

# LAMPLIGHTER

7 Adar 1  
Parshas Tetzaveh  
**1125**  
7 February  
5774/2014

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

## The Altar

This week's Torah portion, *Tetzaveh*, describes the special garments worn by the high priest during his service in the Holy Temple, and enumerates eight separate items of clothing.

The Torah makes two provisos: First, the high priest may not perform his service unless he is wearing all eight garments, and second, he is not allowed to even enter the Sanctuary unless he is wearing three of them - the breastplate, ephod, and robe.

The high priest is the emissary and representative of the Jewish people, and as such, his function is to connect them to G-d.

The relationship between the Jew and G-d exists on two levels simultaneously: One is the result of the Jew's service through Torah and mitzvot (commandments), the other stems from the Jew's innate connection with G-d by virtue of his essence. Both levels are reflected in the Torah's instructions concerning the high priest's garments.

Set into the breastplate were twelve precious stones, each inscribed with the name of a different tribe, which the high priest was required to wear "upon his heart." The breastplate therefore symbolizes the highest level of connection between the Jew and G-d, as these names were actually inscribed on the holy object itself.

The next level of the Jew's bond with G-d is expressed in the ephod, which also contained stones inscribed with the names of the tribes, but with a difference: The stones of the ephod were not worn "opposite the heart" but rather, "upon the shoulder - pieces," in the back of the garment.

The ephod therefore symbolizes those Jews who wage a constant war against their Evil Inclination, a type of service of G-d that falls into the category of "back."

The third level is expressed in the high priest's robe, the hem of which was adorned with "pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarn."

Our Sages commented that even the simplest Jew is as full of mitzvot as a pomegranate; the ephod therefore symbolizes this level.

The high priest must wear all three garments - representing all three levels of Jews - if he is to be allowed into the Sanctuary, the place where the Divine Presence rests. For it is when all Jews stand together in unity that the deepest bond with G-d is forged - "a remembrance before the L-rd continually."

This contains a lesson for us to apply in our lives:

Every single Jew is an essential part of the Jewish people and is therefore a "remembrance before the L-rd continually."

For the true essence of the Jew is not his external appearance but his G-dly soul, "a veritable part of G-d," and all Jews are children of the same Father.

*From Likutei Sichot Vol. XXI of the Rebbe.*

This week's portion, *Tetzaveh*, is a continuation of the theme that began last week discussing the building of the Tabernacle. This was the portable and collapsible sanctuary that the Jewish people travelled with during their 40 years in the desert. Last week, we read of G-d's command to build the copper altar upon which the animal sacrifices took place. In the end of this week's portion is the command to erect an additional one, the golden altar, upon which will be offered the incense.

These two altars are very different from the rest of the vessels of the tabernacle. They did not receive any spiritual impurity, known in Hebrew as *tumaah*. All of the other vessels were able to receive this ritualistic impurity; however, the altars could never be made impure.

The Torah is infinite, and has a depth one can never stop analysing. So, too, this unique law of the altars not receiving impurity can be given a deeper understanding that gives insight into the soul of every Jew.

G-d's command to build this tabernacle, in addition to its significance as the focal point for communal worship, also directs each and every one of us to establish a "tabernacle" within our hearts. We are all called upon to make ourselves into a sanctuary in which G-d's light can dwell and be revealed. As in the general tabernacle, where there were multiple vessels utilized ritually to bring about an indwelling of G-d's presence, so, too, it is with our own personalized tabernacle.

A person also has "vessels and tools" with which we serve G-d. They are our brain, heart, mouth, hands, feet, etc. The Jewish person is called upon to activate his mind in the learning of Torah; to fill his heart with love and awe of G-d; to speak with his mouth words of Torah and prayer; to fulfil the mitzvot with his hands; to use his feet to go do a mitzvah, so that all the limbs of our body participate in acts of holiness. In such a way, we actualize the goal of transforming ourselves into a tabernacle for G-d.

It happens from time to time that our "vessels" become spiritually impure. When we use our mind, emotions and his other soul strengths and capacities for inappropriate things, we thereby make them impure. In order to return and rededicate our tabernacle to G-d, one needs to go through the process of teshuvah ("repentance"), which purifies anew the vessels we possess.

However, there is one vessel for which it is impossible to descend into a state of impurity -- the altar. The altar, the focal point of the Tabernacle, represents complete submission to G-d and eradication of an egocentric attitude, as all is consumed by the abounding love of G-d. As the quintessence of the person's being is revealed, impurity becomes an impossibility. The altar symbolizes the essence of the soul in each and every Jew.

This is the *pintele yid*, the core point of Judaism, which never loses its purity. It is not even affected by a person's behaviour or stream of thought. This innermost, raw sense of being that remains constantly--and always--connected to G-d demonstrates how a Jew does not want, nor is truly able, to separate from his or her Judaism.

# Slice of LIFE

## THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE AND THE OHR HACHAYIM

A Boyaner chasid came to Melbourne, Australia to be the *chazan* (cantor) for the High Holidays of 5771 (2010). Rabbi Mottel Krasnjanski noticed that from time to time in the middle of the services he would pause and glance at a little piece of paper that he had placed on the podium with his *Machzor* (High Holiday prayer book).

After the services were over, Rabbi Krasnjanski asked the *chazan* about the paper. The *chazan* replied that about 20 years earlier, shortly before the High Holidays, he had gone to the **Lubavitcher Rebbe** on a Sunday when the Rebbe distributed dollars to be given to charity. The *chazan* told the Rebbe that he was going to be a *chazan* in a certain shul. The Rebbe's response was, "We must remember that we are praying to G-d."

The *chazan* appreciated the nice thought but didn't take it too seriously at the time. After the holidays however, it occurred to him that throughout the services he was so preoccupied with remembering the tunes, hitting the notes crisply, creating the right emotions through his voice, that he really hadn't thought much about G-d! He then realized that the Rebbe hadn't just told him a "nice thought," but rather had given him guidance and something to work on. Since then," the *chazan* concluded, "whenever I lead the prayers, I carry with me this piece of paper on which I wrote the Rebbe's message, 'We must remember that we are praying to G-d,' and look at it from time to time during the prayers to make sure that I never forget it!"

Rabbi Krasnjanski asked the *chazan* what brought him to the Lubavitcher Rebbe that Sunday for a dollar? The *chazan* answered that he had previously corresponded with the Rebbe, and then began to relate the following story:

"Years earlier, as a young man in Jerusalem, I would go every Thursday to the grave of **Rabbi Chayim ben Moses ibn Attar** (known as the "*Ohr Hachayim*" after his famous Torah

commentary by that name). There in the cemetery on the Mount of Olives, I would study the weekly Torah portion with the commentary of the holy Ohr Hachayim.

"At that time period, the Mount of Olives was not a totally safe place to be. And, sure enough, one time when I was studying at the Ohr Hachayim's grave, I turned around and saw an Arab standing behind me with a drawn knife! Petrified, I turned back to the grave and beseeched the Ohr Hachayim to help protect me from the great and immediate danger in which I found him.

"After my prayer, I turned back around and saw the Arab frozen in fear. An instant later the Arab was running away like someone running for his life! I started to run too, chasing the Arab out of the cemetery. I then continued running until I was back at my own home.

"After this incident, my mother insisted that I stop going to the Ohr Hachayim's grave each week, as she believed I was putting my life in danger. I disagreed. But she was so determined that I not go that she threatened to cut off her relationship with me. Finally I proposed that we would send a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and whatever the Rebbe would answer we would both accept.

A short while later the answer from the Rebbe arrived: 'Ask a Rav (a Jewish legal authority).' I asked the renowned chief judge of the "Badatz" rabbinical court, Rabbi Yitzchok Weiss. The Rav replied that if the Rebbe felt that I shouldn't go to the grave anymore then he simply would have said so. Rather it must be that the Rebbe wants me to continue, but with the added strength of a *pesak halacha* (Jewish legal ruling) and that was why the Rebbe had said to consult a Rav. 'Therefore,' said Dayan Weiss, 'I rule that you can continue going there!' And of course, that is what I did. That was my earlier correspondence with the Rebbe," said the *chazan*.

Rabbi Krasnjanski sensed that there was still something else that the *chazan* hadn't yet told him. After all, when he and his mother had had the disagreement, they both agreed to consult the Lubavitcher Rebbe. "Why him rather than a *Tzadik* (pure, righteous person) or a Rav in Jerusalem?" Rabbi Krasnjanski asked.

The *chazan* smiled and answered that indeed there was one earlier connection already, and that involves yet another story:

"My wife gave birth to a set of twins. A few years later, one of them was diagnosed with a very serious illness. In addition to consulting with numerous doctors and specialists, we went to various great rabbis and *tzadikim* for advice and blessings. Someone encouraged us to get a blessing from the Lubavitcher Rebbe as well. We wrote, and the Rebbe's response was to go see a '*rofeh muncheh yedid*' (a doctor who is a specialist and a good friend).

We were very surprised at this advice because we didn't know any specialists at all, and definitely we did not know a doctor whom we considered a 'friend'!

We decided to make an appointment with a new doctor whom we had never before consulted, thereby fulfilling at least the 'specialist' part of the Rebbe's response. You can imagine our surprise when as soon as we entered the doctor's office, the doctor greeted me by saying, 'Ah my *yedid* is here, how can I help?' - calling me his good friend with the same expression that the Rebbe had used!

This doctor went on to diagnose the illness and he prescribed a course of treatment and medication. At the end of the appointment, I asked the doctor what he had meant by calling me his '*yedid*'; after all, he never met me before and knew nothing about us before the visit!

"I really don't know, and I can't explain why I greeted you with that unusual expression. I can only say that as soon as you entered the room, a very warm feeling toward you enveloped me and that is why I called you my *yedid*.

"In amazement, I told the doctor of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's response to me, which was actually our reason for making this appointment. The doctor was equally amazed at this clear display of G-d's guidance, as well as the holiness and power of the words of a *Tzadik*. He promised to do everything he could for our child and refused to take any payment for his services.

"Needless to say the doctor was indeed the emissary to bring about the full recovery for the child.

"So you see," the *chazan* concluded, "my experience and relationship with the Rebbe really goes back a long time, and has repeatedly affected me in truly wondrous ways."

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ISSUE 1125

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

After all is said and done, there are basically two things that can be said about this world we live in and this life we inhabit. Either it's a hotchpotch of objects and events going nowhere in particular. Or else there's a plan-a method buried somewhere in all the madness, a goal towards which all this is headed.

Four thousand years ago, Judaism embraced the latter option and proceeded to convince the rest of the world of this truth. That the world has a Creator. That the Creator has a plan, and that everything that occurs-good and evil, momentous and trivial-is a step in the march towards its fulfillment. That life has purpose. That all this is leading somewhere-somewhere good. This 'somewhere' is the times of Moshiach.



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d  
11th of Kislev, 5735 [November 25, 1975]  
Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Mr.----  
Springfield, Mass. 01103

Greeting and Blessing:

Your letter of the 22nd of Cheshvan reached me with some delay, and this is the first opportunity for me to acknowledge it.

Following the order of your letter, I wish to extend here my prayerful wishes that your wife ---- should have a normal and complete pregnancy, as well as a normal delivery of a healthy offspring in a good and auspicious hour.

With regard to the business venture about which you write, it is clear that the general conditions which affect the problem, as well as those specific ones that you mention in your letter, are of a nature which change from time to time. Indeed, as you write, this is also the reason that caused the problem of financing. At any rate, it seems at this moment that the next step does not depend on you, as you don't seem to have any options to choose from.

The only suggestion I can make to you is one that may appeal mystical, but it has been borne out by experience and proved quite practical. I have in mind the idea that when a Jew strengthens his bond with the Source of wisdom, which is in G-d, he gains wisdom and understanding also in mundane affairs, which helps him to decide what to do and what not to do in matters of business and the like.

Needless to say, by strengthening one's bonds with the Source of true wisdom and understanding, is meant the actual observance of the Mitzvoth which G-d set forth in His Torah, of which it is written, "This is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of all the nations."

As mentioned above, the advice that you should make an effort to strengthen your commitment and actual fulfillment of the Mitzvoth, which will also help you make the proper decisions, is at first glance of a mystical nature. But looking at it from a practical point of view, we know that in everything else the important thing is the actual results which a certain measure brings about. If experience shows that doing such and such a thing brings such and such results in the vast majority of cases, then it is not so important whether one understands how and why those results are caused, for the important thing is the result itself.

The same applies also to Jews and their commitment to the Torah and Mitzvoth throughout the ages. Our long history has borne out the fact that the well-being of the Jewish people, as well as of the Jew as an individual, is intimately connected with his observance of the Torah and Mitzvoth in the daily life and although the Torah and Mitzvoth should be observed for their own sake, as the commands of our Creator, it has been revealed that the Torah and Mitzvoth are also the channels and vessels to receive G-d's blessings for Hatzlocho in the material aspect of life.

May G-d, whose benevolent Providence extends to each and every one individually, grant you the wisdom to make the right decisions, and to have Hatzlocho in all above.

With blessing,

P.S. Noting that you are an attorney at law, I would like to add a point that is no doubt quite familiar to you. This is that in matters of a legal suit, the best and weightiest legal argument is when one can cite precedents of judgment in similar cases, and there is no need to substantiate and explain the reasons for the judgment further since the judgment speaks for itself.

P.P.S. Regarding the project in Nicaragua in general - in light of the world economic and political situation, it does not appear to be a practicable and realistic project in the near future.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### Laws Relating to Clothing

The Midrash relates that one of the practices in the merit of which the Jews were redeemed from slavery in Egypt was the retention of their Jewish style of clothing. Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Rimanov often said that Jews dressing like gentiles actually invites anti-Semitism.

- One should have new clothing inspected for *shatnez*, to ensure that there is no improper mixing of wool and linen.

#### Donning and Removing Clothes

- When putting on clothes, one should clothe the right side (i.e., arm or leg) before the left. When tying one's shoes, however, one should tie the left shoe first. A left-handed person should reverse this order.
- One should be careful not to wear clothes inside out, as this can cause people to look at the wearer with disdain. Also, one should not put on two articles of clothing at once.
- When removing one's clothes, one should remove the clothes from the left side (arm or leg) before the right. In addition, in order to maintain modesty even in private, one should cover oneself (e.g., with a sheet or blanket) while changing.

#### Shabbat Clothes

- One should wear special clothes on Shabbat, in honour of the holy day. These clothes should be clean, and nicer than one's weekday clothes.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*There is a difference of opinion between Rabbi Eliezer and the Sages as to why the Golden Altar and the Copper Altar of the Sanctuary were not susceptible to ritual impurity.*

*Rabbi Eliezer explains that the altars are considered as earth. Just as earth cannot contract ritual impurity, so too, these altars. Our Sages, by contrast, state that the reason is that the gold or copper coverings were merely an overlay. As such, they were subordinate to (and considered an extension of) the altars' inner material, which was not susceptible to ritual impurity.*

*The Torah, which was given by an infinite G-d, is itself infinite. Its lessons are equally relevant at all times and in all places. It has the same strength now, in the darkness of exile, as when it was given to Moshe on Mount Sinai.*

*An allusion derived from the sages' opinion mentioned above provides us with lessons relevant to our daily lives, for in his own place, every person serves as a "sanctuary in microcosm" in which the Divine Presence rests.*

*There were several sacred articles in the Sanctuary and the Beis HaMikdash. Similarly, within our individual "sanctuaries" there are "sacred articles": our intellect, our feelings, and the like. In these matters, there is the possibility for "ritual impurity;" selfish intent, secular influence, or an unholy thought may creep in. There is even the possibility of sin, doing the opposite of G-d's will, and acting in conflict with the directives of the Torah and its mitzvos.*

*Continuing the analogy, sin makes a person's "sacred articles" his thoughts or feelings impure. It thus becomes necessary to devise a means whereby that "sacred article" can be returned to G-d's sanctuary. For G-d's sanctuary every Jewish man, woman, and child must be pure.*

*The sages teach us an important lesson: that the altar cannot contract impurity because of its inner content. The core of every Jew's Jewishness, the *pintele Yid*, remains intact, regardless of the inner or outer dimensions of his personality. And this aspect of his being has one desire: to fulfil G-d's will.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## WHEN THE REBBE CAN'T HELP

The Jews of Vitebsk, if you want to know the truth, were never known to be generous donators of money to charitable causes. Although they could always be counted on to provide food for the needy, it was not simple to extract hard currency out of them without applying a good deal of pressure. On the other hand, the Talmud concludes that giving ready-to-eat food is greater than giving money because it provides immediate relief, while the benefit of money is indirect.

Once a chassid from Vitebsk came to see the *Tsemech Tsedek*, He told him how his only son was about to be drafted into the Russian army. Previously, only-sons were exempted automatically, but this year there was a new, tough policy and their precious only son was in danger. "Please, Rebbe," he entreated, "help us, save us."

The Tsemech Tsedek replied: "I'm sorry; I cannot help you in this matter."

The chassid pleaded and cajoled every way he could think of, but the Rebbe's answer remained the same, "I cannot help you."

This chassid happened to be close with the Tsemech Tsedek's youngest son, known as the *Maharash*, the only one of the Rebbe's six sons who still lived in Lubavitch. When he left the Rebbe's room, he hurried directly to call on the Maharash and told him his problem. The Maharash said he would do his best to influence his father, but when he went to him and spoke on the chassid's behalf, he too was told, "I cannot help him at all."

Two days before the draft was to take place, the chassid sent a representative to plead his case with the Rebbe once more, but again the Rebbe insisted there was absolutely nothing he could do.

Shortly after, the Tsemech Tsedek called in his son, the Maharash, and told him to bring him a *Midrash Tanchuma*. The Rebbe leafed through it to this week's reading of Mishpatim, and showed his son section 15 there, concerning the verse, "If money you will lend" (Ex. 22:24).

"Says the Holy One, blessed be He: 'A poor person was struggling for his life, to escape starvation, and you gave him a coin and saved his life. I promise that I will pay you back 'a life for a life': If tomorrow your son or daughter will be seriously ill or in any life-threatening situation, I will remember the good deed that you did...and I will pay you back 'a life for a life.'"

The Maharash was perplexed. What did his father have in mind that he wanted to show him this passage?

In the following days, the news reached Lubavitch that the chassid's son had been released, and for no apparent reason. The Tsemech Tsedek was visibly delighted by the report.

The Maharash was very curious to find out the course of events that had transpired, especially since the Tsemech Tsedek had told the boy's

father that he couldn't help him. The next time he had to be in Vitebsk, to see Dr. Hiebenthal, he told his driver to detour to the house of that chassid.

The chassid was happy and honoured to invite him in. The Maharash asked him to describe what had happened on that day his son was supposed to have been drafted.

"Nothing special," answered the chassid.

The Maharash requested that he ask his wife the same question, and she too said she didn't remember that anything unusual had taken place.

"Wait a moment!" she then exclaimed. "I do remember something! I'll tell you."

"That very day a poor person came to the house and asked us to give him something to eat. At first we told him that we were so worried about our son who was going to be drafted that day that we really couldn't deal with him. But then he pleaded with us: it had a long time since he had eaten anything at all and he was starving, and how could it be that a Jew did not have time or food for another Jew that was so hungry! We realized our mistake and served him a huge meal, from what we had prepared to be a special farewell meal for our son. None of us had the appetite to eat because we were so upset. Then..."

The Maharash interrupted her. "Thank you. I heard enough. Everything is clear now."

### Biographical notes:

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn [29 Elul 1789-13 Nissan 1866], the Third Rebbe of Chabad, was known as the *Tsemech Tzedek*, after his books of Halachic responsa and Talmudic commentary called by that name. He was renowned not only as a Rebbe, but also as a leading scholar in his generation in both the revealed and hidden aspects of Torah.

Rabbi Shmuel Schneersohn (1834-1882), the fourth Lubavitch Rebbe, known as "the *Rebbe Maharash*," was the sixth and youngest son of his predecessor, "the Tsemech Tsedek".

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

And you shall command the children of Israel (27:20)

The word *letzaveh*, "to command," also means "to connect" and "to bond." Thus the verse can also be read as G-d saying to Moses: "And you shall bond with the Children of Israel." For every Jewish soul has at its core a spark of the soul of Moses. (*Ohr HaChaim*)

Pure olive oil, crushed for the light (27:20)

Just as the olive yields light only when it is pounded, so are man's greatest potentials realized only under the pressure of adversity. (*The Talmud*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 7 FEBRUARY 2014

| BEGINS                     | ENDS |
|----------------------------|------|
| 8:10 .....MELBOURNE .....  | 9:10 |
| 8:01 .....ADELAIDE .....   | 8:58 |
| 6:21 .....BRISBANE .....   | 7:15 |
| 7:01 .....DARWIN .....     | 7:51 |
| 6:20 .....GOLD COAST ..... | 7:15 |
| 6:57 .....PERTH .....      | 7:53 |
| 7:39 .....SYDNEY .....     | 8:36 |
| 7:49 .....CANBERRA .....   | 8:47 |
| 8:09 .....LAUNCESTON ..... | 9:11 |
| 8:10 .....AUCKLAND .....   | 9:09 |
| 8:18 .....WELLINGTON ..... | 9:20 |
| 8:12 .....HOBART .....     | 9:15 |
| 7:21 .....BYRON BAY .....  | 8:15 |
| 7:03 .....SINGAPORE .....  | 7:53 |



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS TETZAVEH  
7 ADAR 1 • 7 FEBRUARY

|               |                          |                  |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| FRIDAY NIGHT: | CANDLE LIGHTING:         | 8:10 PM          |
|               | MINCHA:                  | 8:20 PM          |
|               | KABBOLAS SHABBOS:        | 8:50 PM          |
| SHABBOS:      | SHACHARIS:               | 10:00 AM         |
|               | LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA | 10:08 AM         |
|               | MINCHA:                  | 8:05 PM          |
|               | SHABBOS ENDS:            | 9:10 PM          |
| WEEKDAYS:     | SHACHARIS:               | SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM |
|               | MON-FRI:                 | 8:00 AM          |
|               | MINCHA:                  | 8:10 PM          |
|               | MAARIV:                  | SUN-FRI: 9:00 PM |