

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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November 24, 2018

VaYishlach

16 Kislev, 5779

Light Bulbs

The light bulb is an important invention, one that illuminates our lives and improves our standard of living.

Although history attributes the invention of the incandescent light bulb to Thomas Edison, historians list 22 inventors of incandescent lamps prior Edison. And, of course these scientists did not create the properties of electricity and vacuum physics. They merely harnessed some of the natural resources that G-d put into his world for the benefit of mankind.

But Edison is given credit because he was able to develop a suitable material for the filament and a means of creating a vacuum in which the light could burn.

We can find multiple similarities between the development of the light-bulb and the way in which Chasidic teaching and the deeper dimension of the Torah was revealed to us laymen.

The inner dimension of the Torah too, stems from properties dating back to Sinai. Yet it took many centuries for it to become a vital component of Jewish life.

This phenomenon was "observed" by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai but remained hidden even from the sages for centuries long. Then it was "rediscovered" by the Kabbalists of the medieval age, and finally clarified and refined by the Arizal to be released to the community of sages to use this wisdom - like light-bulbs - to illuminate their own lives and study halls, though not yet to the masses.

Only in 1698 the Baal Shem Tov came to this world with the mission of finally inventing the "light-bulb" of Chasidut. He developed a model which was now being manufactured by his many students, who became lighthouses in their respective regions, and attracted thousands of followers who could benefit from its light and warmth.

Subsequently, in 1745, came Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the leader who made that "light bulb" available to every single Jew regardless of his or her prior knowledge or affiliation. He provided an easy-to-follow manual of how to use the "light-bulb" to illuminate our thought, speech and actions and bring warmth and joy to every Jewish experience.

As with the light bulb, the factors that transformed the new invention to become more useful to all were an effective incandescent material and a higher vacuum. The Baal Shem recognized the G-dly soul that is latent in every Jew, especially the simple ones, the material that allows them to realize their potential as burning flames and luminaries. The vacuum which allows the light of Chasidic teachings to shine and be more effective than ever is the generations that come right before the coming of Moshiach, that are so spiritually numb - the intense darkness before the dawn.

This model is "economically viable," because G-d has given every Jew a mission, and Chasidut teaches us how to direct our G-d given energy and talents towards that mission.

Until the light-bulb was invented, people managed to get through life. Now, modern-day life relies on it so heavily that it is no longer a luxury but an inseparable part of everyone's life. Chasidut too, was a luxury when it was revealed, but now we are required to deal with spiritual challenges and opportunities that are indeed unmanageable if not for Chasidut.

One more point of light: the incandescent light-bulb is in the process of being replaced with brighter, stronger and longer-lasting sources of light like LED lamps; Chasidut too, is just a "taste" of the "Torah of Moshiach" which we will soon be able to enjoy in its entirety. And the good news is that it's real close, and we could make it happen sooner.

(by Rabbi Levi Liberow from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

Community Information of Interest

November 24: Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. **Democracy, Peace, and its Discontents: The State of Israel and the Jewish World in the late 1970s.** *Reluctant חתונה*: - *The Tortuous Peace-Process of 1978 and the Treaty of 1979.* This lecture will begin at **8:00 p.m.** and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

The Heritage of Yaakov

In our parashah, Yaakov meets Esav for the first time in more than 20 years. Near the end of the parashah, we read (36:6), "Esav took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household—his livestock and all his animals, and all the wealth he had acquired in the land of Canaan—and went to a land because of his brother Yaakov." R' Chaim Palagi z"l (1788-1868; rabbi of Izmir, Turkey) writes, perhaps quoting a midrash: Yaakov reasoned, "The wicked are never satiated in their desire for money." What did he do, therefore? He placed all of his wealth on one side and [a deed to] Eretz Yisrael on the other side, and he offered Esav a choice. Whereupon, Esav went to the Ishmaelites for advice. They said, "The Canaanites, the Prizites, etc. also claim the land. Take the money, and Yaakov will be left with nothing." Esav did so, whereupon Yaakov said, "Now leave my land." Esav did so, and as a reward, his descendants received the Roman Empire.

R' Palagi continues: In this light we may understand the verse (Yeshayah 58:14), "Then [i.e., if you honor Shabbat] you shall be granted pleasure with Hashem and I shall mount you astride the heights of the world; and I will provide you the heritage of your forefather Yaakov." Why is Eretz Yisrael called, "the heritage of [our] forefather Yaakov" rather than the heritage of Avraham or Yitzchak? Because it was due to the special efforts of Yaakov Avinu that Eretz Yisrael was preserved for us and for no one else. (Artzot Ha'chaim p.22)

(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

"The Rav's Friday Night Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men"

will take place next Friday night (VaYeshev, November 30)
at 8:00 p.m. and will be held at
the home of **Mr. & Mrs. Nechemia Gertner**.

If you are coming from Ranchleigh, please feel free to use 2318 Smith Ave. as a shortcut.
Questions can be submitted in advance to rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com or anonymously in the shul mailbox

Yahrzeits This Week:

Yossi Stateman 16 Kislev - Friday night / Shabbat for mother Baila Perel bas Dov Ber

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 11/23 — 15 Kislev
Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:28 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.
Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.

Shabbat, 11/24 — 16 Kislev
Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:24 a.m.
Berachot Gemora Shiur — 3:45 p.m.
Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 4:15 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 5:31 p.m.

Sunday, 11/25 — 17 Kislev
Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Monday, 11/26 — 18 Kislev
Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 11/27 — 19 Kislev
Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/28 — 20 Kislev
Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Thursday, 11/29 — 21 Kislev
Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Friday, 11/30 — 22 Kislev
Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:25 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:25 p.m.
Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.