

LAMPLIGHTER

4 Nissan
Vayikra

1078

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Vayikra, which begins the book of Leviticus, deals with the service of offerings and sacrifices which were brought in the Sanctuary and the Holy Temples. Although today we cannot bring physical sacrifices, the Torah is eternal and applies in any day and age. In fact, each Jew is likened to a sanctuary, whose purpose is likewise to bring G-dliness into the world. We may therefore apply the lessons we learn from these offerings to guide us in our own worship of G-d.

The "tamid" (perpetual) offering was the foundation of the entire daily service, for it was the first to be offered in the morning and the last one to be brought at the end of the day. The tamid was relatively inexpensive, consisting of a lamb, a little oil, and some flour and salt. The tamid was not brought by individuals, but rather, all Jews contributed a small amount of money every year with which to buy the necessary items. This offering brought down G-d's blessings for all Jews, wherever they might live.

We learn from this that G-d does not require us to give up all of our material possessions without leaving anything for our own use. What is required, however, is that whatever we do offer must be given wholeheartedly and with sincerity. Quality is more important than quantity, and our service of G-d should be conducted with joy and enthusiasm.

Another lesson to be learned is that although the tamid was offered only twice each day, it was called a "perpetual" offering because its influence was felt throughout the rest of the day.

The same is true in our own lives. Most of our daily tasks are devoted to necessary and mundane matters, and we are often too busy to sit and contemplate G-dliness a whole day long. That is why, as soon as we open our eyes in the morning, we bring our own "perpetual offering," to express the same utter devotion and dedication to G-d that was expressed by the tamid: "Modeh ani lefanecha, Melech chai ve'kayam, sh'hechezarta bi nishmati b'chemla rabba emunatecha - I offer thanks to You, living and eternal King, for having compassionately restored my soul in me. Great is Your faithfulness." With this declaration, we not only thank G-d for having restored our soul, but designate Him as our King, whose sovereignty we willingly accept.

The recitation of "Modeh Ani," the saying of which takes only a moment, sets the proper tone for the rest of the day. Thus do we bring our own tamid offering even today, enabling us to remain connected to G-dliness even when occupied with our daily affairs, and ensuring that all our endeavours will be blessed with success.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Am I Only Human?

By Baruch Epstein

Chassidic teaching elaborates on the dual and duelling forces within us. On the one side is the human soul; instinctive, practical and obsessed with survival. In the other corner is the G-dly, transcendent soul; no personal agenda, completely committed to executing G-d's will.

Despite the common overlap of interests - most things that are good for the individual are good for G-d - Chassidic teaching does not tolerate a "live and let live" coexistence. Being human or even humane won't cut it. We are not "only human," we are part G-dly; and our infinite side won't rest on good enough. We must outdo the preprogrammed natural kindness of humanity; we must add value beyond the factory-installed equipment we came with. We must be G-dly, not earthly.

An animal does what it does, it makes no choices, it makes no mistakes, and in fact it "makes" nothing at all. Lions eat zebras and raccoons knock over garbage pails. We can be annoyed but never angry with them; they simply do what they do. We must never be raccoons. We must never settle for doing what we do simply because we are so programmed.

To be sure, our propensities are often fine and upstanding, yet if they are just our natural tendencies then we have not "done" anything. Grass grows and angels praise G-d - because they have no alternative, they are hardwired to do so. We must do more, infinitely more. It is not sufficient to passively allow the principal capital, our inborn skills, to just increase at the standard rate, that doesn't justify the risk G-d took of entrusting a part of Him within us.

The Book of Leviticus begins with the laws of sacrifices. G-d demands that we surrender to Him our animal, our innate instincts; that we live consciously, making strides that outpace the inevitable. This is a personal message in the sacrificial procedure. "A man who offers from among you an offering to G-d..." refers to more than surrendering our bad habits, it means doing more than can "reasonably" be expected; it means aligning with our G-dly, infinitely productive side.

Avodah (service), one of the pillars upon which the world stands (Ethics 1:1), includes the sacrificial process and its personal parallel, the duty to stretch beyond the intuitive.

When the serial failure suddenly succeeds, when father and son turn the page on thirty years of estrangement, they have done the unpredictable; they have surrendered their animal, their well-worn trends, to G-d. They experience the miraculous, they serve G-d instead of their survival instinct and they are free. The trajectory had them headed for repetitive failure and now they have exceeded the conventional, they have caused G-d's presence to be evident in the world.

2, 4, 6 does not dictate that 8 must follow. We can achieve the undreamed of, past (disastrous) performance is not a guarantee of future (calamitous) results.

So we need not be "only human"; boring automatons, destined to repeat our patterns till the end of our days. We can change our patterns when we surrender the animalistic impulses we dutifully follow, when we offer them on the altar and follow its smoky residue up to the heavens. It's scary out there beyond the known, the comfortable and the familiar, it is always easier to stay with the "same old same old," yet that's where value is added and a dwelling place for G-d is made.

Slice of LIFE

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, lived his last ten years in the U.S.A. where he laid the groundwork for the massive, worldwide Chabad outreach movement that is serving the world today.

Even in those days his son-in-law and future successor, the Ramash (Rabbi Menachem Mendel) began to reveal supernatural qualities of leadership.

For instance, one Shabbat afternoon he was sitting with a group of some twenty Chassidim in a 'Farbrenge' (Chassidic gathering) speaking of the importance of loving all of G-d's creatures - especially each and every Jew. "Each Jew, no matter what he/she does or thinks, is a Holy Temple with the potential to reveal the Creator and a desire to follow His Torah. And it is our job to get every Jew out there in the street to realize this."

The words made a big impression and it was obvious that he was implying that drastic action must be taken. In those days (the early '40s) there was no such thing as 'outreach' Judaism; 'invading' the world of non-observant Jews with Torah was completely unheard of.

So it was inevitable that one of those present expressed his wonder. "What, do you mean we should stop strangers in the street, ask them if they're Jewish and tell them to do the commandments? They will think we're crazy! Who would do such a thing? How can it be done?"

The Ramash stood up and said "Come I'll show you".

He stood up and walked out of the synagogue and they all followed him.

They stood there outside on the sidewalk for a while and watched as people passed by and crossed the busy street in front of the synagogue. Then the Ramash noticed a woman crossing the street carrying several grocery bags and he walked toward her followed by his small entourage.

He smiled and cordially said good afternoon. When she replied he politely excused himself for being so forthright and asked if she was Jewish.

She replied to the affirmative and he, in the same friendly tone, asked her if she knew that according to Jewish law it was

not permissible to carry on the Sabbath day.

She replied that she once heard something like that but she was not, nor had she ever been, nor did she have any intention of becoming religious so it didn't really matter to her.

But she showed no sign of being disturbed by the conversation. In fact she seemed to enjoy speaking to someone who seemed to be genuinely interested in her welfare.

So the Ramash began to explain the great benefits in observing the Shabbat. How really enjoyable and meaningful it is. How it is a special gift to the Jewish people attaching them to the purpose of creation. How it is a day of rest and rejuvenation. How the Jews have been keeping the Shabbat against all odds for over three thousand years and finally, how the Shabbat protects those who observe it.

All this time the woman listened attentively and even seemed to agree. But finally she glanced at her bags, smiled and raised her eyebrows as though to say, "Very nice Rabbi, but what do I do with these?"

He replied "There is no need to worry about your groceries or your purse. You can leave them here and we will stay and protect them so they will be secure. Then, in a few hours when Shabbat is over you can and get them."

"Oh no, Rabbi." She replied "I couldn't do that. I wouldn't want to trouble you. And I don't really know who you all are. But thank you for your concern. Good Shabbos." And she began to leave.

"Excuse me" he said to her quietly. "When I said that observing the Shabbat protects us I mean not only those who observe it but also their families as well."

The woman stopped, became very serious and she looked at the Rabbi with tear-filled eyes.

"Rabbi" She said "I have a son in Germany in the army and I am terribly worried about him. It is very important to me what you just said. Do you mean that if I keep the Shabbat G-d will protect him?"

The Ramash replied, "I'm sure that G-d will protect him whether you observe the Shabbat or not, but certainly your observance will help."

"And you will stand here and watch my things?"

"Yes" he replied, "You have nothing to worry about. After the Shabbat just go into

the office of that Synagogue and your things will be waiting for you."

The woman thanked him, put all her bags down, turned to the other young men, thanked them as well, said "Good Shabbos" and left. A few hours later she returned, took her things from the Synagogue office and the story ended.

The Rebbe demonstrated how all Jews really want to hear about Judaism. It just depends on us to go 'out' of ourselves a bit.

Several months later the woman returned to the office, told the secretary what had happened that Shabbat and asked if she could speak to the Rabbi that spoke to her back then; she wanted to thank him.

When the Ramash appeared she became very emotional.

"What you did that Shabbat was a miracle, Rabbi. I don't know how it happened but it was a miracle! Just look!"

She produced an envelope from her pocket, took out the letter and said, "It's from my son in the army in Germany. He wrote it the day after that Shabbat. Listen to what it says" and she began to read:

"Dear Mom. You don't know what a miracle it is that I am alive, writing this letter. I am still shaking and can't believe it myself. Yesterday about twenty five of us were sent out on a 'simple' expedition. The area was supposed to be clear of enemy forces but when we were about an hour from the base an entire battalion of Germans surrounded us and bullets and mortars were flying and exploding everywhere. They had heavy machine guns and it was hell on earth. There was nowhere to take cover and we were sitting ducks. I saw my buddies, Joey, Sam, Mickey, being blown to pieces, bleeding to death, screaming for help it was terrible. I figured that I would never see you again. I even said Shma Yisroel and waited to die. But the bullets and bombs kept missing. I just covered my head and prayed, then suddenly from nowhere came our reinforcements! I was saved!!

Mom, all our men were killed! Everyone except for me. It was a miracle! I thank G-d that I am alive and hope to G-d this war will be over soon and I'll be home."

The Remash just smiled and said "I am happy to hear that your son is well. And I hope that the both of you will continue keeping the Shabbat and bring more blessing into the world."

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ISSUE 1078

MOSHIACH MATTERS

When Moshiach comes everyone will believe in him.

A gentile landlord once asked a Chassid: "What will you do if your Moshiach comes and I won't believe in him?" The Chassid replied: "If you won't believe in him, I won't believe in him either!"



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

10th of Nissan, 5741 [1981]

To all the Participants in the International Symposium on Jewish Mysticism Sponsored by the Lubavitch Foundation London, England,

I was pleased to be informed of the upcoming Symposium on Jewish Mysticism, and extend prayerful wishes for its success. Success, or rather *hatzlacha* in its true Jewish concept, is rooted in the Torah, which insists on the primacy of action - "the essential thing is the deed."

Mysticism, in general, has a variety of connotations, but Jewish mysticism must necessarily be defined in terms of specific topics that have to do with the *nistar* [hidden] of Torah - one of the two primary facets of the Torah: *nigleh* [revealed] and *nistar*, the revealed and the hidden.

Needless to say, there can be no dichotomy between the two, because it is One Torah, given by One G-d, to the "one people on earth."

According to the Baal Shemtov's interpretation, the words "one people on earth" allude to the mystic nature of the Jewish soul that is endowed with the capacity to reveal the oneness in the multiplicity of earthly things.

Jewish mysticism teaches that the purpose of the soul's descent to earth is to reveal the harmony that is inherent in the created world, beginning with the small world, namely, man - a creature of *nigleh* and *nistar*, of a body and soul. Inner personal peace and harmony can be achieved only through the supremacy of the soul over the body, since in the nature and scheme of things, the body can be made to submit to the soul - willingly, and in the case of the true mystic even eagerly; but never vice versa.

Jewish mysticism helps to realize the said purpose of the soul by teaching it how to recognize the spirituality of matter, and that in every physical thing, even in the inanimate, there is a "soul," which is the creative force which has created it - a being out of non-being - and continuously keeps it from reverting back to its former state of non-existence.

It is this "spark" of G-dliness that is the true essence and reality of all things, and this spark is released and revealed when physical matter is used for a sublime purpose or deed in accordance with the Will of the Creator, as, for example, in the performance of a *mitzva* (tefillin made of leather, etc.).

One of the aspects of Chabad is to reveal and expound the esoteric aspects of the Torah and *mitzvot* so that they can be comprehended by the three intellectual faculties - *chochma*, *bina*, *daas* [wisdom, understanding, knowledge], and reduced to rational categories, down to the actual performance of the *mitzvot*, showing how, in the final analysis, G-d can be "comprehended" better by action (the performance of *mitzvos* [commandments]) than by meditation, which is one of the cardinal differences between Jewish and non-Jewish mysticism.

As we are about to celebrate Pesach [Passover], the Festival of our Freedom, we are reminded that *yetzias Mitzrayim* [the exodus from Egypt] (in the sense of *metzarim*, constraints) is a continuous process of Jewish living, gaining an ever-growing measure of true freedom through the everyday experience of Torah and *Mitzvos* with emphasis on actual deed.

CUSTOMS CORNER

With Passover just over a week away we must prepare and get familiar with the laws. Here are a few basics:

On the evening before Passover, make a formal search of the home and all its surrounding properties while holding a lit candle.

After the search one must also nullify [the Chametz he may have overlooked] and say:

All leaven and anything leavened that is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth. In the fifth hour of the next day (calculated from sunrise), one should make a fire and burn the Chametz and nullify it again, this time including all leaven.

It is also customary to sell one's Chametz. Speak to your local orthodox Rabbi for Halachic assistance with this transaction.

A WORD

from the Director

This week we celebrated Bais Nissan which is the Yahrzeit [day of passing] of the Rebbe Rashab the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Baal Shem Tov said that everything seen or heard by a Jew must serve as a lesson in his service to G-d. Hence, when a Jew hears of the Rebbe Rashab's name, or sees it written, it must provide a lesson in service to G-d.

The Rebbe Rashab had three names: Sholom, Dov, and Ber. Nevertheless, the Rebbe Rashab signed his name with the last two names joined together - DovBer. Dov is in the Holy tongue, whereas Ber is Yiddish (secular tongue). [Both mean the same thing - bear.] This affects also Halachah, Jewish law.

When writing documents in Torah, the rule is that the name in the Holy tongue is written first, and then the other names. Hence, the way the Rebbe Rashab signed his name is important in Halachah, for the name written in a document must be written in the same way the person signs his name. And the Rebbe Rashab signed his last two names, one of which was in the Holy tongue (Dov) and the other in Yiddish (Ber), together.

There is a lesson in this for our service to G-d. The difference between a name in the Holy tongue and that of another language is similar to the difference between holiness and secular things. In man's service, deed, in comparison to speech and thought, is like the relationship between holy and secular matters. Deed itself is "secular" in comparison to loftier things (e.g. speech and thought).

Nevertheless, "deed is the essential thing," for a person's service is to take secular things and convert them to holy things. This is expressed in the joining together of the two names, one in the Holy tongue and one in another language (DovBer): to change the secular to the sacred. Moreover, not only do we take secular things and change them to holiness, but the ultimate in service is to convert things which are antithetical to holiness into sanctity. This causes the "superiority of light which comes from prior darkness" - for to convert the darkness, a loftier revelation of light is necessary.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Beyond Paradise
By Yanki Tauber

All his life, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov strove to reach the Holy Land. He would often say that if he and Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar, who lived in Jerusalem, would join forces, they would bring the Moshiach. But this was not to be. Several times, the Baal Shem Tov set out for his destination, but all sorts of mishaps and catastrophes forced him to return home empty-handed.

One of these failed journeys left Rabbi Israel and his daughter, Adel, stranded penniless in the city of Istanbul on the eve of Passover, without matzah, wine or any provisions for the festival. Mysteriously, the Baal Shem Tov's spiritual powers had also departed from him, and his great mind was blank -- he could barely remember the forms of the alef-bet.

Rabbi Israel had already gone to the synagogue and his daughter was contemplating their empty seder table when a man knocked on their door. "I'm from Poland," he said, "traveling through this city on business matters. I was told that two fellow Jews from my home country are staying here. I would like very much to spend the festival with you."

"You're welcome to share our lodgings," said Adel, "but, unfortunately, we can't provide you with much of a seder. We have nothing -- no matzahs, no wine, no bitter herbs, not even a candle with which to usher in the festival..."

"No matter," said the guest, "I have everything with me. I knew that I would be spending Passover on the road, so I brought along all the festival provisions. There is enough for all of us."

When Rabbi Israel returned from the synagogue, he found a fully-furnished seder laid out before him: lit candles, matzah, wine and everything needed to fulfill the mitzvot of the day. His joy knew no bounds, for at that moment the divine spirit had also returned to inhabit his soul.

After they had recited the Haggadah, eaten the matzah and the maror, and were enjoying the festival meal, the Baal Shem Tov turned to the guest and said: "You have restored my life to me. How can I repay you? Ask for anything that you require, and I promise you that your need will be filled."

"G-d has blessed me with wealth," said the man, "and I want for nothing material. But my wife and I have been married for many years, and have failed to conceive a child. Rabbi, I see that you are a

righteous and holy man. Surely your prayers can open the gates of heaven. Please, bless us with a child."

"I swear," said Rabbi Israel, "that before the year is out, you will be holding your child in your arms."

No sooner had these words left his mouth than there was a great commotion in the heavens, for this man and his wife had been born without the capacity to bear children. Yet even the heavens must abide by the law that "[G-d] does the will of those who fear Him" (Psalms 145:19). The oath of the Baal Shem Tov would have to be fulfilled.

A proclamation was issued which resounded throughout the supernal worlds: "This man and his wife will indeed bear a child. But because Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov has forced the hand of heaven to overturn the laws of nature, he has forfeited his portion in 'the World to Come'."

Upon hearing this proclamation, the Baal Shem Tov's face lit up with joy. "How fortunate I am!" he cried. "I just learned that I have forfeited all heavenly reward for my good deeds. All my life I have been troubled by the thought that perhaps my service of the Almighty is tainted by the expectation of reward. Now, however, my service of G-d will be pure, free of the possibility of any ulterior motive!"

Thoughts THAT COUNT

A man who shall bring near of you an offering to G-d (1:2)

The verse does not say, "a man of you who shall bring near an offering," but, "a man who shall bring near of you an offering"--the offering must come from within the person. It is the animal within man that must be "brought near" and elevated by the divine fire upon the Altar. (*The Chassidic Masters*)

An ascending offering, a fire-offering of a sweet savour to G-d (1:9)

It is pleasurable to Me that I have spoken and My will was done. (*Sifri; Rashi*)

A soul who shall offer a meal offering to G-d (2:1)

It is said of a large ox, "A fire-offering, a sweet savour"; of a small bird, "A fire-offering, a sweet savour"; and of a meal-offering, "A fire-offering, a sweet savour." This is to teach you that it is the same whether a person offers much or little, so long as he directs his heart to heaven. (*Talmud, Menachot 110a*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 15 MARCH 2013



BEGINS		ENDS
7:23	MELBOURNE	8:19
7:18	ADELAIDE	8:12
5:48	BRISBANE	6:40
6:44	DARWIN	7:32
5:47	GOLD COAST	6:38
6:18	PERTH	7:11
6:57	SYDNEY	7:51
7:06	CANBERRA	8:00
7:16	LAUNCESTON	8:13
7:24	AUCKLAND	8:19
7:25	WELLINGTON	8:23
7:16	HOBART	8:14
6:46	BYRON BAY	7:38

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS VAYIKRA
4 NISSAN • 15 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:23 PM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7:55 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:24 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:19 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	2:03 PM
	MAARIV:	7:20 PM
		8:15 PM
		9:30 PM