

LAMPLIGHTER

5 Tishrei
Parshas Vayeilech
Shabbos Shuvah

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah portion of Vayeilech teaches us about the commandment of Hakhel: that during the times of the Holy Temple, the Jewish People made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem every seventh year to hear the king read the Torah aloud, "that they may hear and that they may learn and fear G-d."

At that time, the kohanim, or priests, surrounded the city of Jerusalem. With golden trumpets they signalled that it was time for everyone to assemble at the Holy Temple. In fact, this musical alarm was so important that, "any kohen who did not have a gold trumpet did not seem to be a kohen at all."

This curious comment needs further explanation. To understand what was meant, let us examine what exactly the kohen's job in the Temple was.

The kohanim were responsible for serving in the Temple, and performed many of the tasks associated with the worship there. Sounding the golden trumpets in the outskirts of Jerusalem was, however, only the preparation for the commandment of hakhel, and not part of the mitzva itself. What, then was so important about this, that a kohen who did not participate was not considered a "real" kohen?

One of the most important and central services performed by the kohanim in the Temple was the burning of the ketoret (incense). Maimonides explains that the purpose of the incense was to dispel any offensive odors and make the Temple smell pleasant.

As with all aspects of Torah, this is understood on many different levels. It is explained in the Zohar that the kohanim were not merely interested in converting unpleasant smells to pleasant ones; the inner purpose of the ketoret was to dispel the foulness of the Evil Inclination.

The ketoret was composed of various inedible substances, among them chelb'na (galbanum), a particularly foul-smelling resin. The Talmud teaches that this ingredient symbolized all that was lowly and inferior. The task of the kohanim was to take the lowly and mundane and utilize it in the service of G-d. Their job was to elevate even the most mundane aspects of life and infuse the physical world with holiness.

This fundamental service of the kohanim found its most emphatic expression in the preparation for the commandment of hakhel. For seven long years prior to this day, the kohanim had been busy in the Temple elevating the physical world. Now it was their turn to elevate the entire Jewish People to a higher spiritual level.

To a certain extent, this was the "test" which determined a kohen's mettle. If he took his G-d-given task to heart, he would run to assemble his fellow Jews, and thereby prove that he was of priestly stock. If, however, he lazily remained at home, he "did not seem to be a kohen at all."

In a broader sense, every single Jew is also a kohen, as it states, "And you shall be a nation of kohanim (priests)." It is every Jew's task in life to go out into the world and "sound the trumpet," arousing his fellow Jews to reach spiritually higher and higher.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Completing the Torah Scroll

By Tali Loewenthal

This Sedra concerns the last day in the life of Moses. On this day G-d transmitted to him the concluding passage of the Torah Scroll and he wrote this down. It was a kind of Divine "dictation". The Sages tell us Moses wrote the last twelve sentences in tears, because they speak of his death, without his being able to enter the Promised Land.

Having completed the Torah Scroll, he then gave it to the Levites. They would look after it. The Scroll was placed in the Holy of Holies, together with the Golden Ark containing the Tablets of the Ten Commandments.

Before it was placed in the Holy of Holies, twelve copies of the Scroll were made - one for each of the Tribes. During the following generations, further copies were made of the Torah in an unbroken line of continuity which includes the many thousands of Torah Scrolls of our own time.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe teaches: each Jew is like a letter in the Torah Scroll. This means that each individual, whether man or woman, elderly person or child, is infinitely important. In a Torah Scroll, if one single letter is missing or is damaged, the entire Scroll is unfit for use until it has been repaired by a Scribe. In the same way every single individual is vital for the wellbeing of the entire Jewish people.

The Shabbat of Return

This is the Shabbat of Return, Shabbat Shuvah. The name comes from the Haftarah, which begins with the words Shuvah Yisrael, "Return, Israel, to G d, for you have stumbled in your sin."

The purpose of the laws of the Torah is to connect the individual with G-d. Every single law helps to strengthen this connection. There are 613 spiritual strands which join the soul to its infinite source, corresponding to the 613 Mitzvot (laws) of the Torah.

If a person transgresses a law of the Torah, he weakens, or even breaks, one of these strands. The accumulative effect is to separate the person from G-d. He feels less "spiritual". He might think of this as 'freedom'. "I don't care about such things," he says. "I do as I like". In fact he or she is more trapped in the confines of a materialistic world.

"Return" is the movement back, to reconnect with G-d. The broken strands are repaired. At this time of year there is a new opportunity to maintain and strengthen one's bond with the Divine.

Ten Point Plan for Improvement

Which points of connection might need strengthening? Each of us might benefit by considering how we score in the following ten areas of activity.

1. Love of one's fellow
2. Supporting Jewish education for oneself and others
3. Torah study
4. Putting on Tefilin, for males
5. Having kosher Mezuzot on one's doors
6. Giving charity
7. Having Jewish books
8. Lighting Shabbat candles, primarily for women, and girls from the age of 3 should light one candle
9. Eating Kosher food
10. Family purity (Mikveh).

In one or more of these ten areas one might find room for improvement. The decision to make a step forward makes Yom Kippur a more meaningful and luminous day. Enjoy!

Slice of LIFE

In the Janowska Road Camp, there was a foreman of a brigade from Lvov by the name of Schneeweiss, one of those people one stays away from if he values his life. He had known Rabbi Israel Spira in Lemberg (Lvov) but was not aware that the latter was an inmate at the Janowska Road Camp. Only a handful of Hasidim who were close to the rabbi knew the rabbi's identity, and they kept it a secret.

The season of the Jewish holidays was approaching. As the date of Yom Kippur neared, the fears in camp mounted. Everyone knew that the Germans especially liked to use Jewish holidays as days for inflicting terror and death. In Janowska, a handful of old-timers remembered large selections of persons to die on Simchat Torah and Purim.

It was the evening of Yom Kippur. The tensions and the fears were at their height. A few Hasidim came to Rabbi Israel and asked him to approach Schneeweiss and request that on Yom Kippur his group not be assigned to any of the thirty-nine main categories of work, so that their transgression of Jewish law by working on Yom Kippur would not be a major one. The rabbi was very moved by the request of his Hasidim and despite his fears, for he would have to disclose his identity, went to Schneeweiss. He knew quite well that Schneeweiss did not have much respect for Jewish tradition. Even prior to the outbreak of World War II, he had publicly violated the Jewish holidays and transgressed Jewish law. Here in Janowska, he was a cruel man who knew no mercy. With a heavy heart, the rabbi went before Schneeweiss.

"You probably remember me. I am the rabbi of Pruchnik, Rabbi Israel Spira." Schneeweiss did not respond. "You are a Jew like myself," the rabbi continued. "Tonight is Kol Nidre night. There is a small group of young Jews who do not want to transgress any of the thirty-nine main categories of work. It means everything to them. It is the essence of their existence. Can you do something about it? Can you help?" The rabbi noticed that a hidden shiver went through Schneeweiss as he listened to the rabbi's strange request. The rabbi took Schneeweiss's hand and said, "I

promise you, as long as you live, it will be a good life. I beg you to do it for us so that we may still find some dignity in our humiliating existence."

The stern face of Schneeweiss changed. For the first time since his arrival at Janowska, there was a human spark in it. "Tonight I can't do a thing," said Schneeweiss, the first words he had uttered since the rabbi had come to him. "I have no jurisdiction over the night brigade. But tomorrow, on Yom Kippur, I will do for you whatever I can." The rabbi shook Schneeweiss's hand in gratitude and left.

That night they were taken to work near the Lvov cemetery. To this very day, the rabbi has scars from the beatings of that night. They returned to their barracks at one o'clock in the morning exhausted, beaten, with blood flowing from fresh wounds. The rabbi was trying to make his way to bed, one level of a five-tiered bunk bed made of a few wooden planks covered with straw. Vivid images from the past, of Yom Kippur at home with his family and Hasidim, passed before his tear-filled eyes that wretched night at Janowska.

Suddenly the door opened and into the barracks came a young Hasid named Ben-Zion. "Rabbi, we must recite Kol Nidre." "Who can say Kol Nidre now?" the rabbi replied. "The people can't even stand on their feet." "Rabbi, I used to pray in your shtibl. Do you remember the tune? The heart wants to hear a prayer!"

As Ben-Zion was talking to the rabbi, about twenty men gathered around them. How could the Rabbi refuse? He took out his prayer shawl, which he kept well-hidden underneath the straw on his bunk bed, and prepared to chant the Kol Nidre.

No one knew how, but the news spread fast: In barracks number twelve they were chanting the Kol Nidre. In the dark shadows of the Janowska barracks one could see shapes against the outer walls as they made their way to barracks number twelve. They recited with the rabbi whatever they could recall from memory, their voices drowned in tears.

In the morning, the rabbi and a small group of young Hasidim were summoned to Schneeweiss's cottage. "I heard that you prayed last night. I don't believe in prayers," Schneeweiss told them. "I even oppose them. But I admire your courage, for you all know well that the penalty for prayer in Janowska is death."

With that, he motioned them to follow him and led them to the SS quarters in the camp. "You fellows will shine the floor without any polish or wax. And you, Rabbi, will clean the windows with dry rags so that you will not transgress any of your prohibitions." He left the room abruptly without saying another word. The rabbi stood on a ladder with rags in his hand, cleaning the huge windows while chanting prayers, while his companions were on the floor polishing the wood and praying with him, the floor wet with tears.

At about twelve o'clock noon, the door opened wide and into the room stormed two Nazis. The room was filled with an aroma of fresh food, food they had not seen since the German occupation: white bread, steaming hot vegetable soup, and huge portions of meat. The SS man commanded "Eat immediately; otherwise you will be shot on the spot!" None of them moved. The German repeated the orders. The rabbi and the Hasidim remained glued to their places. The SS men called in Schneeweiss.

"Schneeweiss, if the dirty dogs refuse to eat, I will kill you along with them." Schneeweiss pulled himself to attention, looked the German directly in the eyes, and said quietly, "We Jews do not eat today. Today is Yom Kippur, our most holy day." "You don't understand, Jewish dog," roared the taller of the two. "I command you in the name of the Fuhrer and the Reich, EAT!" Schneeweiss, composed, his head high, repeated his answer.

The German took out his revolver from its holster and pointed it at Schneeweiss's temple. Schneeweiss remained calm. He stood still, at attention, his head high. A shot pierced the room. Schneeweiss fell. On the freshly polished floor, a puddle of blood was growing bigger and bigger. The rabbi and the Hasidim could not believe what their eyes had just witnessed: Schneeweiss, the man who in the past had publicly transgressed Jewish tradition, had sanctified God's name publicly and died a martyr's death for the sake of Jewish honor.

"Only then, on that Yom Kippur day in Janowska," said the rabbi after the war to his Hasidim, "did I understand the meaning of the statement in the Talmud: 'Even the transgressors in Israel are as full of good deeds as a pomegranate is filled with seeds.'"

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Editor: Ovadya Rogalsky & Tzali Reicher
P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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ISSUE 1209

MOSHIACH MATTERS

All of the Prophets said that the Jewish people will be redeemed only through Teshuva (repentance). The Torah has given assurance that Israel will do teshuva - at the end of its exile - and will be redeemed immediately, as it says in Deuteronomy: "It will be when all these things have happened... you will return to G-d... and G-d will return your captivity and will gather you from among all the nations where He dispersed you". (*Maimonides, Laws of Teshuva*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

A letter addressed to a group of students.

Tishrei 7, 5713
Sept. 25, 1952

The Ten Days of Teshuva - Repentance - which begin with the two days of Rosh Hashanah and continue through their culmination point, the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, are the ten days of the inauguration of the new year. Between these three most solemn days of the year we are given a period of seven days, containing every day of the week: one Sunday, one Monday, and so forth. This complete week, neither more nor less, is given to us to enable us to atone and repent for any wrong deeds accounted for during the previous year, and to better our way of life in the new year. That we have been given a complete week in which to accomplish this is significant: Spending the Sunday of this week as we should, and making the most of the time, serves as a repentance and atonement especially for all the wrong done on all the Sundays of the previous year; the same for all the Mondays of the past year on the Monday of this week, and so on.

However, repentance implies two essential conditions: regret for the past and resolution for the future. Therefore this seven day period is also a means of planned preparation for the forthcoming year. On the Sunday of this week we should plan especially for better Sundays in the new year. This will give us the strength and ability to carry out and fulfill our obligations on the Sundays to come. Likewise with regard to the Monday of this week, and all the rest of it.

In thinking of ourselves alone, however, we would only deal with part of our obligations. As I have emphasized many times in the past, one should not and must not be content with leading a proper Jewish life personally, in one's own home and family. One must recognize and fulfill a duty to the environment in a way of influencing everyone in it to adhere to the Torah and to its precepts. This duty is particularly required of youth, in whom G-d has bestowed an extra measure of natural energy, enabling them to become leaders, particularly among their own youth groups, to inspire others in the ways of our Torah and Torah-true way of life.

I hope and pray that everyone of you will become a leader and source of good influence in your environment, leading Jews, and Jewish youth particularly, to a true Jewish life, a life of happiness, a life where its spiritual and material aspects are properly balanced. Such perfect harmony of the spiritual and material can only be found in the Torah and Mitzvoth, and in the light of the Torah you will lead your colleagues and friends to true happiness.

G-d Bless you and your respective families with a Chasimo and Gmar Chasimo Toivo.
M. Schneerson

CUSTOMS CORNER

There is an old Minhag (tradition) among Sephardim and Ashkenazim to do Kapparot during the 10 Intermediate Days of Repentance (between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). If one didn't do it before Yom Kippur, they may do it until Hoshana Rabba.

When performing Kapparot a person should think about Teshuva (repentance), imagining that the four types of death sentences that were carried out by the Beth Din of Old should be happening to you for your sins. Instead, this chicken is standing in your place.

Some say that one should preferably use white chickens. However, many say that one need not make a special effort to get a white chicken. Some say not to use a black chicken. If a man took a female chicken or a woman took a male chicken they have fulfilled their obligation, yet it's preferable to repeat it with the correct gender chicken. If one can't get a chicken, one should take a goose or another animal which wasn't fit for a sacrifice in the Temple. Some say one may even take a live fish.

A WORD

from the Director

We are now in the midst of the Ten Days of Repentance between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. During these awesome days we perform many mitzvot and customs whose purpose is to inspire us to understand our frailties as human beings, our reliance upon our Creator for everything, and the need to sincerely regret our previous inappropriate actions and resolve to improve in the future.

An interesting story is told about one of these customs:

In many synagogues and shuls on the eve of Yom Kippur, plates and containers are put out for various charities. As people enter and leave the synagogue, they drop a few coins into the containers. The larger or busier the shul, the more noise is made by the clanging and jingling of the coins as they are dropped in. And, of course, during these solemn days, more charity than usual is given.

In the Baal Shem Tov's shul, there was constant noise from the rattling of coins, so much so that some of the people found their prayers sorely disturbed. One person approached the Baal Shem Tov and asked him if it might not be possible to abandon this disruptive custom.

"Heaven forbid," cried the Baal Shem Tov in horror. "It is this very jingling and clanging of the coins that is our deliverance during these awesome days. It confuses the Adversary on High who is spending his time trying to convince the Almighty that we are not worthy of being forgiven."

On Yom Kippur, we solemnly intone the ancient words: "Repentance, prayer and charity, annul the harmful decree." It is not only the noise made by the charity, then, as the Baal Shem Tov mentioned, but the actual giving of the charity that is so important. Let us all remember this in these days before Yom Kippur.

My best wishes that all of you, dear friends and readers, be sealed for a good and sweet year, and that we all celebrate Yom Kippur together in true joy and happiness in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Some 300 years ago, there lived an affluent man named Avigdor. He once brought a large sum of money to Rabbi Yisroel Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Chassidic movement, to be distributed to the poor on his behalf.

Accepting the contribution graciously, the Baal Shem Tov (literally, "Master of a Good Name") inquired if perhaps Avigdor would like a blessing in return. After all, the Baal Shem Tov was renowned not only as a great Torah scholar, but also as a righteous individual who had the power to give blessings.

"No thanks!" replied Avigdor arrogantly. "I am very wealthy; I own many properties, and I have servants, plenty of delicacies and everything else I want. I have more than I need!"

"You are very fortunate," replied the Baal Shem Tov. "Perhaps you would like a blessing for your family?"

"I have a large and healthy family of which I am very proud; they are a credit to me. I don't need-or want anything."

"Well, then perhaps you can help me. May I request one thing of you?" inquired Rabbi Israel. "Can you please deliver a letter to the head of the charity committee in Brody?"

"Certainly," responded Avigdor. "I live in Brody and would be happy to assist you in this matter."

The Baal Shem Tov took out a pen and paper, wrote a letter, sealed it in an envelope and gave it to Avigdor. Avigdor took the letter, placed it in his jacket pocket and returned home. But he had so many projects on his mind that by the time he arrived in Brody he had completely forgotten about the entire encounter with the Baal Shem Tov.

Sixteen years passed, and the wheel of fortune suddenly turned. All of Avigdor's assets and properties were lost or destroyed. Floods ruined his fields of crops; fires destroyed his forests. As calamity and misfortune befell him, he was left penniless. Creditors took his house and everything he owned. He was even forced to sell his clothing to feed his children.

One day, while cleaning out the pockets of an old jacket he planned to sell, he found a letter-the letter that he had received from the Baal Shem Tov 16 years earlier! In a flash, he recalled his visit and his haughtiness when he thought he had everything. With tears in his eyes, he rushed to finally fulfil his mission and deliver the letter. The envelope was addressed to a Mr. Tzaddok, chairman of the charity committee of Brody.

He ran into the street and encountered one of his friends. Grabbing his arm, he said, "Where can I find Mr. Tzaddok?"

"Mr. Tzaddok? You mean Mr. Tzaddok, the chairman of the charity committee?"

"Yes, I must see him immediately!" replied Avigdor.

"He is in the synagogue," said Avigdor's friend. "I was there only a few minutes ago. Mr. Tzaddok is indeed a lucky man. Just this morning he was elected chairman of the charity committee."

"Tell me more about Mr. Tzaddok," insisted Avigdor.

Willing to oblige, Avigdor's friend continued, "Mr. Tzaddok was born and raised here in Brody. A tailor by profession, he was always down on his luck, never able to make a decent living. He was hardly able to support his family, and they always lived in abject poverty. He sat in the back of the synagogue, and no one ever took notice of him. Despite working many hours, he never earned much; it was hard for him to scrape together enough money for even a loaf of bread for his family. Recently, however, the tide changed. Mr. Tzaddok was introduced to a local nobleman, and he made uniforms for all his servants. The nobleman was very

satisfied with Mr. Tzaddok's craftsmanship, and his business started to pick up. He even received an order for 5,000 uniforms for the army. He became a rich man and gained respect in the eyes of the community. He did not forget his former poverty, and gave generously to many, taking an active role in communal affairs. Just this morning, he was unanimously elected chairman of the charity committee."

Hearing this story, Avigdor hurried to the synagogue and found Mr. Tzaddok busy perusing the many requests for financial assistance. He handed Mr. Tzaddok the letter. Together they read the words of the Baal Shem Tov, penned 16 years earlier:

Dear Mr. Tzaddok,

The man who brought this letter is named Avigdor. He was once very wealthy, but is now very poor. He has paid for his haughtiness. Since just this morning you were elected chairman of the charity committee, I request that you do all you can to assist him, as he has a large family to support. He will once again become successful, and this time he will be more suited to success. In case you doubt my words, I give you the following sign: Your wife is expecting a baby, and today she will give birth to a boy.

They had hardly concluded reading the letter when someone burst into the synagogue and exclaimed, "Mazel tov, Mr. Tzaddok! Your wife just had a baby boy!"

Thanks to the Baal Shem Tov's foresight, Avigdor once again became very wealthy. This time, he remained humble and was admired by all.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And Moses went... to all of Israel (31:1)

But the Torah doesn't tell us where Moses went on this last day of his earthly life. The Chassidic masters say: Moses entered into the core of every Jew of every generation, so that every Jewish soul possesses a spark of the soul of Moses. (*Maayanah Shel Torah*)

I am one hundred and twenty years old today (31:2)

Today my days and years were fulfilled; on this day I was born, and on this day I shall die... This is to teach us that G-d fulfils the years of the righteous to the day and to the month, as it is written (Exodus 23:26): "I shall fulfil the number of your days." (*Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 11a*)

So that this song may be a witness for Me... And this song shall testify as a witness for them (31:19)

Thus the prediction that the people of Israel will abandon the Torah and will be punished for their sins, serves as a "witness" both for the people and for G-d. For the people, that they have been forewarned of the consequences of their deeds. And for G-d, that He should not be too harsh on them, since He Himself foresaw it all and said, "For I know their inclination, and what they do, even now, before I have brought them into the land of which I promised..." (*Malbim*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: SEPTEMBER 18, 22 2015

SHABBOS		YOM KIPPUR	
18 September		22 September	
Begins	Ends	Begins	Ends
5.54	6.52	MELBOURNE	5.58 6.56
5.51	6.47	ADELAIDE	5.53 6.50
5.24	6.17	BRISBANE	5.26 6.19
6.25	7.14	DARWIN	6.25 7.14
5.22	6.16	GOLD COAST	5.24 6.17
5.52	6.47	PERTH	5.55 6.49
5.30	6.26	SYDNEY	5.33 6.29
5.38	6.35	CANBERRA	5.41 6.38
5.45	6.45	LAUNCESTON	5.49 6.50
5.56	6.53	AUCKLAND	5.59 6.56
5.55	6.55	WELLINGTON	5.59 6.59
5.44	6.45	HOBART	5.49 6.50
5.21	6.15	BYRON BAY	5.23 6.17

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS VAYELECH • SHABBOS SHUVA • 5 TISHREI • 18 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5.54 PM
	MINCHA:	6.00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6.25 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9.14 AM
	MINCHA:	5.45 PM
	FOLLOWED BY SHABBOS SHUVA DRASHA	
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6.52 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI (EXCEPT WED):	9.15 AM / 8.00 AM
TUES: EREV YOM KIPPUR	MINCHA:	3.00 PM
	FAST AND CANDLE LIGHTING:	5.58 PM
	KOL NIDREI:	6.30 PM
WED: YOM KIPPUR DAY	SHACHARIS:	9.00 AM
	MINCHA:	4.35 PM
	FAST ENDS/MAARIV:	6.56 PM
SUN-THUR (EXCEPT TUES/WED)	MINCHA:	6.05 PM
	MAARIV:	6.45 PM / 9.00 PM