

LampLighter

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

"...And He fed you the Manna which you did not know, neither did your fathers know, etc..." These words are found in this week's Torah portion, Eikev.

What a difference there was between the "bread from heaven" - the manna that fell from above for the Jews during their forty years in the desert - and ordinary bread "from the earth." To produce bread great effort and hard labour is required - ploughing, sowing, reaping, grinding, kneading, baking, etc. And the finished product, in common with all other physical foods, cannot be totally absorbed and utilized by the human body; part of it is rejected by the body as waste. But manna, the "bread from heaven," did not require any labour for preparation and contained no waste whatsoever.

Who was able to eat this noble, almost spiritual food? All Israel - the righteous, the average and even the wicked. Moreover, the manna did not become debased and lose its special qualities when digested by an evil person; even within their bodies it had no waste. On the contrary, it had a refining, elevating effect on them.

Torah is called "bread," and within Torah wisdom we may also discern two kinds of "bread." The revealed parts of Torah - the Oral Law, the Bible, Mishna, Talmud, etc. - is called "bread from the earth" because of the toil and labour associated with the question-answer, challenge-refutation method of study. The inner aspect of Torah - Kabbalah, Chasidic philosophy, the mystical teaching, etc. - is called "bread from heaven."

Who may partake of this noble food? Who may study this refined and esoteric wisdom of Torah? There are some who claim that these teachings, as embodied in Chasidism, are only for the select few, that special preparation is required in order to participate in such studies. But such a claim is similar to the claim of years ago when the validity of Chasidism itself was questioned. Today, however, as we approach the dawn of the coming of Moshiach, the claims against Chasidic teachings have disappeared. Instead, there are claims that the esoteric wisdom of Chasidism is too refined for the masses, etc. But the inner aspect of Torah, the "bread from heaven," is for all and may be ingested, like the manna, by every Jew no matter what level he or she finds himself. Like the manna, it has a refining effect and brings us all closer to returning to our Source.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Born on Top of the Mountain

By Mendy Wolf

The story is told of a group of mountain climbers who had their hearts set on reaching the peak of a very tall mountain. They trained for years, practicing in harsh climates, scaling smaller mountains. One day, they thought they were finally ready. Supplied with essentials and filled with excitement, they set out for the long climb.

After many difficult days, the group finally reached the summit. Their satisfaction was complete - they had achieved their great goal, realizing a dream of years. Suddenly, to their shock, they sighted a young boy sitting comfortably on a rock. Here they had trained for years to scale the mountain; how had he gotten there?

In response to their questions, the lad stated simply, "I was born here."

Imagine you were that child, fortunate to be given what others needed to labour arduously to accomplish. How would you feel? Would you be grateful? Would you take it for granted? Would you feel superior to others?

Now stop imagining. You are that boy. Yes, we are each born with unique talents and capabilities which enable us to reach heights that remain out of reach for others. Every one of us is born at the top of some mountain, be it intellect, physical strength, creativity or anything else.

It is easy to feel that we own our achievements. We pride ourselves on a job well done. We consider ourselves deserving of the profits of our labour. Charity? It's my money! Gratitude? For what? This is all my work!

In Deuteronomy (8:17-18), Moses exhorts us not to fall into that trap of entitlement. When we start thinking, "My strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth," we are to remember that our strength was, after all, given to us by G-d.

Yes, we may work hard, and for that we deserve recognition. But let us not forget that we received a head start. We may have cut a great deal, but it was only because we received a "lead." We were born at the top of a mountain: Our efforts, however laudable, really build upon the talents and capabilities we were given, gratis.



Each summer (American Summer), Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, dispatches hundreds of rabbinical students to small Jewish communities around the globe. Rabbinical students and young rabbis spend their summers on the road, sharing their passion for Jewish life and bringing Jewish awareness and observance wherever they go.

These dedicated students, chosen for their rabbinic proficiency and people skills, vie for the honour of assisting the most faraway and isolated communities. These summer assignments also afford them with an invaluable on-the-ground experience in Jewish outreach and a unique appreciation for the diverse needs and colourful makeup of our nation.

Below are just two of the many stories they have to share

BLAST OFF!

Lessons From Apollo, Guatemala

By Eliezer Posner and Naftoli Minkowitz

A few weeks back on a Thursday evening we were invited to a home for a roundtable Torah discussion. We wanted to find a topic that would be interesting for all of the participants—from the most learned scholar to the Jew who knows next to nothing about his heritage.

After tossing around ideas we settled on, “Whose business is it if I choose to sin?”

We drew a lesson that was both timely and very close to home for me. Here is the nugget of wisdom that was a central point of our discussion:

The space shuttle has been in the news lately. After 30 years, it is retiring.

Going back in history, soon after man’s first trip around the moon, Rabbi Zalman Posner (my great-uncle) was a guest on a popular Jewish radio talk show. The discussion focused on why and how Judaism dares to interfere with the private lives of individual human beings. Is it right for the Torah to choose how a person may act, and even punish him for lighting a match on Shabbat or eating unkosher food?

Uncle Zalman had some good points, explaining how the seemingly cruel punishments were very rarely, if ever, carried out.

The following Shabbat, the Rebbe discussed the same issue and pointed out that the answer can be found in the events of the day.

Man had just been around the moon. The astronauts on board had a long list of dos and don’ts. They were told how to sit, which buttons to press, and exactly when to press them. “Now what would happen,” asked the Rebbe, “if one of the fellows on board would choose to smoke a cigarette on board? Is it not his right to smoke if he wants to?” Of course it is out of the question, as doing so would jeopardize the mission and the lives of their fellow travellers. But even more than that, the astronauts are not on board as tourists or as private individuals. They represent their nation and humanity. To paraphrase a famous astronaut, “one misstep for man is a giant misstep for mankind.”

In the same way, each of us is an astronaut on a mission. Our job is to bring the universe to a state of universal perfection. Our actions have universal implications, and we must be aware of this fact and act accordingly.

The topic was a hit, and a long and meaningful conversation ensued.

~*~

SHE KNEW THE REBBE

By Simcha Evan Finkelstein and Leibel Berklin

As we were finishing up a conversation with some tourists from Spain, I suddenly glanced over at our table with Tefillin and Jewish literature, to find a whole family of four looking curiously at our setup and speaking Russian. I walked over, and with the few Russian words I know, greeted them and found out they were visiting from Russia.

The mother of the family was really the only one who could communicate well in English. She said to me, “your table caught my eye because I remember this man.”

She was pointing to a picture of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe** (on a Twelve Torah Passages card we had on display). She then continued:

“I saw the Rebbe many years ago, back when he was giving out dollar bills in New York. He gave me one dollar for a much-needed blessing, and then, thank G-d, not too long after, my son was born. Then I went back a year later, got another dollar from him, and my daughter was born.”

The lady was almost in tears. She had such a warm smile on her face as she introduced me to her two children and her husband.

Finally, she asks me, “Please, you can help me? My son, he has never put on Tefillin before. Can you help him put it on for the first time?”

I helped the young man put on Tefillin, and the whole family got to share in the joy. The young man said the Shema prayer with such excitement, realizing his connection to his Jewish roots.

It’s such an amazing thing. To be in the old Jewish shtetl in Prague, where tens of thousands of Jews long ago fought for their Judaism with self-sacrifice. And, after the many hardships the Jews of Eastern Europe experienced, we find a young man from Russia, on his family vacation to the Czech Republic, reconnecting to his Jewish soul, and leaving a lasting impression on me, his family, and the old city as a whole.

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ISSUE 996

MOSHIACH MATTERS

One who is full of himself fills all the space around him. There is no room left for anyone else. Therefore, he despises another person by virtue of the space that other person consumes. He may give reasons for his disdain, but the reasons are secondary. This is called wanton hatred. It is the reason given for our exile. It is the core of all evil. It is balanced and cured by wanton acts of love and kindness.

(From the teachings of the Rebbe; rendered by Tzvi Freeman)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



A Waste of Time

By the Grace of G-d
March 20, 1957

...as to what you write regarding [your] depression – the Holy Tanya has already explained that all depression stems from an unholy source. In any case, how is it that such a matter concerns yourself? I wonder: How does a Chassid have time to be depressed? Does one not realize that time is now the most precious of resources, its every moment an asset that must be utilized to the utmost? How much time is being wasted on matters for which “petty” is too generous an adjective!

How to Feel Secure

By the Grace of G-d
22nd of Elul, 5739
[September 14, 1979]
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. [...]
Johannesburg, So. Africa

Blessing and Greeting:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of Aug. 29th, with the enclosure. May G-d grant the fulfilment of your heart's desires for good. With regard to your writing about your feeling of depression, etc., I trust it is surely unnecessary to explain to you at length that one of the basics of our Torah, *Toras Chaim* [the Torah of Life] (so called because it is the Jew's true guide in life, given by G-d, the Creator and Master of the world), is that G-d's benevolent Providence extends to each and every one individually, as is frequently emphasized in Tehillim [Psalms] that G-d is your “Guardian” and your “Keeper” and is always “at your right hand,” etc., so that every Jew can feel quite secure in the constant presence and watchfulness of G-d. It is only necessary to keep the channels open to receive G-d's blessings, and these channels are the everyday life and conduct in accordance with the Torah and Mitzvoth to the best of one's ability. And every Jew has the ability to carry it out fully, since G-d provides this ability. It is largely, thereafter, up to one's own will and determination. Receipt is enclosed for your Tzedoko [charity], and may it additionally stand you and yours in good stead.

Wishing you and yours a Kesivo VaChasimo Tovo [to be inscribed and sealed for a good year], for a good and pleasant year,

With blessing,
M. Schneerson

A WORD from the Director

This Shabbat is the 20th of Av, the Yartzeit (anniversary of the passing) of the Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson.

In a gathering on Shabbat that coincided with Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's Yartzeit, the Rebbe spoke about the significance of his father's Yartzeit and specifically of it occurring on Shabbat.

The Rebbe quoted the Talmudic saying that “The death of the righteous is compared to the burning of the House of G-d.” The Rebbe then went on to explain that the true meaning of this statement is that the tragedy of a righteous person's passing is, like the destruction of the Holy Temple, a descent that must ultimately bring us closer to the building of the Third Holy Temple.

The Rebbe then went on to explain that on this Shabbat there are many reasons to be joyous. It is the Shabbat following Shabbat Nachamu - the Shabbat when we are doubly consoled for the destruction of the two Holy Temples. That this Shabbat follows the 15th of Av (known as a very joyous day in the Jewish calendar) means that it brings completion to the day. In addition, that it is the 20th of Av, a day that will ultimately bring us closer to the building of the Third Holy Temple is also a reason to be joyous.

The Rebbe also spoke about the importance of permeating all of our actions with joy, thus hastening the promised redemption:

“This joy, consolation and salvation must all be expressed in a revealed way and in actuality.... Our action in all areas of Torah and mitzvot (commandments) will speed the realization of the promised redemption.... the attitude of joy should also permeate and encompass all of these good actions, and this will speed the transition of the day of mourning into a day of rejoicing.” May this take place immediately, NOW!

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.

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...



This Shabbos we commemorate the Yahrzeit (anniversary of the passing) of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, (1878-1944) father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Below is a story related by the Rebbe on 18 Nissan 5743 which took place in Communist Russia:

I would like to tell a story about an event connected with my father, which for various reasons is not so well known. The story reveals the true capacity of the Jew if he only resolves to stand strong - not in the sense of "my power and the strength of my hand," G-d forbid, but empowered with the strength and courage of "And behold, G-d stands over him," with which he strives to fulfil G-d's command and Divine mission in life.

The event in question involved flour and matzos for Pesach, and my father's stance against even the slightest possibility of Chametz.

It was in the early years of the present Soviet regime, when all commerce and business throughout the country had already been nationalized. Accordingly, all of the mills and Matzah bakeries were run by the government and supervised by its representatives.

When it came time to collect all the flour in a central location prior to transport to the bakeries, the government turned to my father. First of all, he was one of the few Rabbanim (Rabbi's) left, and the authorities knew about him and were aware that he had given his Hechsher (kosher approval) to the flour in previous years. Furthermore, the city in which he lived was in southern Russia, where most of the wheat was grown.

Thus, when it was time to ship the wheat and they needed a Hechsher certifying that the flour had been milled under the strictest supervision and was kosher for Passover, they asked my father. He would be allowed to send his own Mashgichim (supervisors) into the factories to make sure that it did not come into any contact with water.

This arrangement had existed for many years. That year, however, when the government representatives explained to him that as everything was now under central control, if a certain portion of the flour was not sold because it lacked his approval, it would be interpreted as a declaration of war against the state. The government stood to lose a great deal of revenue from the flour, especially kosher for Passover flour, which was so expensive.

My father replied that it was already understood that if they allowed him to post his own Mashgichim whose instructions would be strictly obeyed, he would certainly certify the flour as kosher. If they did not allow him his own supervisors or would not follow their instructions, he would not comply. And not only that, he would make sure to publicize that he was in no way connected to any of it.

The representatives reiterated that they would surely permit him to install his own supervisors. If they approved the flour, it was all fine and good. If they did not, and on their say-so my father refused to give his Hechsher, he should know that he would be considered a revolutionary against the government!

At that point my father declared that he was ready to travel to Moscow and meet with the president of the Soviet Union, Kalinen, to discuss the matter. Indeed, he would tell him that it is impossible to certify flour for baking matzos if that flour is not kosher for Passover. If they wished to punish him, surely they had the power to do so. But he absolutely refused to give his Hechsher to

something that did not deserve it, as it was against Jewish law and against G-d.

Again they tried to apply pressure and threaten him, but they soon found out that they were powerless. The matter was referred to the highest authorities (maybe even Kalinen or his advisors - it is impossible to know for sure), after which a directive was issued to the effect that obtaining my father's Hechsher was an absolute necessity. Not only would he be permitted to post his own supervisors in the mills, but everything that he said must be followed to the letter.

Indeed, that is what happened that year, and the next year and the next. In all of the government-sponsored Matzah bakeries throughout the Soviet Union, only the flour approved by my father was used.

Lamplighter

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.

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CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS EIKEV • 20 MENACHEM AV • 20 AUGUST

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:29 PM
	MINCHA:	5:35 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:10 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:41 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:28 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	MAARIV:	6:25 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 19 AUGUST 2011



Begins	Ends
5:29 MELBOURNE	6:28
5:28 ADELAIDE	6:25
5:10 BRISBANE	6:04
6:24 DARWIN	7:15
5:08 GOLD COAST	6:02
5:33 PERTH	6:29
5:09 SYDNEY	6:06
5:16 CANBERRA	6:13
5:15 LAUNCESTON	6:16
5:31 AUCKLAND	6:29
5:24 WELLINGTON	6:25
5:12 HOBART	6:14

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.