

# LAMPLIGHTER

4 Nisan  
Parshas  
Vayikra  
**1289**  
31 March  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Vayikra, focuses on the korbanot, the offerings brought by the Jewish people in the Sanctuary in the desert and afterwards, in the Temple in Jerusalem. It introduces this subject with the verse (translated literally): "When a man will offer of you a sacrifice to G-d of the animal." Now proper grammar would have the verse read: "When a man from among you offers...." But the verse is structured in this manner to teach that the offering is "of you," dependent on each person and no one else.

The word "korban" has its root in the word "karov," meaning "close." Bringing an offering means coming close to G-d. And the Torah teaches us that coming close to G-d is dependent on each individual. No external factors can stand in his way. Every person can come close to G-d. If he truly desires, he can reach the highest peaks.

Also implied is that the offering comes "of you," of the animal within the person himself. For each one of us has an animalistic side. This isn't necessarily something bad, for not all animals possess negative qualities such as cruelty or parasitism. On the contrary, most animals are pleasant creatures that are not harmful to humans or other beasts.

Even so, an animal is not considered a positive model for our Divine service. For an animal acts only to fulfill its own instinctual drives. It thinks of nothing more than satisfying its own needs and achieving gratification. Its selfishness lies not in the desire to take advantage of others; it just doesn't think of others. It is concerned with one thing: how to get what it wants and needs.

We each have a certain animal dimension to our personalities. There are times when we think only of ourselves and what we want. This is not necessarily bad, but it can lead to conflict when two people want the same thing, and it does not represent a developed state. One of the unique dimensions of a human being is that he can think and his brain can control his feelings and desires. But when a person allows the animal in him to control his conduct, he does nothing with this human potential. He will leave the world the same way he came in without having developed himself.

That is not why G-d brought us into being. He created us to make a change in the world and to begin by making a change in ourselves. Instead of just acting because we feel like doing something, our actions should be motivated by thought. We should act because what we're doing is right, because it follows G-d's intent in the world. Instead of always taking we should think of looking outward and giving. And this involves changing the animal in ourselves, bringing it closer to G-d. That's the spiritual service associated with bringing a sacrifice.

How is this done? Through thought. The animal in us is also intelligent. What does it want? To feel good. When it appreciates that giving can be more satisfying than receiving and that the greatest happiness comes from attuning oneself to G-d's will, it will also act in that manner. That's why we must continually expose ourselves to inspiring ideas and uplifting concepts. In this way, we will be motivated to look beyond our self-interest and seek goals that benefit mankind as a whole.

The division of the Torah into five books is neither random nor simply intended to make a long text more user-friendly. Each of the Five Books of Moses has its own unique theme. Nachmanides explains that the theme of the Book of Leviticus, which we begin reading this Shabbat, is mitzvot. While a good amount of commandments are also imparted in the other four books, they are mentioned there incidentally, in the course of conveying the events or messages which are the primary message of those books.

Considering that this is the "Book of Mitzvot," we would have expected this book to open with some of the primary mitzvot which form the basis of the Jew's day. Prayer, tefillin, mezuzah, the laws of kashrut and Shabbat are some which immediately come to mind. Instead, the first portions of Leviticus discuss at length the laws of the various sacrifices offered during Temple times. This begs the question—why does the book devoted to mitzvot start with commandments which: a) aren't permanent fixtures of Jewish life—they have been non-practicable for nearly two thousand years now; and b) were not part of the daily life of the average Jew (who only visited the Temple thrice yearly) even when sacrifices were offered in the Temple in Jerusalem.

A closer examination of the deeper significance of mitzvot will lead us to conclude that sacrifices encapsulate the inner meaning of mitzvot perhaps more than any other individual mitzvah.

An animal is consumed by its desires and impulses of the moment, giving nary a thought to purpose, to future, to its betterment and refinement. Its emotions control its mind, using its limited cognitive abilities to further the heart's agenda. The human, on the other hand, is endowed with the ability to harness his emotions, to act based on need, purpose and ambition rather than expediency and instant gratification. In truth, however, every person is born an animal, and must be educated from without and tamed from within before earning the title of "mentch"—human.

Becoming "human" in its truest sense is indeed a lofty objective. The world would be so much more pleasant and inviting if more and more people actively pursued this goal. But while mitzvot also greatly assist in this quest, this is hardly their ultimate objective. Mitzvot are intended to take the animal-turned-human and connect him to his Creator, to allow him to rise above the limitations of a mere mortal and become sanctified—human-turned-holy. This completes the circle; this creation which was originally animal has become holy.

Torah philosophy doesn't agree with vegetarian activism, because the Torah recognizes the value of animal-turned-human—which is accomplished when someone who earned the title of human consumes the flesh of an animal. Indeed, it is a favor for the animal no less that it is a favor for the human: the animal now reaches a state it never could have reached while grazing in the field.

But animal-turned-holy—that's what sacrifices are all about. An animal is taken and becomes sanctified by being offered to G-d.

The commandments associated with sacrifices set the tone for the entire book, clarifying what the ultimate objective of the mitzvah really is.

# Slice of LIFE

## Thank You

by Ben Goldman

The last time I saw Rabbi Shaya Gansbourg was on the second night of Chanuka, a few months ago. I had just completed my army service in the IDF, and my wife and I were on our last night in New York City after traveling abroad for several weeks. The next morning, we would be returning to our home in Israel.

It was a bitterly cold and quiet night in New York, but when I opened the door to the Chabad of Harlem, I was greeted with the warmth and jubilant laughter of several dozen children, all of whom had shown up with their parents for a Chanuka party being held by the rabbi and his family. The children excitedly busied themselves decorating donuts, building lego menorahs, and playing "spin the dreidel." Some kids danced, others chased each other through the legs of adults, and several posed for pictures with "Yehuda the Maccabee" - an orthodox Jew and U.S. army officer who has served multiple tours in Afghanistan.

At a certain point the menorahs were lit, and I joined hands with the rabbi as we danced in a circle while singing "L'shana haba'a b'Yerushalayim" - "Next Year in Jerusalem."

It is somewhat fitting that my last memory of Rabbi Shaya Gansbourg is from Chanuka, the holiday where we celebrate light being found in the most unlikely of places. For me, Chabad of Harlem was the epitome of this idea. But it wasn't just remarkable for its unlikely location, but also for the absolute potency of the light produced by Rabbi Gansbourg as a leader of the community. He was, in all senses, the candle that burned miraculously, despite all odds, and whose light

reached corners both dark and distant.

In his eight years dedicated to the revival of the Jewish community in Harlem, Rabbi Gansbourg and his wife Goldie managed to open Chabad of Harlem, organize a chabad club on the campus of City College of New York, start a Jewish daycare, and punctuate all of Judaism's numerous holidays with an event. Chanukah parties like the one above were not the exception, but the rule.

And in the whirlwind of Rabbi Gansbourg's ceaseless activity, he changed lives forever.

When I first moved to Harlem four years ago, I was in many ways awash in the sea of impending adulthood without a life raft. I was in my final year of university and preoccupied with the development of my career; my interest in God was minimal, my observance nonexistent, and I was prepared, as so many other young Jewish Americans are, to abandon most of my heritage.

Rabbi Gansbourg changed this not through indoctrination, but through example. Through his unassuming, modest one-room synagogue in Harlem, converted from a ground-floor apartment, he created a community that provided so much of what I found missing in the secular world - meditation, human bonding, unconditional acceptance, and a connection to something beyond oneself. Though I did not know it initially, what the rabbi had created was Jewish life.

What began for me as the occasional attendance at Friday night services developed rapidly into regular, almost perfunctory ritual, and within a matter of months, Shabbat evening and morning services were beating out bars, clubs and parties for my attention - even before I had adopted observance. I perceived something wholesome to the environment, something healthy and soul-enriching. I perceived something invaluable.

The world that Chabad of Harlem opened up to me was a beautiful one, but it was also a revolutionary one.

Rabbi Gansbourg exposed me to a world where friendly faces, home cooking, and a little wine could produce an exponentially greater happiness than an American Express Black Card at the finest club in Manhattan. He created a world where job title could be checked at the door, and one could be appreciated for who they are, rather than what they do. It was a world where a person could reflect on himself, on life, and on G-d, and in the process learn more about the universe than any textbook could provide.

It was an alien world, and a fantastic one, and it was incredible enough to change the course of my life.

I am happy and unbelievably privileged to say that I knew Rabbi Gansbourg, who recently passed away, and I thank G-d everyday for having introduced the two of us - and for showing me this new world. I thank him for inspiring me to move to Israel, where I could pursue both career and spirituality, and where I later met my wife, who I love with all of my being, and with whom I have now started my own Jewish life.

And I thank Rabbi Gansbourg for what he taught me both in life and now in death; that the material world is fleeting, that ultimately the universe unknowable and the ways of G-d are mysterious, and that the only thing we can do is to live a good life, do what's right, be kind to others and walk as closely along the path that G-d set out for us as possible, because life is too precious to live in any other way.

Rabbi Gansbourg, thank you for everything. I will always miss you.

*Ben Goldman is a writer, TV producer and filmmaker. Before moving to Israel, he worked for MTV and Comedy Central, and co-founded the community service organization Superheroes Anonymous. While in Israel, he has worked as a freelance reporter for the IBA English News, the Israel Now News, and served as Director of Video Operations for the IDF Spokesperson's New Media Unit.*

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The Lamplighter contains words from sacred  
writings. Please do not deface or discard.

ISSUE 1289

## SOUL COFFEE

*A child cannot learn something without running out and screaming it to others.*

*And so it should be with all those who have knowledge.*



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## Mezuzah Protection

*Excerpt from a letter written right after the hostage taking and rescue of Israelis in Uganda. Addressed to all Jewish women and girls*

In view of the recent events -- the hijacking and saving of the hostages held in Uganda; and the subsequent attempt of the terrorists to perpetrate a vicious reprisal, G-d forbid, in Kushta (Istanbul).

It should be understood that these events are an indication that Jews must, at the earliest possible, strengthen all aspects of their security and defenses -- first and foremost in their spiritual life, which is the channel to receive G-d's blessings also in the physical aspect, namely, to know the right ways and means that have to be undertaken in the natural order of things, and to fully succeed in these efforts, in accordance with the Divine promise, "G-d, your G-d, will bless you in all that you do" -- to be protected and secured from enemies, and to be spared any undesirable happenings, G-d forbid.

The above events remind each and all of our Jewish brethren in general, and Jewish mothers and daughters in particular -- since every married Jewish woman is called Akeres Habayis, "Foundation of the Home," and those not yet married are to be Akeres Habayis, for which they must prepare themselves from tender age -- the following:

The present situation calls for the protection of every Jewish home. True protection is that which only G-d provides, as it is written, "G-d guards the city." To ensure this Divine guardianship, the home has to be conducted in all aspects according to G-d's will.

Then the home is also an abode for the Shechinah (G-d's Presence), in accordance with His promise, "I will dwell among them."

In addition to this, G-d has given our people a special gift wherewith to protect the home, namely, the Mitzvah of Mezuzah. Our Sages declare explicitly that "the home is protected by it (the Mezuzah)."

Moreover, this protection embraces the members of the household also when they go out of the house, as it is written, 'G-d will guard your going and your coming from now and forever.' It is further explained in our holy sources that the Divine Name (Shin-Dalet-Yud) written on the back of the sacred Mezuzah parchment spells out the words, "Shomer Dalsos Yisroel -- Guardian of Jewish Doors."

Let it also be remembered that inasmuch as all Jews constitute one body, and are bound up with one another, every Mezuzah is a Divine protection not only for the individual home, with everybody and everything in it, but each additional kosher Mezuzah that is affixed on a doorpost of any Jewish home, anywhere, adds to the protection of all our people everywhere.

And considering -- as mentioned above -- that every Jewish housewife is an Akeres Habayis, and every Jewish girl a future Akeres Habayis, they have a special Zechus (merit) and responsibility in the matter of Mezuzah, to see to it that not only a kosher Mezuzah be affixed on every doorpost in their home that is required to have a Mezuzah, but that the same be done by their Jewish neighbors and friends, and in all Jewish homes.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

### How do Jews Celebrate Birthdays?

**Question:** *Is there a Jewish way for me to celebrate my birthday?*

**Answer:** Sure, there's a Jewish way for everything!

Here are some ideas (culled from the teachings of the Rebbe):

**Note:** All these suggestions should be implemented on your Jewish birthday.

- Giving charity should be a daily event. On your special day increase the amount of your contribution, especially before the day's morning and afternoon prayers. If your birthday falls on Shabbat or a Jewish holiday when handling money is forbidden, give the added charity beforehand and afterwards.
  - Spend some extra time praying, focusing on meditating and concentrating on the words of the prayers.
  - Say as many Psalms as possible. Ideally you should complete at least one of its five books (Psalms is divided into five books).
  - Study the Psalm which corresponds to your new year. This is your age plus one -- e.g. Psalm 25 if this is your 24th birthday. This is also the Psalm which you should try to say daily until your next birthday.
  - Take some time out to contemplate on your past year. Consider which areas require improvement, and resolve to do so.
  - Learn some extra Torah on this day.
  - Study a Chassidic idea and repeat it at a gathering in honor of your birthday.
  - Partake of a new fruit which you did not yet taste during this season and recite the Shehecheyanu blessing.
  - Take the time to teach another something about Torah and Judaism.
  - Commit yourself to doing a particular good deed. Choose something practical and doable!
  - Men and boys over the age of thirteen: On the Shabbat beforehand, get an aliyah in the synagogue. If the birthday falls on a day when the Torah is read, be sure to receive an aliyah on that day too.
- Have a happy and meaningful birthday!

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*It is a Jewish custom that, when bringing a young child to school for the first time, we begin his Torah studies with the third book of the Torah, Vayikra - Leviticus. The book of Vayikra, the first portion of which we read this Shabbat, is also known as Torat Kohanim, for it mainly deals with the responsibilities of the Priests.*

*One might think that it would be more proper to begin a child's formal Jewish education "in the beginning," with the book of Genesis. Or, at least, to start out with the history of our people and thus, commence with the portion that discusses Abraham.*

*This, however, is not the case. The Midrash states that children are "pure" and the sacrifices (which the priests offered) are 'pure.' "Let the pure occupy themselves with the pure," says the Midrash.*

*It is interesting to note here at what age the child is considered "pure." For, in truth, there are three stages in the spiritual life of every Jew: 1) after the age of Bar/Bat Mitzva when the person is obligated to perform mitzvot (commandments); 2) when one is educated in the ways of Torah and mitzvot and begins observing them. (Though under no obligation, this prepares and trains the child for the time when he will be obligated to perform them); and 3) when the child is still so young that, though learning about Torah and mitzvot, he cannot be expected to conduct himself in accordance with them.*

*It is at this last and youngest stage, particularly, that the child is referred to as "pure." And, it is at precisely at this early, precious and pure stage that one needs begin a child's Jewish education. Though he cannot fully comprehend what he is learning, and isn't even required to put his studies into action, his/her pure neshama (soul) should be involved in the "pure" Torah.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

IT HAPPENED



In years gone by, it was not unusual for Chasidim to spend extended periods of time in their rebbe's presence, where they would fine-tune their own character traits and learn a path of spiritual service that would become the basis for their own spiritual endeavors.

Once, the tzadik, Reb Michel of Zlotchov, sent one of his Chasidim to another town to learn the attribute of trust in G-d from a simple, unlearned Jew. The Chasid remained in that town for many weeks, observing that individual and learning how to perfect his trust in the Creator.

Finally, when the time came to leave, the Chasid made his way home, pondering the lessons he had learned. He was walking down the road lost in thought, when he was shaken by the cries and screams of women and children. The Chasid looked up to see two Jewish women, bound in chains, being dragged down the road by two large, muscular gentile guards. He ran after the party and asked the women, "What has happened to you?"

The weeping women replied to him, "Our husbands leased the inn which belongs to the master of the village and they owe him a lot of rent. When they couldn't pay the rent, the master took us and he says he will kill us!"

The Chasid told the guards, "I will go to your master and I will pay the entire debt." They all went to the house of the master of the village, but instead of finding him, they found the manager of the estate. When the Chasid explained his intention to repay the debt, the manager was very willing to make the deal.

"Here is 150 rubles and I will sign a note for the balance," the Chasid said. "You don't know my master," said the manager. "He's not the type to settle for less than the whole amount. He's waited a long time for these Jews to pay up! Either you produce the whole amount, or the deal is off!"

The Chasid had no choice but to comply, for the fate of two Jewish families was at stake. He laid all his money on the table, but was still short. Then he went and pawned whatever possessions he had to amass the entire sum of money. The manager took the money and released the captives.

The Chasid continued on his journey home, giving thanks to the Creator for having given him the privilege of performing the exalted mitzva (commandment) of redeeming captives. Before dark, the Chasid stopped at an inn to rest for the night. He soon fell into conversation with another Jewish traveler, who, by the look of his clothing, was a wealthy merchant.

The wealthy Jew asked him many questions. It so happened that the two men came from the same town. They passed the entire evening in conversation, until the dawn broke and it was time to recite the morning prayer.

The Chasid mentioned to his new acquaintance the names of the towns he intended to pass through on his trip home. "I have a relative living in the town of R--, not far from the road you will be taking. For some time I have been looking for a trustworthy messenger with whom I could send him inheritance money. Perhaps you would agree to do this favor for me?"

The Chasid agreed at once. He wouldn't have to go far out of his way, and he was happy to be able to do yet another favor for a fellow Jew. He took the money and carefully sewed it into the lining of his jacket. The wealthy merchant thanked him warmly and offered to compensate him

for his trouble, but the Chasid refused, saying, "It is really no trouble for me to make a short detour, and I'm glad to be able to help you out."

But the merchant persisted, saying, "I promise you that your mitzva will stand intact, even though you accept this small gift from me." At last the Chasid agreed to take the money, for indeed, he had not even enough to pay for his night's stay at the inn. The two men shook hands and went their separate ways.

The Chasid finally came to the little town and asked around for the man, but no one recognized the name or the description. He was puzzled, for the merchant had entrusted him with an enormous sum of money. He certainly must have known that his relative lived in that town. Perhaps he was a recluse, or lived on the outskirts of the town. The Chasid decided to spend a few days in the town in the hope that he would discover the whereabouts of the lost relative, but all his searching was in vain.

It was a very downhearted man who returned to Zlotchov, to the court of Reb Michel. The Chasid went into the room of his rebbe and related to him all he had learned about his service to the Al-mighty; how he had learned to put his trust entirely in his Creator with a pure and simple belief. He also told the rebbe about his encounter with the two women and how he had ransomed them from their cruel captors.

Finally, he told the tzadik about his meeting with the wealthy merchant who had entrusted him to deliver the inheritance to the relative who could not be found. "Rebbe," said the man, sadly, "In this last mission which was entrusted to me I regret that I have failed, and now, I have a great sum of money which I cannot deliver to its rightful owner."

Reb Michel smiled at him and replied, "Let me offer you the explanation of what you experienced. In the merit of the great mitzva of redeeming the two Jewish women, angels were created as your advocates in the Heavenly Court. The man you took for a wealthy merchant was really an angel which was created by your merciful deed, and the money he gave you is for you to make use of with a happy and peaceful heart."

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

G-d calls to Moses from the Tent of Meeting, and communicates to him the laws of the korbanot, the animal and meal offerings brought in the Sanctuary. These include:

- The "ascending offering" (olah) that is wholly raised to G-d by the fire atop the altar;
- Five varieties of "meal offering" (minchah) prepared with fine flour, olive oil and frankincense;
- The "peace offering" (shelamim), whose meat was eaten by the one bringing the offering, after parts are burned on the altar and parts are given to the kohanim (priests);
- The different types of "sin offering" (chatat) brought to atone for transgressions committed erroneously by the high priest, the entire community, the king or the ordinary Jew;
- The "guilt offering" (asham) brought by one who has misappropriated property of the Sanctuary, who is in doubt as to whether he transgressed a divine prohibition, or who has committed a "betrayal against G-d" by swearing falsely to defraud a fellow man.

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 31 March-1 April	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	6:57	7:53
Adelaide	6:54	7:48
Brisbane	5:29	6:20
Darwin	6:32	7:21
Gold Coast	5:27	6:19
Perth	5:56	6:49
Sydney	6:34	7:27
Canberra	6:42	7:36
Launceston	6:47	7:44
Auckland	6:59	7:53
Wellington	6:57	7:54
Hobart	6:46	7:44
Byron Bay	6:26	7:18

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS VAYIKRA • 4 NISAN • 31 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	6.57 PM
	MINCHA:	7.05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7.30 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10.26 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	6.50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	7.53 PM
MOTZEI SHABBOS:	DAYLIGHT SAVINGS, CHANGING THE CLOCK FROM 3.00 TO 2.00	
SUNDAY:	NO 8.00 AM MINYAN	
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA:	5.55 PM
	MAARIV:	6.45 PM