

LAMPLIGHTER

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Parshas Shemini
Shabbos Parah
Shabbos Rosh Chodesh

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah portion, Shemini, discusses the pure animals that we are allowed to eat, and the impure ones that we are forbidden to eat. The Torah gives two signs to recognize a pure animal: it chews the cud and it has split hoofs.

One of the reasons offered for the dietary laws is that everything a person eats is transformed into blood and flesh, becoming an integral part of that person. The Torah thus prohibits certain foods in order to prevent man from assimilating the evil characteristics of the forbidden food.

If there is a prohibition against eating animals which do not have a split hoof and do not chew the cud, it follows that the proper conduct for man should be one that embraces the concepts of a split hoof and chewing the cud.

The hoof must be split entirely, from the top to the very bottom. The hoof is divided into two, to indicate that our walking on this earth, i.e., our mundane involvements, must include two basic principles: drawing near to oneself that which is good and proper and pushing away that which is not.

But the sign of a split hoof by itself is not sufficient. There must also be the sign of chewing the cud.

One must very carefully "chew over" every mundane activity which one intends to undertake. One must clarify and determine, once and again, whether to do it altogether, and if so, how to do it. Only then will the action itself be a "pure animal" - something which can and is used for our spiritual mission in life.

Regarding fowl, we do not rely on signs alone, but we also require a tradition affirming that species' purity. Off hand, one could ask why we need such a tradition. Observing the signs would seem sufficient. However, this comes to teach us that one cannot rely on one's own intelligence. It is possible to study the Code of Jewish Law and even follow a course of behaviour which one's own intellect determines to be "beyond the letter of the law."

One must follow the tradition. The Hebrew word for tradition is Mesorah, which is related to the word Mesira - devotion and being bound together. In order to follow the Jewish tradition we must be devoted to and bound together with other Jews and Torah leaders who can teach us the ways of our tradition.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Have you ever closed a deal, celebrated your marriage (or its anniversary), or simply spent time with a good friend-without eating something together? When you think of home, is it not in your taste buds that the most elemental memories reside? And what about the food itself-can you get any closer to something than by ingesting it into yourself and turning it into your own flesh, bone and blood?

Tell me what, how, where and with whom you eat, and I'll tell you who and what you are.

Numerous explanations have been offered for the Torah's kosher dietary laws. Some point out the health benefits. Others dwell on the unifying effect these laws have on a dispersed people, and their role as a shield against assimilation. Nachmanides, the great 13th-century sage and Kabbalist, explains that "the birds and many of the mammals forbidden by the Torah are predators, while the permitted animals are not; we are commanded not to eat those animals possessive of a cruel nature, so that we should not absorb these qualities into ourselves."

But perhaps the most basic reason (insofar as a divine command can possess a "reason") is that presented by the Torah itself in the closing verses of its chapter on the dietary laws:

To differentiate between the impure and the pure, between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten. (Leviticus 11:47)

"To differentiate," *lehavdil* in the original Hebrew-this single word defines man's uniqueness as a moral creature. Or, in the Torah's terminology, a "holy" person.

As our sages point out in their commentary on this verse, the concept of *lehavdil* applies only to two ostensibly similar things. Cows, too, differentiate, between a nutritious grass and a poisonous weed. But the kosher-observant shopper will differentiate between a piece of meat from an animal that was slaughtered by a certified *shochet* in accordance with the detailed laws of *shechitah*, and a piece of meat from an animal that was simply killed in an abattoir. No laboratory will discover any physical difference between the two. But the Jew accepts the first and rejects the second. And if he unwittingly brings the second into his kitchen, he will blowtorch the pan that cooked it and discard the china on which it was served.

Morality is the capacity to accept that there are things to be embraced and things to be rebuffed. Sometimes the desirability or undesirability of a thing is obvious; sometimes we can smell the difference, and sometimes we can understand it. But if that's where it stops, we're nothing more than cows avoiding the poison.

The point at which we begin to lead moral and holy lives is the point at which we say: "There is 'Yes' and there is 'No' in G-d's world. These are objective truths, established by the Creator of reality. Often I will find that the 'Yes' things give me pleasure, safeguard my health, preserve society, and fulfill me spiritually, while the 'No' things achieve the opposite. But this is not what makes them 'Yes' or 'No.' On the contrary: because a thing is morally positive, it will invariably occupy a positive place in my life; because a thing is morally negative, it will inevitably hurt me. But my need to affirm the 'Yes' and reject the 'No' stands above these considerations, which are the result, not the source, of the intrinsic difference."

Of course, every time the Torah tells us to do something or not to do something, it is making this point. But nowhere is the imperative *lehavdil* as fundamental as when it dictates what we should eat and what we should not. Nowhere is it as intimately woven into our lives as when applied to the act of eating, by which the eater and the eaten literally become one flesh.

If you accept a yes/no line of demarcation across the diameter of your dinner plate, then-and only then-have you mastered the art of holiness.

Slice of LIFE

The story takes place some 34 years ago just as the first Israeli-Lebanon war was winding down to an uncertain, one sided (our side) halt.

Chaim Dayan, who lives in Kfar Chabad and was in the army at the time, received a phone call from his commanding officer that he must appear at his base near Haifa (called Bat Galim) at 8:30 the next morning....or else.

Chaim thought to himself: "The base is two hours away, the sun rises at 6:00. That means that tomorrow morning I'll have to pray alone, rush the prayers to make it there on time."

He thought about it for a few more minutes and finally decided... no. That's no way to start the day and certainly no way to start an army stint. He would take his time, pray slowly and hope for the best. G-d will help!

The next morning he woke at the crack of dawn, went to the Synagogue, took his time praying and finished at... seven. He had an hour and a half to get there. But he had to hitch a ride; public transportation would take two hours.

"No problem!" He said to himself as he ran to the main road and stuck out his finger hoping for the best...."G-d will help!"

But no one stopped. He tried switching fingers, then arms, then poses, but nothing helped. He was getting tired, aggravated, and pessimistic as car after car whizzed by. But he had to keep reminding himself, "Everything is from G-d, I must be positive! Positive thinking will change the situation. THINK GOOD and it will BE GOOD!"

And sure enough, as soon as he began to think 'good' a car pulled over, screeched to a stop and the door opened. But just as he was about to ask if he could get a ride, a soldier in an air force uniform got out, slammed the door behind him and the car drove off leaving a thin cloud of exhaust smoke and ... another hitchhiker. The pilot, or whatever he was, stuck out his finger as well!

But five minutes later, just as he was

thinking all was lost, a huge truck loaded with massive crates filled with oranges pulled to a stop and the driver yelled out high up from his cabin, "One place!"

"A truck! Oy!" Chaim thought to himself, "It will take a year to get to Haifa, but on the other hand it's better than nothing. And maybe there will be a miracle."

But in the two seconds he was busy thinking, the other hitchhiker somehow managed to cut in front of him and slip up into the cabin of the truck! Chaim's anger instantly flared up. "I'll go up there, grab a hold of him and pull him out!! Why that.....!"

He battled internally; should he do it? Should he get mad? Should he go up? But something inside of him told him to let it go... anger is like idolatry, G-d will take care of it, I'll see it was all for the best etc..... until the passenger door slammed shut, the truck rumbled off into the distance and he was alone.

After another few minutes Chaim was really getting worried... what if no one stops!?

Suddenly sirens filled the air, an ambulance, sirens screaming, appeared as if from nowhere and screeched to a halt before him. It couldn't be offering him a ride, it's forbidden for ambulances to take riders. But the driver rolled down the passenger window and yelled "Hey soldier! You've got to help me! I got a soldier with shell-shock here, he's in bad shape and I need someone to talk to him non-stop to keep him awake. Can you do it?"

"Listen, where are you going?" Chaim asked the driver. "I need to get to Bat Galim and I'm really late."

"Jump in!" The driver yelled. "I'm going to the hospital in Haifa. I'll take you to Bat Galim. It's on my way! Just get in!"

Chaim got in the back door, sat next to the soldier who was laying catatonic on his back, eyes bolt open eyeballs dancing wildly in their sockets, mouth open totally unable to utter a sound, as the ambulance jetted forward and gained speed, sirens howling.

Chaim tried to get the soldier's attention so he talked about the weather. But it didn't seem to be working, the soldier was fading away, so he changed

subjects, sports, news, but nothing worked till he talked about what he himself was interested in; Judaism.

He talked about G-d, the Torah, the commandments, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, while gradually the soldier turned and silently stared at him, open-mouthed, occasionally convulsing or twitching wildly for a second or two but apparently hanging on his every word.

The ambulance raced through red lights, around corners and swerved past traffic. Only once did it slow down to go around a huge traffic jam caused by a truck whose cargo had fallen off.... orange crates! It was the truck that had stopped for him!! Chaim looked briefly out the window and saw the air force soldier that had stolen his place standing helplessly in a sea of oranges on the road... It would be hours until anyone in that huge line would be able to give him a ride.

But the ambulance sped on and Chaim never stopped talking until it came to a screeching halt. The driver turned to Chaim and said. "Here it is! Bat Ganim! Thanks a million! I'll make it alone, its just a few minutes to the hospital! You did a great job."

The ride took one half an hour! Chaim jumped out in time to catch the last bus in his battalion that was pulling out! It was a miracle. He made it! He made the last bus!"

Several years later Chaim was walking down the streets of Tel Aviv when a religious fellow in his twenties stopped him, shook his hand and asked. "Tell me? A few years ago wasn't it you that talked to me in that ambulance? I was in shock and you talked to me? Wasn't it you?"

When Chaim remembered and said yes the fellow hugged him and began crying like a baby. Sobbing aloud and hugging him for dear life.

"You saved me! You saved me!" He repeated, "And I remembered everything you said! Everything! It took me a while but I decided to learn about what you said. You know, about Judaism and the Rebbe, and now I'm a different person! You saved my life!"

By not fighting for his place in the orange truck Chaim got much more than he could possibly dream of.

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MOSHIACH MATTERS

The first person, Adam, chose this name for himself, explaining that the letter "alef" of Adam alludes to G-d, who is "One" (Alef has the numerical equivalent of 1), and the "Chief" ("aluf" in Hebrew). The letters "Daled" and "Mem" of Adam spell "Dam" (blood), alluding to man's physical component. Man is comprised of spirituality and physicality - soul and body. When a person achieves just the right mixture of both, then he becomes a true "Adam" in the fullest sense which is why the numerical value of "Adam" is equal to the numerical value of the word for Geula - Redemption. (Rabbi Pinchos Winston)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

18th of Adar II, 5725 [1965]

Insofar as I have heard about your husband from visitors from London, I am surprised to read your description of his present state of discouragement. Surely he knows that it is not only a matter of world outlook for a Jew, but one of the very foundations of the Jew's faith, that G-d's Providence extends to everyone individually, and in every aspect of one's individual life. How much more so where it is not only an individual matter, but is related to the Parnasah [income] of the whole family. At the same time it should be remembered that G-d's Providence is a benevolent Providence; that G-d is the Essence of Goodness and desires to do good, for, "It is in the nature of the good to do good." Therefore, it is easy to see how right King David was in the holy Tehillim [Psalms] when he said, "G-d is with me, I shall not fear," "G-d is my shepherd, I shall not want," etc. It is only necessary to reflect upon this frequently and deeply, and all anxiety and worry will be dispelled at once.

Needless to say, trust in G-d does not mean relying solely on miracles. For the Torah demands the Jew to do everything possible in the natural order of things in matters of Parnasah, etc., except that he should at the same time remember success and blessing comes from G-d. And so it is written in the Torah, "G-d will bless you in all you do."

If the above is true in every case and at all times and places, it should certainly be obvious to Jews in our own times, since every one of us has seen G-d's kindness, especially Jews who had a miraculous escape from the dangers of the second World War. How can one allow himself to be so confused by the Yetzer Hara [evil inclination] as to be so overcome by anxiety or worry?

Of course there are times when things do not go as expected or as desired. But the Torah has already forewarned us to regard such times as temporary trials and tests of one's faith in G-d. As a matter of fact, the stronger remains one faith in G-d even under adverse circumstances, the sooner it will become clear it was all a matter of a test. But this faith should not be merely a matter of lip service, but must have the full force of conviction. And this is not hard to achieve, if one reflects on what has been said above, and frequently, calmly and objectively.

I trust that the above lines will suffice and that you, on your part, will also be a source of encouragement and confidence to your husband. May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in the spirit of Purim on which we celebrate the reversal of the Jewish position from sadness to gladness and, in the words of the Megila, "For the Jews there was light, joy, gladness and honour."

P.S. You may, of course, show this letter to your husband, if you think it will serve a useful purpose. The important thing is that the message of the letter should be effective, and that you should soon be able to report about an improvement in your husband's state of mind, to go about his business with confidence and joy, and this will be the first step to an improvement in Parnasah.

8th of Nissan, 5722 [1962]

I trust that during the time since our meeting much has been accomplished in the matters which we discussed. Moreover, I hope that the difficulties which seemed to exist at the time turned out to be much less formidable than anticipated, and that this will therefore stimulate greater and much more rapid advancement, especially as when one is determined to do the right thing, one receives special help from On High, as our Sages assure us.

With the approach of Pesach, the Season of Our Freedom, may G-d grant every one of us a greater measure of freedom from all manner of anxiety and difficulty, so as to be able to serve Him with joy and gladness of heart without hindrance, in good health physically and spiritually, which go hand in hand together.

Wishing you and yours a kosher and happy Pesach [Passover],

CUSTOMS CORNER

The Laws of Visiting the Sick

- Opinions vary as to whether one should visit a person whom he hates. According to some, he should avoid visiting, since it may appear as if he is rejoicing over the other's illness. The best thing is to inform the sick person through a third party that you would like to visit him. If it is acceptable to the patient, you may visit him, for this may be the beginning of a peace process.
- No blessing is said when performing the commandment of visiting the sick.
- Although most aspects of visiting the sick can be fulfilled only with a personal visit, if one is not able to do a personal visit, he can fulfill the mitzvah with a phone call.

A WORD

from the Director

A parking sign lets drivers know that the space is meant to be used for parking cars. A storefront with toys on its entrance explains what we can expect to find in this store.

It's not the signs that make things into what they are. The signs simply describe what is already there. The signs, symbols, and labels all around us give information about the item or place to which they are attached.

Parshas Shemini tells us about the signs of kosher animals. Kosher animals have two signs: they have split hooves and they chew their cud. Kosher fish have fins and scales.

It is not the signs that make the animal kosher. HaShem created these animals with a kosher nature. The signs merely tell us that they are kosher.

When we eat the meat of any animal, its nature becomes part of us, and it affects the way we think. Have you heard people say "you are what you eat?"

The meat of kosher animals is fit for a Jew to eat, because of its kosher nature. When we eat this food, it affects us in the proper way. So HaShem gave those animals signs to inform us that they are kosher.

Other animals were created with non-kosher natures. This means that their meat will not affect us in a good way. Of course, HaShem did not give them kosher signs.

Let us take a closer look at these signs. Kosher animals have split hooves, which mean that their feet are divided.

We can divide our activities throughout the day into two lists. One list could include davening, studying, making berachos, giving tzedakah, and helping others. The other list could include eating, playing, reading, talking, and getting dressed.

Though they are different types of activities, we should not separate these two lists from each other. Instead, they should be like two parts of a single hoof. Can you imagine a split hoof with each part looking as if it belonged to a different animal?

Just as we daven, study and do activities from List 1 like a Jew should, we must also do the activities in List 2 like a Jew should. The games we play, the books we read, and the clothes we wear should all belong to one kosher lifestyle.

This is not always easy. Because when we talk, read, or play, we are busy with what we are doing and we don't always think about how to do it in a holy way.

Here's where the second kosher sign chewing the cud teaches us an important lesson. Animals take time to chew their cud. They bring up their food over and over again. This teaches us to take time, to think things over, and plan to do things in a way which is kosher fit for a Jew.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

When the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom DovBer Schneerson (1860-1920) was a young child, his father (the fourth Rebbe, Rebbe Shmuel) woke him one morning and asked him if he had dreamed anything. The boy thought for a minute, then began trembling with fear and answered that he dreamed that several awesomely holy men had visited him and that one of them told him a Torah idea and a story. He described them and his father identified the one who had spoken as Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (the founder of Chassidism, 1698-1760).

The Torah idea that the Baal Shem Tov said was: It is written in Ethics of the Fathers (4:1): "Who is strong? He who conquers his selfish inclinations." It does not say "who breaks his selfish inclinations" but rather "who conquers..." true might lies in conquering and transforming one's selfish drives in order to use them to serve G-d as well. The story that he told was as follows:

When I was a young man of twenty, recently after being accepted as a member of the society the hidden tzaddikim, several of us came to the city of Brody. [The "hidden tzaddikim" were a group of unusually gifted and devoted Jews who, disguised as simple people, dedicated their lives to improving the plight of their Jewish brethren both spiritually and materially.]

It was there in Brody that I saw the most amazing thing. I was standing in the market place speaking to a large group of locals when I noticed from the corner of my eye an older man walking in the distance, bent under the burden of a large sack he was carrying on his shoulder. His face was covered with sweat and there was nothing unusual about him except for the fact that over his head floated a brilliant pillar of spiritual fire!

Obviously none of the other townspeople saw it. A few of them even yelled jeeringly, "Keep going, Herschel Goat" and, "Carry, Herschel, Carry!" And he called back with a smile "Thank you! G-d bless you!"

I could not believe my eyes. I called two of the elder tzaddikim who were with me, Rabbi Yechezkel and Rabbi Ephraim. They, too, saw the pillar but also couldn't explain it. For all appearances this Herschel was just a simple old Jew trying to make a living. What connected him to such a great revelation? For several days I observed him and tried to understand the reason for this holy fire, but I still had no idea. The people told me that he was a widower, his wife having died some ten years ago. He earned his meek living by carrying things on his back and doing odd jobs, and as far as everyone knew he used all his money to feed a few goats he had because he loved goat milk. That is how he earned the name "Herschel Goat".

So I decided to fast the first three days of each week, only drinking water at night, until I understood what this man did that was so pleasing to G-d. I had just finished the first three days and was leaving the Shul when by Divine providence, there was Herschel walking down the street. He had a big smile on his face as I approached him. I told him I was very weak from having fasted and asked if he could give me something to eat. "Of course! Of course!" He said joyously. "Please, just follow me to my home! I'm so happy to help."

We walked for about an hour till we came to an old run-down hut near the woods. Nothing seemed unusual until he opened the door and we entered. Suddenly four or five goats jumped from all corners of the hut at him. They lovingly licked his hands and literally pranced with joy about him. I had never quite seen the like of it. Herschel quieted the goats told me to sit down, took out a large metal pail, milked one of them, and poured me a cup to drink. "Nothing's healthier than goat's milk! Here, have another," he said with satisfaction as he handed me a second cup.

When I tried to pay him he refused. "G-d forbid! Money? No! No money, no money! It's my pleasure! I'm the one that benefits! What, I should take money too?" he said with a smile on his face.

Then he looked at me seriously and said, "I want to tell you a true story. You have no idea how happy I am that you came here. Please listen." He sat down opposite me waited a few moments collecting his thoughts, and began.

"My wife, of blessed memory was a truly righteous woman, always helping people. Any time anyone lacked anything she was there, doing everything she could to help. She collected money for charity, cared for people when they were sick; everything she did was

for others. Shortly after she passed away, after the seven days of mourning, she appeared to me in a dream.

"She told me that after she died, instead of going through the painful and frightening purification processes of 'the slingshot' and 'the thrashing of the grave,' she was received warmly by the souls of all those people she had helped and led directly to one of the highest heavens.

"She told me that nothing is valued in heaven more than brotherly love and beseeched me to also begin a life of charity and good deeds.

"That is why I bought these goats. I give free milk to whoever needs it and it has done wonders for people, simply wonders, and I am so happy I can help.

"Since then my wife never appeared to me again. It's been ten years since then, but today, just before I woke up, she came. She told me that this morning I would meet a holy man and he would change my life, and I'm sure she was talking about you. Please stay with me for a few days and teach me Torah."

I stayed with Herschel for several days and watched the way he lovingly cared for his goats and how he dispensed their milk to dozens of people that needed it, everything done with a simple, contagious joy and with no egotism whatsoever. But on the other hand he was a complete ignoramus and could barely read.

I discussed it with the tzaddikim and we decided to take him under our wing and teach him Torah. For three years we taught him the most basic books and then one day his mind simply opened. He suddenly understood and remembered everything we taught him, even the most difficult concepts in Talmud and in Kabbalah, but he never lost his simplicity.

After five more years he became a great hidden tzaddik and mystic in his own right, moved to the city of Ostropol, and for the next ten years helped and even saved hundreds of Jews with his prayers and blessings.

But the story has a strange ending. As fate would have it Herschel passed away on a cold rainy day. The burial society of Ostropol did provide ten Jews to escort him to his final resting place, but otherwise treated him like a simple pauper. This was not received well in heaven. After all, Herschel was a holy man and had helped myriads of people and deserved much more honorable treatment.

A decree was passed in heaven that the city of Ostropol should suffer terrible misfortunes because of their mistreatment of Herschel.

I and many others tried to avert the decree, but to no avail. It seems that disgracing a tzaddik, even if he does not care about his own honor, is no small matter.

Until, suddenly, the soul of Herschel's wife appeared before the heavenly court.

All the accusing angels fell silent and she spoke. How could it be that the entire city of Ostropol would be punished because of her husband? Her husband had devoted his life to helping people. The greatest possible disgrace that could be done to him would be to cause anyone, no less an entire city, to suffer on his account. She demanded that the punishment be annulled.

"After short deliberation," the Baal Shem Tov concluded his tale, "her demands were met."

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Moses told Aaron, "Come close to the altar" (Lev. 9:7)

Rashi states: Aaron was reserved and afraid to come close. Moses said to him, "Why are you reserved? For this you were chosen." The Baal Shem Tov explains Rashi's comments in the following manner: You were chosen for this - because of your reserve and modesty, and your doubts about being worthy to carry out the Divine service. These are the qualities that demonstrate your being fit for the job.

And Aaron raised his hands (Yadav) toward the people and blessed them (Lev. 9:22)

At that moment Aaron merited to receive the Priestly Gifts, and merited that his descendants, the Kohanim, would bless the Jewish people until the Resurrection of the Dead. (*Midrash Rabba*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 1 APRIL 2016

BEGINS	ENDS
6.55MELBOURNE	7.51
6.52ADELAIDE	7.46
5.28BRISBANE	6.19
6.32DARWIN	7.21
5.26GOLD COAST	6.17
5.54PERTH	6.47
6.32SYDNEY	7.26
6.40CANBERRA	7.34
6.45LAUNCESTON	7.42
6.57AUCKLAND	7.52
6.54WELLINGTON	7.52
6.43HOBART	7.41
6.25BYRON BAY	7.17



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD
 PARSHAS SHEMINI • SHABBOS PARSHAS PARAH
 22 ADAR 2 • 1 APRIL

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING:	6.55 PM
	MINCHA:	7.00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7.30 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10.30 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF NISSAN	
	WILL BE ON: Thursday	10.15 AM (16 chalakim)
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	6.50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	7.51 PM
	Changing the clock one hour back	
WEEKDAYS	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI	8.00 AM / 9.15 AM
	MINCHA:	5.50 PM
	MAARIV:	6.45 PM