

LampLighter

26 Menachem-Av
Re'eh
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Re'ei, the Children of Israel are commanded to maintain their own code of behaviour and not to learn from the nations that inhabited Israel before its conquest. "Take heed to yourself that you not be snared by following them." A Jew must never ask, "How do these gentiles worship their gods, that I may do the same?" For G-d has commanded us: "You must not do this before the L-rd your G-d... But hearken to the voice of the L-rd your G-d, to keep all His commandments... to do that which is right in the eyes of the L-rd your G-d."

Moses warned the Jews against imitating the gentiles' conduct. They have their own culture and customs, he explained. Some worship idols, some spend their lives trying to satisfy earthly lusts and desires, while others are motivated by the pursuit of power. But it is forbidden for a Jew to learn from their behaviour.

From a numerical standpoint, of course, the Jewish people is the most insignificant of all the nations. Nonetheless, its conduct is entirely unique. Some Jews might mistakenly think that the key to earning the respect and admiration of the gentile nations is to copy their behaviour. And yet the opposite is true. It is only when Jews proudly maintain their Jewish traditions and unwavering faith in G-d that they merit not only the respect of their gentile neighbours, but their support and assistance as well.

G-d placed the Jewish people among the nations so that others may see and learn from their simple and uncompromising faith. Jews must always remember that "You have chosen us from among the nations" and conduct themselves according to His will, as revealed in the Torah.

When Jews conduct themselves in such a manner, so as to serve as living examples to the gentiles, they demonstrate that it is indeed possible to adhere to the Seven Noahide Laws that apply to all mankind.

The Jewish people has lived according to the Torah's laws for over 3,000 years. Yet despite its antiquity, the Torah is equally relevant to our present day and age, imparting all who follow in its ways with renewed strength and vitality.

When Jews keep G-d's laws and refuse to mimic the surrounding nations, they merit a multitude of G-d's blessings: long life and good years, tranquillity and peace, physical health and true pleasure.

Additionally, when Jews do what is right, the gentile nations not only hold them in high esteem, but lend their assistance as well.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

A Choice of Choices

By Yanki Tauber

"See, I have placed before you blessing and curse." Thus opens this week's Torah reading of Re'eh (Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17), as Moses reiterates, once again, the doctrine of Free Choice.

Freedom of choice. Without which, as Maimonides reminds us, religion is meaningless, morality a non-concept, a Torah superfluous.

In fact, not only have we been granted a free choice between good and evil, but also the option of which level on which to make this choice. A choice of choices, if you will:

a) There is good and there is evil. Blessing and curse, light and darkness. G-d created both. We choose which of the two, or whichever combination thereof, shall define our existence.

b) In truth, there is only good. G-d is the source of all reality; and since G-d is the essence of good, only good is real. Just as there's no such thing as darkness—only light or its absence (which we call "darkness")—so too, there is only good or its absence. Or rather—since no place is devoid of His presence—good or its concealment. So the choice between good and evil is not a choice between two realities, but a choice between being and non-being, between reality and illusion.

c) Since "choice," by definition, is the free and uninhibited assertion of will; and since the intrinsic will of the human soul is for life and well-being; the only true choice there can be is the choice of good. But we have been granted freedom of choice, which means that we can choose not to choose; what we call "freedom of choice" is in fact the choice to exercise choice or to abnegate choice. When we do assert our true will—when we do choose—we invariably choose good.

Which is it—a, b, or c? That's up to you. That is the true meaning of "free choice": not that you may merely choose between two or more options presented to you by a higher authority, but that it is you who determines the level of reality upon which your conscious life unfolds. It is you who determines the distance between your life and its Source, and thus the form which "Free Choice" takes in your experience.

Choose your choice.



G-d's Return Policy

An Encounter from Naftali Dulitzky, told by Members of his family:

"It was Kislev 1957, Eight years had passed since the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, founded Kfar Chabad, and the abandoned Arab village transformed into a Lubavitcher stronghold. But there was one problem: no more apartments were available. As more and more Chassidim found themselves turned away, they wrote in despair to the current Rebbe.

The Rebbe, who since 1955 had begun contacting Zalman Shazar (later President of Israel) about the new neighbourhood in Kfar Chabad, guaranteed to find sources of funding. He also wrote to Chabad businessmen in Israel, demanding action. On 10 Kislev 5718/Dec. 3, 1957 the Rebbe wrote to Shazar.

Asking Shazar to officially announce the new neighbourhood in Kfar Chabad, and the Rebbe set the date: 19 Kislev 5718/Dec. 12, 1957, nine days later.

At the main 19 Kislev event in Kfar Chabad, Shazar announced a new Chabad neighbourhood. In his next letter, the Rebbe thanked him.

In a private audience several days before the Rebbe's Farbrangen (Chassidic gathering) in Brooklyn, R' Pinye Altheus was asked by the Rebbe about the finances for the new neighbourhood in Kfar Chabad. R' Pinye replied sadly that the situation was dire and the wealthy people didn't participate as generous as anticipated.

At the Farbrengen, amongst many topics, the Rebbe said:

If they filled my request... then today marks the founding (at least the verbal announcement that will lead to action) of a new neighbourhood in Kfar Chabad which was founded by the Rebbe, my father-in-law

The Rebbe announced that although on Yud-Tes Kislev appeals were generally not made, the building of a new neighbourhood presented a unique situation. Everyone was asked to donate amply, and within the next day or two.

The crowd had not yet recovered from the shock, when the Rebbe said:

In general, I don't mix in and express my opinion regarding how much each person gives... But since this is altogether an exception, I will also act differently than usual, and if it seems to me that someone is giving too little, I will overcome embarrassment and tell him—by power of the matters for which the

money is needed (i.e. the neighbourhood)—to increase the amount as I see it...

In short: On this one occasion, the Rebbe decided how much each person should give.

The Rebbe concluded:

If it seems to someone that he was told to give an amount that he is unable to give, the intention is so that Hashem will give him at least four times that amount and therefore, when you add another \$1000, Hashem will give you \$4000!

Among the people sitting in the crowd was R' Naftali Dulitzky, a Chassid and diamond dealer from Tel Aviv. Whenever he visited the Rebbe he brought a large sum of money with which he would buy diamonds at lower prices on the New York diamond exchange and sell for a nice profit in Israel and Europe.

Like everybody else there, Dulitzky handed a slip of paper to the Rebbe that included his name and the amount of money he would be giving. Inspired by the Farbrengen, Dulitzky wrote down 20% of the money he had brought with him to New York to do business!

Later on after some songs were sung the Rebbe began reading the notes, telling each person how much to add, from double to two hundred times the amount originally pledged.

The Rebbe repeated the blessing said earlier:

There are people who are afraid to give their donation now since I will publicly announce how much they need to add... But the time now is the Yom Tov of the Alter Rebbe, an auspicious time, and therefore, if you give your donation now, in addition to Hashem repaying you four times as much or ten times as much, you can accomplish spiritual and material things according to what the Alter Rebbe is capable of accomplishing.

Accordingly, it pays to put yourself in "danger" for me to tell you to increase your amount in order to merit the Blessings of the Alter Rebbe in those things you need.

When R' Dulitzky's note was read by the Rebbe, the Rebbe announced:

"Tula Dulitzky—five times more!"

Dulitzky looked stunned. The Rebbe had left him without a penny for his business transactions. However, as a loyal Chassid he didn't ask questions, and as soon as the Farbrengen was over he gave the full amount.

The next part of the story, related by Naftali Dulitzky's daughter, was heard from Rabbi Chatzkel Besser, A"H, of Agudath Israel, who knew Naftali for years and was often "schlepped" to the Rebbe's Farbrengens.

"I was supposed to go to that Farbrengen with R' Dulitzky, but the snow and cold that night froze the engine of my car, so I missed the Farbrengen.

"The next day, when I met Dulitzky, I apologized and asked him how the Farbrengen was. He said, with a smile, that it was fortunate I had not attended, because they had to give huge amounts of money to the Rebbe. He confided that he had been instructed to give all his money for the new neighbourhood in Kfar Chabad.

"I was a bit surprised. I knew him as a Chassid who would give everything to the Rebbe, but I did not understand why the Rebbe needed to take everything from him. We spoke for a few minutes and then parted. As far as I was concerned, the story was over.

"A little more than a year later, I was in Israel for some communal matter. At that time the first armed robbery in Israel took place, and a diamond merchant by the name of Zerach Pollack was murdered. Everyone was shaken, especially those in the diamond business. Every single diamond merchant attended the funeral.

"I also attended the funeral and I met Dulitzky there. We greeted one another, and as we spoke I mentioned our previous conversation that took place in Manhattan. Dulitzky said, 'You won't believe this. I'll tell you what happened later.'

Dulitzky related, "A few days after the Farbrengen, I boarded a ship back to Israel. My original plan was to stop for a few days in Europe to sell the diamonds I would have bought in the U.S. Although now I had no reason to waste time there, my ticket was already purchased.

"The ship set anchor in the port of London. For Shabbos I decided to travel to Antwerp, where I had many friends from the diamond trade.

"I arrived Friday morning and went to the diamond exchange, where I was immediately greeted by an acquaintance, 'Dulitzky, you don't know how happy I am to see you!' Understanding my surprise, he explained that he wanted to do a deal on large diamonds, which he knew to be my area of expertise.

"I explained to him that I did not have any money or diamonds for sale, but he insisted that I accompany him nonetheless. 'At least come with me to see the diamonds,' he requested.

"I tried to get out of it, but he was determined. I finally gave in on condition that I would be there only to advise him.

"I looked at the diamonds that he had been offered and recommended that he buy them. They were very nice and the price, relative to the quality, was quite reasonable. I figured that my job was done, but he thought otherwise.

"He wanted to make a partnership with me. As much as I tried to explain to him that I didn't have money to invest, he refused to hear it. He wanted a partnership, and honestly, I don't know why I agreed. But I signed a contract and promised to send him my share when I returned to Israel.

"When I returned to Israel, I sent him a letter asking for the details regarding the payment I owed him. He sent me back a telegram saying I didn't owe him anything.

"A few days later I received a letter from him in which he explained that he had been able to sell all the diamonds quickly and make a nice profit. He promised to send me my share of the money.

"When I read the next line I was flabbergasted. The sum was four times the amount I had donated at the Farbrengen.

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P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA
Phone (04) 3039-5770
Email: lampighter_weekly@hotmail.com
Web: rabbinicalcollege.edu.au/Lampighter
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ISSUE 997

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Exile does not really separate us from G-d. On the contrary, the Divine Presences is also in exile. Our "Father" is in exile together with us. Furthermore, the very fact that we are in exile is a revelation of G-d's will. In addition, the reason we are in exile is to raise ourselves to an even higher level than before. It is a descent for the purpose of ascent. Thus, exile is not an end in itself, but merely a means to lift the Jews to a higher rung than before. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe, 20 Av, 1985*)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



A Glaring Contradiction

...In answer to your letter... in which you write of the current state of your affairs, adding that "all my life, no good has befallen me," and conclude with a request for a blessing for yourself, together with you wife and children, may they live:

It seems that you are unaware of the contradiction in your letter.

For a man whom the Creator has provided his partner in life, and has blessed them with children, to say that, "all my life, good has eluded me," is ingratitude in a most shocking manner...

Hundreds and thousands of people who pray every day to be blessed with children, and would give all that they have for a single son or daughter, have yet to merit it (may G-d bless them with the speedy fulfilment of their heart's desires), while you, who received this blessing (seemingly without an overabundance of praying for it) do not recognize what a treasure and joy this is, writing as you do in your letter...

I'm not implying that one is supposed to struggle for a living or not enjoy perfect health. My point is that perhaps the reason for your weak health and your difficulties in earning a living is your utter failure to appreciate G-d's blessing to you in a far more basic matter than perfect health and abundant sustenance—the blessing of sons and daughters who follow the ways of G-d. When one does not recognize the explicit good bestowed from Above, particularly when one's lack of recognition is so extreme that it results in statements such as you express in your letter, is it any wonder that blessings are not forthcoming from Above in other matters?

My hope is that these few lines will suffice to open your eyes to see your situation in its true light. And when you begin to serve G-d with a true and inner joy, surely G-d will increase His blessings also in regard to health and sustenance...

I trust that you have set times for Torah study, both for its exoteric teachings as well as the teachings of Chassidut; in any case, do so from now on. It would also be proper to examine your Tefillin, as well as the Mezuzot in your home, and to set aside several coins for charity each weekday morning before prayer.

Elul Observances

As the last month of the Jewish year, Elul is traditionally a time of introspection and stocktaking — a time to review one's deeds and spiritual progress over the past year and prepare for the upcoming "Days of Awe" of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

As the month of Divine Mercy and Forgiveness it is a most opportune time for *Teshuvah* ("return" to G-d), prayer, charity, and increased Ahavat Yisrael (love for a fellow Jew) in the quest for self-improvement and coming closer to G-d. Chassidic master Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi likens the month of Elul to a time when "the king is in the field" and, in contrast to when he is in the royal palace, "everyone who so desires is permitted to meet him, and he receives them all with a cheerful countenance and shows a smiling face to them all."

Specific Elul customs include the daily sounding of the shofar (ram's horn) as a call to repentance. The Baal Shem Tov instituted the custom of reciting three additional chapters

of Psalms each day, from the 1st of Elul until Yom Kippur (on Yom Kippur the remaining 36 chapters are recited, thereby completing the entire book of Psalms).

Elul is also the time to have one's *Tefillin* and *Mezuzahs* checked by an accredited scribe to ensure that they are in good condition and fit for use.

Good Year Greetings

From the beginning of Elul and throughout the High Holiday season, we include the blessing "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year" in letters and greetings to one another.

Have a good & sweet new year!

A WORD from the Director

This Shabbat is Shabbat Mevarchim, when we bless the upcoming month of Elul. The month of Elul is a month of preparation, when we take stock of ourselves in anticipation of the upcoming holiday of Rosh Hashanah.

In Elul, one contemplates the past year, utterly regretting whatever has been undesirable, and resolving to be vigilant in the meticulous observance of the commandments, to be conscientious in one's Torah study and in one's prayers, and to habituate oneself to positive character traits.

The name of the month, "Elul," is an acronym for the Hebrew words which mean, "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine."

"I am my Beloved's" refers to serving G-d through one's own initiative. When a Jew serves G-d through his own initiative, the bond between G-d and the Jew is internalized. "My Beloved is mine" refers to Divine revelation which inspires this bond. Elul represents a month of complete connection, through revelation from Above and service from below.

This concept is also connected to this week's Torah portion, Re'ei, which begins with the words, "See I am giving before you today." All of the aspects of our service to G-d should be seen and openly revealed. When someone sees something, it makes a greater impression than if it is just heard. Torah and mitzvot should be openly revealed, and not just something we hear about.

In a deeper sense, we should use our sight to see not just the physicality of the world, but also the essence of G-d and His handiwork in our surroundings.

Additionally, when one recognizes his own G-dliness and the G-dliness of other Jews, this will lead him to truly be able to fulfil the mitzvah of loving one's fellow Jew.

J.I. Gutnick

It Happened Once...



There was a Torah scholar named Yosef who lived in the city of Nikopol, in northern Bulgaria. Although Rabbi Yosef's main interest and joy in life was the study of Torah, he insisted on supporting his family through the sweat of his own labour. To that end, he entered into a business partnership with an acquaintance and opened a store.

The division of labour would prove to be problematic. Yosef's daily schedule was as follows: After early morning prayers, he would go to the study hall for several hours; thus he never arrived at the store until noon. His partner, who had already been dealing with customers for several hours, eventually began to resent this arrangement. He respected his partner's diligence in Torah study, but at the same time needed help with the practical aspect of running a business.

Yosef realized that his partner was right and remained silent. "But what can I do," he thought to himself, "If my love of Torah is so strong?"

One morning, someone in the study hall raised a particularly complex question in Torah law. The heated discussion that ensued lasted for hours as all the scholars in the study hall attempted to answer it. By the time Yosef looked up from his volume of Talmud it was already late in the afternoon.

When R. Yosef finally arrived at the store his partner was furious. "That's it!" he fumed. "I've had enough of this joint venture!"

Yosef asked his partner to wait one more day before dissolving the partnership, as he wished to consult with his wife. That evening he went home and asked her opinion on whether he should continue as he had been doing, or should he reduce significantly his attendance at the study hall. His wife, a righteous woman, advised him to continue learning, and not lessen the number of hours he devoted to Torah study. "If your partner wishes to close one door to you, I have full faith that G-d, who opens the gates of salvation, will surely unlock other channels through which to send His blessing."

Encouraged by his wife's words, Yosef returned to the store the next day and announced that he was willing to end the partnership amicably. Yosef was given half the value of the store's holdings and suddenly found himself unemployed.

"There's no point in letting the money just sit at home," his wife advised him the following morning. "Why don't you go to the marketplace and look for another business venture?" Yosef agreed it was a good idea and set out at once. But he was so involved in his Torah thoughts that by force of habit his feet led him in the direction of the study hall, where he remained until evening. Only when his wife questioned him that night did he remember what he had set out to do. "Don't worry," he told her, "G-d will surely send something my way tomorrow."

The next day Yosef had barely entered the marketplace when an unusually tall man approached him with a huge mortar and pestle for sale. Yosef handed over all his money and bought the mortar and pestle with his last cent.

"What will we do with this old mortar and pestle?" his wife wondered when he returned home. But Yosef wasn't worried and went off to the study hall.

Two days later Yosef had a curious dream in which the tall man who had sold him the mortar and pestle told him a secret. "You should know," he revealed, "that good fortune has long been awaiting you, which was not meant to be shared by your former partner. That is why it was necessary that you part ways. But now that you're on your own, your hour has come."

"The mortar and pestle I sold you," he continued, "is made out of pure gold. You must learn its true worth before you can receive fair compensation. Then you must leave this place, as it is not where you belong. Go to the Land of Israel, and live in the city of Safed."

The next morning Yosef recounted his dream to his wife, who immediately summoned a goldsmith for an appraisal. The goldsmith rubbed off the accumulated dust and dirt and was astonished by what he saw. "This mortar and pestle is made out of pure gold!" he told them, and determined that it was worth a fortune.

The mortar and pestle were quickly sold, and Yosef and his wife moved to the Land of Israel and settled in Safed. The money they received from the sale was enough to support them for the rest of their lives.

What pleased Yosef most was that the wealth finally enabled him to publish his two greatest works, the *Beit Yosef* and *Shulchan Aruch*. For Yosef was none other than Rabbi Yosef Karo, the famous 16th century codifier of Rabbinic law.

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.

Please email us at:
Lamplighter_weekly@hotmail.com

Or mail to: **P.O. Box 67 Balaclava Vic. 3183**

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS RE'EH • 27 MENACHEM AV • 27 AUGUST

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:35 PM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:15 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:35 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF ELUL IS:	
	MONDAY (AUGUST 29, 2011) 4:24 & 13 CHALAKIM AM	
	MINCHA:	5:35 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:33 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:45 PM
	MAARIV:	6:30 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 26 AUGUST 2011

Begins		Ends
5:35	MELBOURNE	6:33
5:34	ADELAIDE	6:30
5:13	BRISBANE	6:07
6:25	DARWIN	7:15
5:11	GOLD COAST	6:05
5:38	PERTH	6:33
5:14	SYDNEY	6:10
5:21	CANBERRA	6:18
5:22	LAUNCESTON	6:22
5:37	AUCKLAND	6:34
5:31	WELLINGTON	6:32
5:19	HOBART	6:21

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נב"מ ז"ע

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