

LampLighter

21 Tishrei
Shemini Atzeres

899

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

Of all the holidays of the month of Tishrei, it is perhaps the very last, Shemini Atzeret, which best expresses G-d's love for the Jewish people. The name itself, "Atzeret," comes from the Hebrew word "to stop" or "delay." G-d detains us, as it were, for one more day before we return to our regular lives.

The Midrash likens this to a king who holds a seven-day celebration for his sons. On the eighth day, when it comes time for them to leave, he is reluctant to see them go and asks them to remain for one more day of festivities.

A question is asked: How can one more day of celebration make the inevitable departure less painful? What is gained by pushing it off? We must therefore conclude that there is something about this special holiday, Shemini Atzeret, which actually prevents the departure from taking place at all.

This concept is reflected in the precise language of the Midrash. "Your departure is difficult," the king tells his sons, not "our departure."

This alludes to the fact that G-d never abandons the Jewish people; His love for us is constant and eternal. "Your departure is difficult," G-d tells us. G-d doesn't want us to abandon Him; He therefore requests that we celebrate one more holiday together which will serve to strengthen our bond.

The key to maintaining a close connection with G-d is achdut - unity.

When Jews are united with one another our relationship with G-d is strong. When, however, there is strife and division, it forms a wedge between the Jewish people and our Father in heaven.

The entire theme of Sukot is Jewish unity; indeed, the mitzva of the Four Kinds represents the four types of Jews coming together to be bound into one entity. Nonetheless, after Sukot is over and its positive effect has dissipated, the possibility still exists that the individual elements will revert to their previous separateness and dissociation.

In order to prevent this from happening, G-d asks us to remain with Him a while longer, to celebrate a holiday which will secure our unity in an everlasting manner.

On Shemini Atzeret, a single sacrifice is brought in the Holy Temple, expressing the idea of the indivisible nature of the Jewish people. Furthermore, this concept is also reflected in the way the holiday is celebrated: great scholars and simple people alike dancing with the Torah scroll, without distinction between them.

The absolute unity with which we conclude the holidays of Tishrei thus guarantees that these feelings will carry over into the rest of the year, effectively preventing that we will ever "depart" from holiness, G-d forbid.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Start Again

A Page Turner

When was the last time you spent an entire year reading a two thousand-page novel and then launched into a second reading of it on the very day you finished? When was the last time you spent an entire year reading this novel for the second time and then launched into a third reading of it on the very day you finished it again?

Have you ever found a novel that has so captivated your interest, so triggered your fascination that you simply couldn't put it down? That you simply had to read it every single day of your life? I believe you have, and it's called the Torah. The author of this book is G-d and the content sure is novel...

A Book of Instruction

On Simchat Torah we finish a yearlong recital/study of this book and as soon as we read the last verse we turn around and launch into a renewed reading of the first verse. We do so to indicate that the Torah is not just a book we read for pleasure or for its literary value. To us it is a manual of instruction: a source of direction: a book of life. The very word "Torah" is rooted in the Hebrew word "Hora'ah" which means "instruction".

What We Learn From It

We read it every day and never grow weary of it. We finish the book, but start over again for we are never truly finished. We may have completed the study for now, but we are never complete. There always remains something more to learn, something more to accomplish, something more to improve upon.

The story is told of a diligent student who approached his rabbi and proudly informs him that he has completed a yearlong study of the entire Torah. "I don't doubt that you have studied the Torah," said the rabbi, "but I am more interested in knowing what your Torah study has taught you..."

As we complete the annual cycle of Torah reading this year let's reflect on the Torah's impact on our personal lives. Let's resolve to increase the amount of time spent studying the Torah. Let's resolve to sign up for the classes offered at our Shul. Let's resolve not only to study the Torah but also to learn from it.



The Three Fingers

Simchat Torah in the "Soldiers' Synagogue" of the town S. in old Russia was a wonderful sight. There was true and genuine rejoicing with the Torah in that little synagogue, where most of the members were one-time cantonists.

The most impressive sight was when at the height of the rejoicing, one of the old soldiers, while dancing with a Scroll of the Torah in his arms, would puff his shirt open, disclosing deep scars on his chest and shoulders, and would sing, "Torah, Torah, I love thee."

After the *hakafot* we, the youngsters in the little synagogue, gathered around him as he was trying to catch his breath, a huge smile on his glistening face and asked him how he got the scars.

"Ahh! These?" He replied "These are my medals of honor!! Ha haa!!"

When he saw that they really wanted to know he became a bit more serious and began, still with a twinkle in his eye, looking from child to child.

"When I was eight years old, something like you children, there was a big meeting of all the Jews in the town in my house that lasted into the night.

My father, of blessed memory, was the Rabbi of the town and he led the meeting. I listened from behind my door which was opened a bit and heard everything.

It seems that the Czar's soldiers had come earlier that day and demanded that the town produce twenty young men for the army or they would induct everyone, and no one wanted it to be their son.

The rich people said they would give money, big money to the community if their sons were exempted while the others, my father included, insisted on a fair and equal lottery. It was really serious, there was yelling, even crying and lasted most of the night but finally the lottery idea won.

I fell asleep after a few hours of their arguing, but suddenly I was awakened by a scream. I knew it was my mother and I understood immediately what had happened. I was one of those chosen!

My mother came into my room, crying and weeping almost uncontrollably, hugging me and kissing me with no words.

But I told her, 'Mommy, you don't have to cry. I'll come back. I promise. You'll see!' But she answered, "Shimon, my beloved son, your soul is more in danger than your body!"

"But I answered, 'Mommy, I swear I will always remain a Jew!'

The next day my father spoke to me for an hour and although he didn't cry at all, I knew that his soul was shattered. And, in fact, he died just a few weeks later, a young man, from a broken heart.

But a few days later two 'snatchers' came into town and began taking children forcefully from their parents. It seems that the rich people couldn't stand the pain of losing their children and hired them. All the parents tried to hide their children but it didn't work. My mother also hid me in a barrel but they burst into our house, beat my mother and when I jumped out to protect her they took me as well.

The next day there was a wagon full of us, hands tied to one another like animals with armed guards on horseback around us. But somehow my mother managed to break through, toss me a bag (which I later discovered contained Tefillin and a prayer book and said 'Don't forget the day of your Bar-Mitzva'. Those were the last words I ever heard her say.

Three years later I was still a year away from my Bar-Mitzva and I had succeeded in keeping my promise to my mother I did not give in to them. But I knew I couldn't hold out much longer. The tortures and punishments they subjected me to were indescribable. I was a leader and an example to the others so they decided that they would put all their efforts in me. I was beaten, starved, deprived of sleep, warm clothing and kept in solitary confinement and as time went on it got worse.

"That's how I got my 'medals'." He said, touching his chest and continued his story.

"After they had tortured me intensively for several weeks they made a proposition. The general himself was going to visit the camp and if I converted before him they would give me rights, warm bed, good food, a high rank in the army and even let me see my parents again (my father had already passed away, but I didn't know).

'I told them to give me three days to think.'

In those three days they kept up the tortures and didn't let up on me even a bit. Just that the officials kept visiting and promising me, they wanted to be sure that I wasn't going to let them down.

That night I had a dream. I dreamt that I was in my home town by a river. I was very thirsty and jumped into the river to cool off and to drink when suddenly the current began

to draw me down. I fought with all my might but it was a losing battle, I felt that in one second all would be lost. Then, suddenly, I saw a small branch floating on the water and, in desperation I reached for it. As soon as I grabbed it it became the last link of a long chain attached that was to a tree on the dry land. Each link had a Hebrew name on it, on the closest to the tree was written 'Avraham', the one after it, 'Yitzchak' Thousands of links until the one before the one I was holding my father's name, Shlomo and the one in my hand, was written .. My name!

But mine was beginning to crack!!
"NO, NO, NO!!" I screamed hysterically and woke in a sweat.

When the day came, soldiers came for me, dressed me up and took me, with themselves as an 'honour' guard to the ceremony. There sat the general with royal escorts on all sides, everyone was smiling.

They presented me as the boy who saw the light and was willing to leave Judaism for the church. All eyes were on me.

I noticed when they took me on the stage, that the walls were decorated with several pairs of large crossed swords, with two smaller swords beneath them.

I reached behind me, pulled one of the smaller swords with its sheath from the wall, drew it from its sheath and declared.

"In the name of his glorious majesty the Czar, this is for the three days I said I would consider changing, G-d forbid, my religion! I am a Jew and I will always be a Jew!!
SHEMA YISROEL...!!"

And before they knew what was happening I put the pinky, ring finger and index finger of my left hand on the table before me (careful to hide my middle, Tefillin finger) and, in one powerful move, chopped them off with the sword and held them up for all to see!! I was spraying blood on the pure white uniforms of the officials!

The crowd let out a gasp. The officials left the room in confusion, they had suffered a clear defeat by a Jewish boy.

"I don't know how but I didn't die. The bleeding stopped, I got better and even served ten more years in the army until they discharged me. But they never talked to me about religion again.

"I didn't know it at the time but I wasn't the only such story, But I heard that when the Czar Nicholas, may his name be cursed forever, heard what I had done it was the last straw. They knew they were defeated and the entire Cantonist plan was dropped. Thank G-d!

NOW It's Simchas Torah tonight!! Let's dance!!"

And saying this he leaped up and began dancing again and singing "Sisu V'Shimchu B'Simchas Torah!!"

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ISSUE 899

MOSHIACH MATTERS

"I will rejoice and celebrate on Simchat Torah. Tzemach (Moshiach) will certainly come on Simchat Torah." (From the prayers recited on Simchat Torah)

All-Merciful Father, in Your goodwill, bestow goodness upon Zion; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. For in You alone we trust, sublime and exalted G-d and King, master of the worlds. (From the Hakafot prayer recited on Simchat Torah when circling with the Torah scrolls)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



DOUBLE JOY

6 Marcheshvan, 5727 (1967)

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 12th, in which you also refer to a previous letter you wrote.

As you can well imagine, there is a great deal of correspondence that reaches me during the period of the month of Tishrei and prior to it, so that a delay is unavoidable, not only because of the volume of correspondence, but also of the various matters of the month of Tishrei and the intervening festivals, as well as the many visitors that come to spend this month with us here.

With regard to the question of hatzlacha [success] in study and the gaining of knowledge, surely you know of the promise of our Sages, "Try hard and you will succeed." Thus success is largely something which depends on the student himself. However, inasmuch as everything requires Divine help, including also that the "try hard" as well as the "and you will succeed" should be satisfactory, the way to obtain this is through devotion and diligence in the study of the Torah and the observance of the mitzvot with hiddur [enhancement]. This is mainly a matter of will and determination, for nothing stands in the way of the will.

Having just concluded the month of Tishrei, culminating with the joyous festival of Simchat Torah, you have surely heard the explanation of the Alter Rebbe [Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chasidism] that the joy of Simchat Torah is a double one: the Jews rejoicing with the Torah, and the Torah rejoicing with the Jews, based on the verses, "Israel rejoices with their Maker" and "G-d rejoices with His works."

Since all the festivals of the month of Tishrei conclude with Simchat Torah, it means that this mutual rejoicing can be achieved only through the fulfillment of the Torah and mitzvot, as it is stated in the Zohar, "Israel, the Torah, and the Holy One blessed be He, are all one" - the Torah placed in the centre as the connecting link between Israel and G-d.

We have but one Torah, comprising both Nigleh [the revealed] and Chasidut [the mystical], which must be studied with a view to fulfillment of the mitzvot with hiddur, as emphasized by our Sages that the essential matter with regards to Torah study is the deed. This brings G-d's blessings for hatzlacha not only spiritually, but also materially.

Hoping to hear good news from you,
With blessing

A WORD from the Director

This coming Tuesday is the day of the passing of the great Chassidic leader and advocate for the Jewish people, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740-1810). Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was a close disciple of the second leader of the Chassidic movement, Rabbi DovBer, the Maggid of Mezritch. He is best known for his love for every Jew and his impassioned advocating on their behalf before the Almighty.

There are a multitude of stories that reveal his remarkable personality, of which this is just a short one. As R' Levi was walking to shul one morning he encountered a Jew wearing his tallit, teffilin and oiling the wheels of his carriage. Some of us might have pointed out his disrespect ..., but R' Levi turned his face heavenward saying "look G-d how precious you are in the eyes of your children. Even while oiling their carriage wheels they wear their tallit and teffilin".

As we approach the end of Succos / Simchat Torah, which concludes the high holidays, we have had a lot of food for thought, but perhaps the most emphasized is that of unity and love for one another. Just one example of many, on Simchat Torah we have the custom of every Jewish man being called up to the Torah (an "aliya"). (Through him, his entire family is given an aliya.) Although this involves much time and one might think that it would be improper to delay the prayers of the entire congregation for this reason, this practice is followed. Why? Because it is the genuine desire of each member of the community that every person present receive an aliya.

In other words, every Jew is connected, every Jew wants to share in another Jew's simcha - rejoicing, no Jew really minds being "put out" a little for the good and well-being of his fellow Jew. This essential connectedness and unity amongst Jews can be clearly seen through each Jew receiving an aliya on Simchat Torah. G-d willing we will all rejoice together on Simchat Torah which should lead to the ultimate rejoicing with the coming of Moshiach Now!

J.I. Gutnick

T'fillat Geshem, a prayer said on Shmini Atzeret to indicate the commencement of the rainy season, is one of the serious prayers of the year. It is recited during the repetition of the Musaf Amidah on Shmini Atzeret. In some congregations, the Chazzan wears a white cloak and hat (as on Yom Kippur), and recites the prayer in a solemn High Holiday style melody.

Before the start of the silent Musaf Amidah on Shmini Atzeret, the beadle bangs on a table and announces to the congregation that they will begin reciting "Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hageshem". This mention of rain is not meant as a formal request for rain, only as recognition that the source of rain is from G-d.

T'fillat Geshem consists of a collection of liturgy which indicates the change in the 2nd blessing of the Amidah from the prayer for dew, which is said in the summer [according to the season in Israel] to the start of the prayer for rain, "Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hageshem" ("He causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall").

Although this custom is of German-Polish origin and is only practiced amongst Ashkenazic Jewry, Sephardic communities have liturgy of their own which they call "Tikkun Geshem".

It Happened Once...



On Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah we finish reading the Torah — and then immediately start reading from the beginning again. Most Jewish communities around the world celebrate Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah with hakafot - the community dances around the shul with the sifrei Torah - Torah scrolls. Simchat Torah is such a joyous holiday because it celebrates our most precious gift, the Holy Torah. Without the Torah, we would be like all the other nations. With the Torah, we have a spiritual road map to guide us in life.

The following amazing true story illustrates one Jew's devotion on this Yom Tov.

Shemini Atzeret was fast approaching and Rabbi Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam, the Klausenburger Rebbe, had decided to spend that day alone with his Creator. Although he was incarcerated in Mehdorf, a forced labour camp, he was not about to let the Nazis ruin his Yom Tov. "Let those barbaric animals do what they may, but I will not work on that day," he said. Arrangements were begun to provide the Rebbe with a work furlough for the upcoming Yom Tov.

In Klausenburg, Chassidim had come from afar to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe's devotion to Hashem and His Torah. Fathers had hoisted their young children onto their shoulders to observe the Rebbe's fervent dancing. The Chassidim – both young and old – had enthusiastically danced as they added yet another link to the chain of tradition stretching from Mount Sinai.

But those were the glorious days of yesteryear. The shtetl of Klausenburg no longer existed. It was only a distant memory. It had been destroyed, set afire by the cursed Germans. The Jews who had lived there had been brutally driven into the gas chambers and crematoria. The inmates of Mehdorf were the fortunate ones.

All the forced labourers harboured memories of the festive aura of Succot that had permeated the narrow streets of Klausenburg, each succah more beautifully adorned than the next, men grandly marching through the streets with their own "weapons of battle" — the fragrant etrog accompanied by the regal lulav, its stalwart companion.

Dr. Greenbaum, the Jewish camp doctor, was willing to help the Rebbe refrain from work on Shemini Atzeret. Bribes were distributed and, on erev Yom Tov, the Rebbe was admitted to the infirmary. One of the Chassidim, Moshe Einhorn, found out that the Nazis would be conducting a selektsia on the holiday, to weed out all those who were too weak to work and send them to their deaths. Their first stop was to be the infirmary.

Moishe pleaded with Dr. Greenbaum to send the Rebbe back to work.

The doctor ordered the Rebbe to return to the barracks, the Rebbe was resolved to refrain from any physical labour. He refused to come to roll call. His absence was noted and guards were sent to inspect the barracks.

The S.S. men found the "Rabbiner" praying. They angrily seized him, threw him down on the cold floor and mercilessly dragged him outside. They struck him repeatedly, first lashing out with truncheons, then kicking him with their metal tipped boots.

When it was over, several inmates carried the bleeding Rebbe to the infirmary. Then they reluctantly set out to work. They assumed that they would never see the Rebbe again.

At the end of the workday, a few brave inmates rushed to the dilapidated infirmary to find out what had happened to their Rebbe. Fearing the worst, they

stealthily made their way through the building, peeking into the poorly maintained rooms.

Finally, they found him. A rickety stool stood in the centre of the room. On top of the stool were the torn remnants of a gemara. The Rebbe, his face aglow with an otherworldly radiance, was dancing (yes, dancing!) around this makeshift bima, celebrating the holiday.

There were no fathers hoisting their children onto their shoulders to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe. There were no Chassidim to dance enthusiastically. Yet, perhaps as never before, the Rebbe had united with his Creator, with the understanding that indeed, "Ein ... od... milvado," "There is nothing and no one besides Him!"

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

You have been shown to know, that the L-rd is G-d, there is none else aside from Him — from the verses recited on Simchat Torah. The entire month of Elul, Rosh Hashana, the blowing of the shofar, the Ten Days of Repentance, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, the Four Kinds and Hoshana Rabba are only preparations for the, "You have shown to make it known" of Simchat Torah. (*Rabbi Moshe of Kobrin*)

On Simchat Torah we finish reading the Torah and begin reading it once again. The last letter of the Torah is "lamed" (found in the word Yisrael — Israel). The first letter of the Torah is the "beit" in B'reishis ("In the beginning"). These two letters together spell the word lev, heart. The Torah is the heart of the Jewish people and demands that we view each other as one singular heart, pulsating, beating and bringing life to our world and every one of its inhabitants. (*Likutei Torah*)

On Simchat Torah, all the advocating angels rush to the defence of the Jewish people and berate the Satan. "How can you accuse such a wonderful nation of any wrongdoing!" they cry. "Just look at them - men, women and children, going to their synagogues to rejoice with the holy Torah!" Hour after hour the angels describe the joyful dancing and the love even the smallest Jewish children show for the Torah as they kiss the scrolls with their tiny mouths, until the Satan slinks away in shame... (*Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber of Lubavitch*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

SEMINI ATZERET • SIMCHAT TORAH 22 TISHREI • 10 OCTOBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:13 PM
	MINCHA:	7:25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS – MAARIV:	7:50 PM
	HAKAFOT:	8:45 PM

SHABBOS/YOM TOV MORNING, SHEMINI ATZERET • 10 OCTOBER:		
SHACHARIS:		10:00 AM
YIZKOR:	11:00 AM	(APPROX)
MINCHA:		7:10 PM
MAARIV:		8:10 PM
LIGHT CANDLES AFTER:		8:11 PM
HAKAFOT:		9:30 PM

SUNDAY, SIMCHAT TORAH • 11 OCTOBER:		
SHACHARIS:		10:00 AM
MINCHA:		7:10 PM
YOM TOV ENDS:		8:12 PM

WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN- FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:25 PM
	MAARIV:	8:15 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 9, 10 OCTOBER 2009



9th	10th	11th
7:13	8:11	MELBOURNE 8:12
7:06	8:03	ADELAIDE 8:04
5:34	6:27	BRISBANE 6:28
6:25	7:15	DARWIN 7:15
5:32	6:26	GOLD COAST 6:26
6:05	7:01	PERTH 7:01
6:45	7:41	SYDNEY 7:42
6:54	7:51	CANBERRA 7:52
7:08	8:10	LAUNCESTON 8:11
7:13	8:11	AUCKLAND 8:12
7:16	8:17	WELLINGTON 8:18

For the 9th of Oct. one should not light after the given times. For the 10th one should light after the given time from a pre-existing flame only.

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה נב"מ ז"ע

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