mother what he had learned at Hebrew Sunday school.

"Well, Mom, our teacher told us how G-d sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then he used his walkie-talkie to radio headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved."

"Now, Joey, is that really what your teacher taught you?"

"Well, no, Mom. But if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!"

One of the greatest challenges facing rabbis and teachers today is making the Torah relevant. Stories that happened thousands of years ago need to be explained in contemporary language; otherwise they become meaningless.

When G-d introduces himself for the first time to the Jewish people, when giving them the Ten Commandments, he says: "I am G-d, your G-d, who has taken you out of Egypt." Now if G-d was trying to give here His best credentials to His newly acquired nation, why would He choose to mention the exodus? Isn't the creation of the heavens and earth a far greater feat? Wouldn't that have been a far more awesome description?

Yet, while creation is a far superior feat, redemption from Egypt – to the people whom He was addressing – was contemporary and relevant. The G-d of creation is great, but very distant; the G-d of redemption is current, meaningful and alive.

One of the daily observances of the Jewish people, which constitutes an essential part of our prayers, is remembering the Exodus from Egypt. Every day of our lives. Why this obsession with an event that happened thousands of years ago? The answer is simple. By remembering the Exodus from Egypt we are celebrating the G-d of redemption.

And this G-d is personal, contemporary and relevant. After all, we all have our personal spiritual "Egypt" in our lives that with the help of G-d we can succeed in overcoming.

Every day there are miracles in our lives that need to be recognized. We need to see the hand of G-d in our lives. G-d takes us out of Egypt every day. The exodus is a live reoccurring experience that makes G-d a very relevant part of our lives!



## THE BODY SWITCHER

By Tuvia Bolton

On a Friday afternoon, I was driving back home to Kfar Chabad from Tel Aviv. It was late and, with no time to waste, I took a bit of a short-cut to save ten minutes. My short-cut put no other drivers in danger; but it did involve me driving over a solid white line.

Before I knew it, a policeman jumped out into the street and motioned to me to pull over. I opened my window, admitted my guilt, and requested that he dispense with me as quickly as possible as Shabbat was approaching.

He told me to get out of the car as he wanted to check on the computer if I had other offenses. By the time I got to his car he was already writing the ticket. He stopped writing for a second and said, "You're Tuvia Bolton? That name is familiar. Where do I know that name from?"

"From jail?" I replied, as jovially as possible.

"Jail?" he asked me in shock.

"Yes," I replied, "I've been there to read the Scroll of Esther on Purim, to light the Chanukah candles, and to put *Tefillin* on the prisoners, not as a prisoner myself, of course," I explained.

He just looked down and continued writing. When he finished writing, he got out of his car and asked, "You are from Chabad, right?"

"Yes," I admitted, wondering if this revelation would make it more or less likely that he would tear up the ticket. He handed the paper to me. Then he said, "I had a big miracle from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. A big miracle."

"Tell me the story," I said. "At least this way I'll get my money's worth!"

"It was in the year of 1986," he began. "I was a motorcycle cop on my way to someone trapped in an overturned car when suddenly an Arab slammed into me

and flipped me and my bike over a guard-rail into a 14 foot-deep ravine.

"My spine and neck were broken and they thought I'd be paralysed for life. The doctors operated and succeeded in returning control to the left half of my body but my entire right side was totally paralysed. Everyone told me I was lucky to be alive. The doctors said there was nothing more to do. So I began to visit healers and try alternative medicine. I spent a fortune, but nothing helped.

"Then, after four years our family doctor called to tell me about an operation that had been developed in Germany. It was still experimental but he felt that because my situation was deteriorating, I should take the chance.

"I contacted the doctors and the operation was scheduled in two week's time. I was nervous but I kept telling myself that anything would be better than being half-paralysed.

"A few days later, on Friday, a friend brought a young Chabad rabbi to my house. I had never been involved in Judaism and I had a dislike for religious people. But he had told the rabbi my story and the rabbi suggested that I write a letter to the Rebbe of Lubavitch. I told my friend: "Do me a favour; get this rabbi out of my sight."

"The rabbi explained that he didn't take money so I agreed. All I wrote in the letter was: 'I want health and livelihood.' I signed my name and faxed it off from my house. That Saturday night, some nine hours after Shabbat, my fax rang. It was a letter from the Rebbe's office. My wife took it and read it aloud, word for word: 'Do not make the operation, it is not necessary. With G-d's help you will return to work as before.'

"I took the letter and read it myself. 'This is from the great rabbi? I didn't say anything about any operation! That Chabad Rabbi must have written and told him! That's how he knew. And he writes that I'll return to work!' I shouted. I crumpled the fax and threw it angrily in the trash.

"That was Saturday night. Two days later, at about 6:00 a.m., my phone rang. Still half asleep I picked it up. 'Who is this?' I mumbled.

"The voice on the other end said, 'This is Eddy from the traffic police. We're making a new group and we want you to be part of it.'

"Just what I need," I said to myself, 'a practical joker first thing in the morning! I just slammed the phone down and rolled back over to try to sleep. But suddenly I realized that I had picked up the phone with my right hand - the one that had been paralysed! I thought that maybe I was dreaming, but after a few seconds I held up my right hand in front of my face and moved it! The phone rang again. I picked it up with my right hand again.

"Did you just hang up on me?" asked the voice on the other end. I explained that I thought it was a prank phone call but before I could finish he told me that if I was interested I should come to the station on Wednesday and he hung up.

"When I drove to the station it was the first time I had driven a car in four years. All the police were new there, which probably explains the confusion of how they called me. Anyway, I had to go through a whole standard physical exam including x-rays. They told me to return on Sunday for the results. When I returned on Sunday, I casually showed the doctor my old x-rays and he asked, 'Wow, who is this poor fellow?' When I pointed to my name and to myself he almost fell over. He exclaimed, 'I see it, but what I see is impossible; on this old picture there are broken bones and scars from your operations. On these new x-rays all this is gone! It seems that the Rebbe gave you a new body!'

"If anyone asks me," the policeman concluded his story, "I say the Lubavitcher Rebbe is here with us today, this very moment! If he could give me a new body for sure he can be here!"

We hugged each other and then I stepped back and said, "My friend, I don't know how much this ticket is but it's worth every shekel just to have heard that story!"

He replied with a smile, "Ticket? It's a warning!"

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ISSUE 995

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Our Sages have told us that the time before the coming of Moshiach will be a time of paradox. On the one hand, we will be able to perceive a glimmer of the future light, on the other hand, this era will be weighted down by a darkness so palpable that it will prevent the light from being properly perceived. (*Overview to A Partner in the Dynamic of Creation by Malka Touger*)

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## No Human Being Could Claim Superior Ancestral Origin

By the Grace of G-d  
15th of Cheshvan, 5752 [October 23, 1991]  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Arkadiusz Rybicki  
President of the Council for Polish-Jewish Relations  
Office of the President of the Republic of Poland  
Warsaw

Dear Mr. Rybicki,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter in which you express deep sorrow about the terrible anti-semitic incident that took place last month in front of the synagogue in Warsaw: that the perpetrators were captured and will be prosecuted, and that the behaviour was condemned by President Walesa, etc. You also express the hope that in the future intolerance and prejudice will disappear from the Polish people, and that you are working towards this end.

We appreciate the sentiment expressed in your letter, and we pray that your hope and efforts will materialize very soon indeed.

Apropos of the above I would like to add that last month, in the beginning of Tishrei, we ushered in the current Jewish New Year, 5752, with the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the anniversary of the Creation of the first man, Adam. Our Sages of the Talmud explain why the creation of man differed from the creation of other living species and why, among other things, man was created as a single individual, unlike other living creatures created in pairs. One of the reasons – our Sages declare – is that it was G-d's design that the human race, all humans everywhere and at all times, should know that each and all descend from the one and the same single progenitor, a fully developed human being created in the image of G-d, so that no human being could claim superior ancestral origin; hence would also find it easier to cultivate a real feeling of kinship in all inter-human relationships.

Indeed, although Rosh Hashanah is a Jewish festival, our prayers for a Happy New Year include also all the nations and dwellers on earth. And true happiness includes everyone's peace and prosperity both materially and spiritually.

With prayerful wishes,  
M. Schneerson

## A WORD from the Director

This week's Parsha features the **second** version of the Ten Commandments, which varies from the first version we read in the Book of Exodus, particularly with respect to the Mitzvah of Shabbos. In Exodus it says: "Zachor-**Remember** the day of the Shabbos to keep it holy." This alludes to the positive things we do on Shabbos that introduce us to its holiness such as the Kiddush prayer; the lighting of Shabbos candles, etc. In this week's Parsha, it says: "Shamor-**Guard** the day of Shabbos...", which refers to the Shabbos restrictions.

These two words, our Sages tell us, were uttered by G-d simultaneously to underscore that we can only experience the sanctity of Shabbos when we cease our weekday activities.

This is reinforced by another salient feature of this week's version of the Shabbos that differs from the first version. The rationale given in this week's Parsha is that observing Shabbos is a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. When we refrain from work on Shabbos we experience the same redemptive energy that we experienced at the time of the Exodus. Without being liberated from the weekday activities and pressures it is impossible for us to "plug in" to the spiritual dimension of the Shabbos.

This week is also known as Shabbos Nachamu, the Shabbos of consolation because the prophetic reading, the Haftarah, commences with the words "Nachamu Nachamu Ami. It employs a double expression of consolation. Why the double expression?

One way of explaining it is that our desire for and understanding of the final Redemption is twofold: One aspect of the Messianic Age is that it will liberate us from all of the pain and travail of exile much like the Shabbos liberates us from the pressures of the preceding weekdays. But there is also a second dimension that parallels the word Zachor that introduces us to a higher consciousness and awareness of G-d. As long as we are mired in exile we cannot appreciate the G-dly good that is in store for us.

Observing the twin features of Shabbos is a good way to prepare ourselves for the ultimate Shabbos of Moshiach, which will last forever!

J.I. Gutnick

### THE 15<sup>TH</sup> OF MENACHEM-AV

Because of the joyous events which occurred on this day, our sages regarded the 15th of Av to be one of the two most auspicious days on the Jewish calendar (the other being Yom Kippur—*Talmud, Taanit 26b*). Nevertheless, no special Av 15 observances or celebrations are ordained by Halachah (Torah law) or custom, other than the omission of the *Tachnun* (confession of sins) and similar portions from the daily prayers, as is the case with all festive dates.

CUSTOMS CORNER

## It Happened Once...



A man once came into the office of a great Rabbi and declared: 'I do not believe in G-d! And I don't believe you can prove it to me! But I challenge you to try!'

The Rabbi took up the challenge but asked him to first explain the reasons he doesn't believe. This was exactly what the challenger was waiting for and began pouring out all his frustrations: 'No one has ever perceived G-d, the stories of the Bible are all invented, the world created itself, there is no order, no plan, no good, no purpose, no reward, no punishment, no miracles, no soul etc.'

The Rabbi listened patiently and when the man was finished, shook his head in agreement and said 'You know what? You're right!'

The man was shocked; ehh? The Rabbi just gave up!? He actually convinced him that Judaism is wrong!?! and his entire life is down the drain?!

"I'm right?" He said in amazement. You mean you're just going to drop all your faith? I thought you believe that millions of Jews gave their lives for G-d... you mean to tell me I just convinced you that Abraham and Moses and all those saints were wrong?!!"

"Oh certainly not! G-d forbid!! The Rabbi explained; "What I meant is that if I was as ignorant as you and defined G-d like you do, I wouldn't believe in Him either! That is why I learn the Torah and Chassidut... so I won't think like you."

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Shamil was a fearless and clever leader of the Georgian freedom fighters hundreds of years ago in their attempt at independence from Russia.

Somehow the Russian generals convinced the Georgian forces that they were willing to give them what they wanted. But when Shamil came to the peace table the Russians captured and imprisoned him for life.

The story goes that every day he would find a way to pull himself up to a small window high in the wall of his cell, gaze out longingly at the mountains where he once ran free and sing a song of yearning and hope from the depth of his broken heart for freedom.

This song somehow got publicized and the Chabad Chassidim adopted it as one of their own. Indeed the Lubavitcher Rebbe liked it so much that he even explained it. He explained that it is a song sung by the Jewish soul after 'descending' from heaven where it was 'free' and aware of the Creator, to be 'imprisoned' in the body and it's selfish, confusing urges. The soul yearns for the truth.

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Once the fifth Rebbe of Chabad; Rebbe Shalom Dovber was in a museum where there were many beautiful, large paintings.

There were several other people standing and admiring three of them so the Rebbe approached and afterward related to his Chassidim (followers) what he saw.

"The first picture was a large fresco depicting an awesome and frightening battle scene. There were thousands of soldiers engaged in mortal combat and hundreds of wounded and dead strewn about, many missing limbs or bleeding profusely, which gave a frightening feeling.

The second picture was a large pastoral landscape of a huge wheat field, glistening in the summer sun, stretching as far as the eye can see. This picture drew remarks of admiration from the spectators who praised the preciseness and depth of the work. But a simple farmer that happened to be standing there pointed out that there was a telling flaw; on one of the stalks of wheat, the artist drew a small bird whose weight should have bent the stalk slightly... but it didn't. The stalk stood straight and, although it was beautiful, was not accurate.

The third picture was a courtroom scene depicting the last moments of a trial involving capital punishment.

The prosecutor was speaking, hand majestically raised in his final speech while a young boy, obviously the son of the accused, was entering the courtroom to plead for his father's life. The artist had expertly depicted on the face of the accused both deep fear from death and deep pleasure and relief at seeing his son trying to save his life.

The Rebbe explained: The first picture represents the terrible and often frightening internal soul-battle that each of us must fight against our own selfish and destructive impulses.

The picture of the wheat field teaches that it's possible for a person to be beautiful, impressive and successful but if he refuses to bend his will to that of the Creator he will be missing truth. Sometimes we must be willing to bend our ego.

And the last 'courtroom' picture teaches that just one good deed can tilt the value and worth of one's entire life; just as the small boy aroused deep and true pleasure in his father's eyes.



## Issue 1,000

With G-d's help, we will be publishing our **1,000th issue of the Lamplighter.** 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 Lamplighter 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 VA'ETCHANAN • 13 MENACHEM AV • 13 AUGUST

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:23 PM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:05 PM
<b>SHABBOS:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:46 AM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:22 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	MAARIV:	6:20 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 12 AUGUST 2011

Begins		Ends
5:23	MELBOURNE	6:22
5:23	ADELAIDE	6:21
5:06	BRISBANE	6:01
6:24	DARWIN	7:14
5:04	GOLD COAST	5:59
5:29	PERTH	6:25
5:04	SYDNEY	6:01
5:11	CANBERRA	6:08
5:08	LAUNCESTON	6:09
5:25	AUCKLAND	6:24
5:17	WELLINGTON	6:19
5:04	HOBART	6:07

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

יצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

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