

# LampLighter

13 Sivan  
Nasso  
**881**  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah reading Nasso contains the portion about the sota - a wife whose behaviour is indiscreet. A deeper examination of the concept reveals the symbolism behind the Torah's words, alluding to G-d as Husband, and the Jews as His wife.

On the verse, "If the wife of any man goes aside," our Sages comment: "One does not commit a sin unless the 'spirit of folly' has entered him."

The Hebrew word for "folly" is related to the word that means straying from the path.

With this statement our Sages sought to explain the seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon of a Jew who commits a sin.

How can such a contradictory state of affairs occur? Is not every Jew, by virtue of his G-dly soul, connected to G-d on the very deepest level? How then can he possibly allow himself to commit a transgression which separates him from his Source Above?

The answer to this is the "spirit of folly," an outside, external force that temporarily gains control and obscures the Jew's faith.

Because of this "spirit of folly," the Jew cannot perceive the true consequence of his actions - the disconnection from G-d that his sin actually causes. Were he properly aware of this at all times, the Jew could never bring himself to disobey the commandment of G-d under any circumstances.

What exactly is this "spirit of folly"? It is only a desire for physical gratification, which causes a lessening in spiritual perception.

Consequently, a person imagines that nothing will happen if he commits the sin, and that he will remain just as connected to G-d as he was before. His desire for gratification blinds him to the fact that even the tiniest of infractions is detrimental to his bond with G-d.

The reverse side of this principle is that even when a Jew does sin, G-d forbid, it does not mean that the Jew himself is bad; rather, every Jew is inherently good, and his innermost desire is to obey G-d's will. It is the "spirit of folly" that is to blame, an outside factor that is incongruent with the Jew's true nature.

In the symbolic sense, G-d is referred to as the "Husband" of the Jewish people.

A Jew who commits a sin is likened to a wife whose indiscreet conduct arouses the suspicion of her husband.

The sota has not committed a sin with certainty; she has merely behaved in a manner which raises doubts. And just as the sota is rewarded when she is found to be innocent - "but if she is pure she shall conceive seed" - so too does G-d promise that every Jew will ultimately repent and return to Him, for the Jew's inner essence always remains untouched by sin.

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

## Individual Talents

By Mordechai Wollenberg

The Torah tells of twelve sets of gifts brought as offerings by the twelve tribes in honour of the dedication of the Tabernacle. Even though the Torah never wastes words, and seemingly each tribe brought the exact same gifts, the Torah repeats the list of donations given by each tribe word for word. "Reuben gave..., Shimon gave..., etc.," rather than simply saying "Reuben, Shimon,... and Benjamin each gave..."

The basis for this is that each of the items symbolized different things to each tribe. The difference in meaning of these items related to the role each tribe played. In this way, every tribe's gifts had a diverse flavour from the others.

All of the tribes conformed to the same divine guidelines, all followed the same Torah, yet each one carried out those very same deeds with their own personal approach.

We often see tension between conformity and creativity, between tradition and innovation. People ask why Judaism has to be so rigid and conforming. Where is freedom of expression? On the one hand we need the foundation stones of our Jewish tradition; on the other, we need an outlet for our individual vision, to personalize, to nurture our own talents.

Torah tells us that this is not a contradiction. The entire nation, including individuals of every conceivable character and calling, can do the very same deed, down to the very last detail, yet each can provide a unique flavour.

In the same manner, we can live in a civilized society, governed by ethical and moral precepts, yet still thrive as individuals. We can follow Torah and carry out its commandments, yet still remain true to our sense of individuality. No matter how conformist Judaism (or society, for that matter) may seem, there is always room for personal expression. It does not, however, have to involve rebellion or non-conformity. On the contrary, the greatest personal expression comes from individuals who adhere to the same framework yet demonstrate diversity and uniqueness within that framework.

We were blessed with the structure of Torah, of Jewish teachings and practices. Let us endeavour to enjoy and celebrate Judaism, in the traditions of our predecessors, bringing to it our own personal flavour - to keep it going for the next generation.



## Doesn't Everyone Deserve the Chance to Have a Child?

By Mirish Kiszner

Shlomo Bochner\* slowly made his way through the hospital ward. At the entrance to the waiting lounge he stopped and peered through the glass in the door. He could see Mrs. Davis sitting upright on an orange chair, holding a small prayer book with both hands. Her lips were moving quickly. Every now and then she shut her eyes as tears flowed through them and then streamed unchecked down her face.

Shlomo sighed. It was his responsibility to tell her.

All around him the usual flurry of activity kept on. Nurses in white coats talked among themselves as they wheeled blood pressure monitors from room to room. Anonymous voices crackled through the intercom and solemn faced doctors hurried along the corridors. Shlomo did not know how long he stood there, his right hand on the doorknob, his left hand tightly clenched. He couldn't bring himself to tell her.

How could he approach Chana Davis and tell her the message that weighed on him like a stone, a boulder that would shatter her dreams?

Shlomo cleared his throat and blinked. The pain of childlessness was a familiar one to him. That was why he'd helped establish *Bonei Olam* (Build a World), to provide emotional and financial support for couples dealing with infertility.

When Chana and her husband Elchanan had approached him, Shlomo had perceived that the doctors, whose costs were frightfully high, had, due to the severity of their situation, written their case off as hopeless. Shlomo had been in a quandary. If indeed the chances of success were so small, should he take on their case or channel the much needed funds to other, more hopeful cases? On the other hand, how could he turn them away? The policy of *Bonei Olam* was to spare no effort or expense in their quest to help childless couples.

In the end Shlomo had turned to rabbis for perspective, and he was advised to proceed with their case. Although Shlomo normally

consulted with Dr. Cornwallis, a highly acclaimed expert, only as a last resort due to his exorbitant rates, this time Shlomo didn't hesitate.

A young man holding a cup of coffee appeared at his side. Shlomo released the doorknob and moved over to the side to allow him to enter the lounge. Mrs. Davis, it seemed, hadn't noticed him yet. Coffee was a good idea. Perhaps the caffeine would help him relax and talk to Chana in a calm manner.

As Shlomo dropped his coins through the slot of the coffee machine, he thought of Dr. Cornwallis. For some reason, a conversation with the doctor that had surprised him now replayed itself in his mind.

"Dr. Cornwallis, remember the couple from Israel, the Davises?"

"Davis? Ah, I remember now. Unfortunately Rabbi Bochner, there's not much the medical world could do for them. The high cost of treatment – ah, quite frankly Rabbi Bochner, I'm not sure it's worthwhile."

"Dr. Cornwallis, doesn't every couple deserve at least a chance?"

There was silence.

"Doctor?"

"I'm here."

"We can't turn them away. When will your schedule call for a visit to Israel? We'll do what we can. G-d will do the rest."

"Rabbi Bochner," the doctor said after a long pause. "I'll talk to my travel agent, and Rabbi?"

"Of course we'll see to everything else. The hospital stay..."

"Sure, sure," the doctor laughed. "I have no doubt about that. I just want to add..."

"The anaesthesiologist. Certainly. That will be arranged as well."

"No, no, Rabbi Bochner, that's not what I mean. Listen. I'll take care of the flight arrangement and all that...but this time I don't want you to pay me."

Shlomo had been stunned. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, Dr. Cornwallis's usual fee, was not a small matter. But Dr. Cornwallis, inspired by the commitment of *Bonei Olam* had insisted on waiving his fee.

Shlomo retrieved his steaming cup and returned to the lounge. Again he stood by the door of that room. Slowly he sipped from his mug, the tears mingling with his coffee.

The minutes were ticking by and he knew that he couldn't stand there much longer. The treatment had not met with success. They had skillfully pitched their last trial and...G-d had willed otherwise. It was Shlomo's duty to inform Mrs. Davis the stark, painful truth.

He braced himself, took a deep breath and turned the doorknob.

Mrs. Davis looked up at him, her face brightening.

Shlomo dug his hands deep in his pocket. As he would later relate, "It was the hardest moment of my life. To this day, I don't remember what I told her."

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A year later...

Shlomo sat at his desk engrossed in some paperwork, when the secretary buzzed him. Somewhat distractedly, he switched on the answering machine.

As soon as the voice sounded in the machine, Shlomo sat up straight.

"Hi, this is Elchanon Davis on the line. When you have a chance please be in touch with me."

Shlomo grabbed the phone. But it was too late. The caller had hung up.

For a few moments, Shlomo sat lost in thought. Almost a year had passed since that day when he'd been compelled to give the fateful message to Chana Davis. But Chana, he soon learned, was a remarkable woman. Her husband, Elchanan, had filled him in on the details.

"In the taxi on the way home from the hospital," Elchanan had told him, "we sped through the quiet streets in silence, each of us absorbed in our own thoughts. I was unable to formulate my swirling thoughts and bring them into cohesive sentences. I felt as if a black cloud had enveloped me and I couldn't think straight."

"Somehow I stumbled out of the taxi. In a fog, I walked the few steps up to our front door, turned the key and weakly pushed open the door. I flicked on the switch and the room flooded with light."

"I was shocked at the scene that greeted me."

"The table in the dining room was decked in our best tablecloth and was set with my wife's finest dinnerware, the ones she used only for special occasions."

"Well, aren't you going to hang up your coat?" My wife asked me as she lit the two candles perched on the silver candlesticks.

"I watched as the little flames leaped and danced, reaching upward."

"We have now ended a chapter in our life," my wife said softly. Her face was bathed in the warm glow of the candle. "We were dealt a blow today. But I don't want to be angry at G-d. I want to make a *seudat hoda'ah* (thanksgiving meal). I want to give praise to G-d for giving you to me and me to you. We have each other. And we're not angry. We are entering the next chapter of our lives and we will not let bitterness or melancholy darken it. Let's celebrate."

"My wife served us a magnificent meal. By the time we went to sleep, her serenity had effected a considerable change in me."

"I had slept only a few minutes, it seemed to me, when the ringing of the phone near my bed jarred me awake. The alarm clock read 5:00 a.m."

"It was someone from the hospital. They were asking me to return immediately. They had studied my chart, the caller claimed, and there was something they could do."

Shlomo knew the story well. It was a heart warming story. A story of a woman making the will of G-d her own will.

Already he was beaming as he pressed the Davises' phone number in the keypad.

"Hello Shlomo," Elchanan's voice was jubilant. "It's a boy. A beautiful baby boy! Chana and the baby are, thank G-d, doing very well."

"Mazel tov! Mazel tov!" Shlomo was overcome with emotion.

"Shlomo, the *brit* (circumcision) is next week."

It was a celebration he would not miss.

\*some names have been changed to protect privacy.

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## Quality Is Better Than Quantity

19 Tammuz, 5710 [1959]

Greetings and blessings,

In response to what you wrote... In your circles, you have a good opportunity to become effective in fulfilling the mission for which Divine providence has led you to this place.

One should not be discouraged if it appears that only a small number of individuals allow themselves to be influenced and even with these few, the influence is less than one would desire.

With regard to quantity, we have to understand that as every individual is an entire world, so it is worthwhile for the whole world to devote itself to saving even one individual Jew with regard to material matters; how much more so regarding spiritual matters.

In addition, the good influence that the recipient is granted does not remain sequestered in his possession. In a direct or indirect manner, he has a positive effect on the other people in his close or broad circles of influence. To speak in analogies, just as every organ is a part of the body as a whole, every individual is a part of the community as a whole.

Thus the spiritual improvement of one person strengthens the well-being of the entire community as a matter of course.

With regard to quality: We cannot appreciate the greatness of the good accomplished for a person when we help him lift himself up even a little bit higher!

Aside from the immeasurable worth that results from performing even one less sin and doing one more mitzvah [commandment], a sin would have led to another sin and one mitzvah leads to another mitzvah.

Moreover, with each mitzvah, one becomes more fit to properly appreciate a true Torah concept and to have the potential to apply that concept in actual life. In practice, this means having one Jew put on a yarmulke, another, tefillin, a third, tzitzis, a fourth, inspiring him towards love for his fellow man and proper character traits, a fifth, encouraging him to observe taharas hamishpachah [the laws of family purity], a sixth, to teach his children Torah, and so on.

...It is difficult in a letter to tally all of the particular areas where you have potential to make yourself more effective. What is most fundamental is, as my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, hk"m, would say: "We have to talk less and do more."

All of the above concerns your work with others. It is, however, with regard to one's work with one's own self that the yetzer hara [evil inclination] presents the greatest obstacles. We will leave that topic, however, for another time.

## A MITZVA A DAY

**Positive Commandment 73:** *Confessing a sin*  
Feeling regret is the first step of doing teshuvah followed by asking forgiveness. This requires us to actually voice what we have done wrong. This verbal confession is the main step of doing teshuvah. This is learned out from the words (in the Torah) "And he shall confess that he has sinned" (Leviticus 5:5).

## A WORD from the Director

*This week we continue the cycle of study of Ethics of the Fathers on Shabbat afternoons, going back to Chapter One, whose opening lines express a fundamental and axiomatic concept in Judaism:*

*"Moses received the Torah from Sinai and passed it on to Joshua; Joshua to the Elders; the Elders to the Prophets; and the Prophets passed it on to the Men of the Great Assembly."*

*Why is it important for us to know this chain of transmission? To teach us that the Torah we have in our possession today is the very same Torah that was revealed to Moses thousands of years ago. And, as links in the ongoing chain of tradition, it is our duty as Jewish parents to transmit the Torah to our children.*

*The Torah has an infinite number of facets. Some parts are narrative; others are legal codes, while still other sections are allegorical. The Five Books of Moses, Mishna, Talmud, Midrashim, Shulchan Aruch, Chasidut - all are part and parcel of the G-dly body of knowledge we call Torah.*

*Some parts of the Torah were meant to be written down; others were transmitted orally until the arrival of the appropriate era to put them into writing.*

*At Sinai, Moses received the entirety of Torah with all its potential for extrapolation, 'even that which the scholar would innovate in the future.' A halachic decision rendered today is Torah, revealed to man according to a Divinely-inspired 'timetable' of revelation. This process will reach its culmination in the Messianic era, when Moshiach will teach the world a new and deeper dimension of Torah, as it states in Isaiah 51:4: "For Torah shall proceed from Me, and I will make My judgment suddenly for a light of the people."*

*May it happen at once.*

J.I. Gutnick

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

If a king arises from the House of David who meditates on the Torah and occupies himself with the commandments like his ancestor David, in accordance with the written and oral Torah, and he will prevail upon all of Israel to walk in [the ways of the Torah] and strengthen its breaches, and he will fight the battles of G-d - it may be assumed that he is Moshiach. (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah Laws of Kings)

# It Happened Once...



When the second Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Dov Ber (known as the "Mittler Rebbe") passed away, there were three prospective successors.

Though all three were qualified for the leadership of the Chabad movement, all three declined the importuning of the Chasidim. The three were: Reb Chaim Avraham, the brother of Rabbi Dov Ber and youngest son of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism, Reb Menachem Nachum, the Mittler Rebbe's son, and the Tzemach Tzedek, the son of Rabbi Shneur Zalman's eldest daughter.

As time passed, the pressure among the Chasidim to find a successor escalated. It seemed that no solution was in sight. Finally, in despair, two of the Chasidim declared, "It is impossible to be without a Rebbe!" They decided to travel to Ruzhin with the intention of accepting the Ruzhiner Rebbe as their Rebbe.

The Ruzhiner Rebbe, Reb Yisrael, was the grandson of the Mezritcher Maggid, and so highly thought of for his enormous piety that he was called the "Holy Ruzhiner."

These two Chasidim travelled to Ruzhin for Shavuot. As common to many other Chasidic groups, the custom there was that the Ruzhiner distributed shirayim - food from his table - to his Chasidim. It was Yom Tov and the Ruzhiner began to distribute wine from his own cup to each of the Chasidim. The two Chabad Chasidim also wanted to participate and receive wine from the Ruzhiner and they proffered their cups for the "cup of blessing".

The Ruzhiner refused them, saying, "If you want some wine, you may take it yourself, but I will not give it to you."

The two were very surprised and protested, "Why won't you give it to us, after all we have come here in order to accept you as our Rebbe?"

Upon hearing those words, the Ruzhiner sat down at the table and began to deliver a deep Chasidic discourse based on the theme, "The Giving of the Torah began, not at Mount Sinai, but at the burning bush".

He explained in great depth that when G-d gave Moses the task of taking the Children of Israel out of Egypt, G-d told Moses to "tell the Jews that I have remembered you and want to take you out of Egypt."

Moses' reaction was strange. He replied that he was afraid the Jews would ask him what G-d's name is. To this G-d replied, "Tell them My Name is, 'I will be what I will be.'"

The Ruzhiner posed the question, "Why did Moses ask this question of G-d? For Moses did know G-d's name as he had been handed down a tradition that it was spelled Yud-Kei-Vav-Kei! And why did G-d answer, 'I will be what I will be.'"

The Ruzhiner elucidated the point through the use of numerical equivalents which are often used to explicate texts. He explained that the numerical equivalent of Yud-Kei-Vav-Kei is 26, while that of the words "I will be what I will be" equals 441 which is "emet" - truth. G-d desired that Moses be able to reveal to the Jews the truth.

"The word 'emet'," continued the Ruzhiner, "is also an acronym for, 'Torat Menachem Emet' ["the Torah of Menachem is truth"].

When the two Chabad Chasidim heard these words being spoken by the Holy Ruzhiner, they realized that he was intimating that they should return home to the city of Lubavitch and that the Tzemach Tzedek, whose name was Menachem Mendel, should become Rebbe.

Upon their arrival in Lubavitch two weeks later, these two Chasidim found that the Tzemach Tzedek had already acquiesced. They repeated to their fellows the discourse they had heard from the mouth of the Holy Ruzhiner in regard to the word "emet," intimating that the Tzemach Tzedek should be the Rebbe.

The Chasidim recalled with amazement that the Tzemach Tzedek had delivered the same discourse that very same Shavuot, but when he reached the part which identified the acronym of emet with his name, Menachem, he merely hesitated and smiled to himself. Now, they all understood why he had smiled.

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, "Thus shall you bless the children of Israel" (Num. 6:23)**

The portion of the Priestly Blessing follows the discussion of the Nazarite in the Torah. Why? To teach us that just as the Nazarite abstains from wine, so must the priest abstain before blessing the Jewish people. (*Talmud, Taanit*)

### The Priestly Blessing

Why do kohanim (priests) raise their hands when blessing the Jewish people? Our Sages taught that while giving blessings is both proper and appropriate, when someone is in need it is not enough. It is essential that we also "raise our hands" and do something to actually help the person in need.

**This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon... their charge shall be supervised by Itamar, son of Aaron the priest (Num. 4:28)**

The name "Gershon" is derived from the word meaning "to expel," alluding to the expulsion of evil. "Itamar" is related to the word for speech, alluding to words of Torah. The juxtaposition of the two names teaches that speaking words of Torah severs evil from good and expels it. (*Ohr HaTorah*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS NASSO 14 SIVAN • 6 JUNE

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:50 PM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:30 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	4:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:51 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN – FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	MAARIV:	5:50 PM

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 5 JUNE 2009



BEGINS		ENDS
4:50	MELBOURNE	5:51
4:53	ADELAIDE	5:52
4:43	BRISBANE	5:38
6:10	DARWIN	7:02
4:39	GOLD COAST	5:39
5:02	PERTH	5:59
4:35	SYDNEY	5:34
4:32	LAUNCESTON	5:36
4:54	AUCKLAND	5:54
4:41	WELLINGTON	5:44

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

יצוקללה"ה נבג"מ ז"ע

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