

LAMPLIGHTER

29 Adar
Vayikra/Parah
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Never Say Sorry

By Elisha Greenbaum

Did you hear the news? There is a brewing political situation, which may or may not develop into a scandal. It seems that some politicians may have said or done something which may or may not have been the wrong thing to do, depending on the circumstances at the time, and/or our understanding of the law.

Innocuous, you say? Well it's the cover-up that sinks them every time. The press picks it up, questions began to fly; who knew what, when? A commission is empowered and an investigative process instigated. A slow leak of information began to surface. Diplomatic cables are tendered, emails examined, witnesses are cross-examined for reliability. Red herrings, smoking guns, cover ups; clichés galore. Scandal rules the airwaves.

Sound familiar? Well I'm not referring to any particular contretemps; rather this is a template of every political scandal. It's a game; they get it wrong, they deny it; we try to catch them in a lie. The teflon ones get away with it, while the less lucky ones "retire to spend more time with their family."

Makes me wonder, if a leader just had the courage to look us in the collective eye, admit to a mistake and promise to take better care in the future, wouldn't he be better off in the long and short run. The electorate is realistic, we know that everyone slips up occasionally and most of us would forgive and forget in the face of an honest admission.

This week's Torah reading discusses the situation where a leader or king accidentally did something wrong, admits his sin and wishes to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of his people and the eyes of G-d. Fascinatingly, unlike contemporary elected officials who squirm, spin and deny any wrongdoing, even to the extent of destroying their career in the process, a Jewish leader would publicly acknowledge his mistake and offer a sacrifice to G-d as a penance.

The king as the figurehead of the nation would utilize this opportunity to publicly demonstrate his continuing commitment to the Commandments, and the people would thrill with the knowledge that their leader recognized his own imperfections and was openly willing to address them.

We all go off the rails on occasion, whether in our marriage, financial affairs, or relationships. We have the choice to deny the past and refuse to address the future, or to act like a true leader and face up to ourselves. The temptation is to creep into the wriggle room of life, and bluff and bluster our way past the problem. However this soft option will only lead us further into the muck, as the cover-up compounds the original sin.

Only when we are prepared to confront our demons, and honestly and publicly undertake to improve, do we demonstrate our capacity for self-invention, reinvigoration and true leadership.

Slice of LIFE

“Mom, I'm Marrying a Chassid!”

The Rebbe's advice on maintaining a good relationship with your parents and in-laws

By David Eliezrie

We were on pins and needles. We had decided to get engaged. As is the chassidic custom, before finalizing the shidduch (match), we wrote a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of righteous memory, asking for his blessing. In the letter, we indicated that my fiancée's parents had some issues with the shidduch.

My future in-laws had both come from religious families. They were first cousins. Their fathers, two brothers, had left Poland in the decades prior to World War II. His parents headed to Tel Aviv, hers to New York. In both of these communities, the families had continued their fully observant lifestyle.

Their children, however, had chosen a different path. Yaakov, my fiancée's father, was drawn to the Irgun (a Zionist paramilitary group that operated in Mandate Palestine between 1931 and 1948). He had been imprisoned in Latrun by the British for hiding weapons. Dora, my fiancée's mother, grew up in Queens, where her father operated a kosher bakery. At the time there were few Jewish schools for girls, so while her brothers attended the famous Yeshivah Torah Vodaath, Dora went to public school.

Although both Yaakov and Dora drifted away from full observance, they retained a strong Jewish identity. They were among the few Jewish families in Los Angeles in the fifties to send their children to an Orthodox day school. Eventually, they joined a large Conservative temple. On Friday nights, Holocaust survivors would gather in my in-laws' home; their daughter attended the Orthodox Zionist B'nai Akiva.

But the prospect of a future son-in-

law who was a product of a Lubavitcher yeshivah was a bit too much for them. A chassidic son-in-law who aspired to be a shliach (emissary) of the Rebbe was something they had never planned for their daughter. We mentioned the issue in our letter to the Rebbe, but I never expected the Rebbe to comment.

The Rebbe's response arrived shortly, with a powerful message that would set the tone of our relationship with my future in-laws for decades to come. The Rebbe had made the shidduch conditional: “If the parents will agree; and if not, [we] should wait to the end of the year of learning, and in the meanwhile discuss it with them.” Although my fiancée and I were ready to go ahead with the shidduch despite my in-laws' objections, the Rebbe had insisted we wait until they felt comfortable.

We were in Israel, and my in-laws were in L.A. Over the next few months, friends and relatives shuttled back and forth, negotiating on our behalf. Finally, a friend of my future in-laws who was involved with Chabad in L.A. came to Israel to visit. Upon her return to Los Angeles, she was able to lay my in-laws' concerns to rest. The shidduch became official.

The Rebbe's message was clear: Treat your in-laws with the greatest esteem. Judaism should not be a barrier; with communication and respect, you can create a positive relationship.

A year and a half later, the Rebbe provided us with yet another reality check. After a year of studying in New York, my wife and I were ready to start our work as Chabad emissaries. Our mission was to open a new Chabad center at the University of Miami. Before we left, we had a yechidus (private audience) with the Rebbe to receive his blessing.

My wife told the Rebbe that her parents were making some changes. They had moved from the Conservative temple to an Orthodox shul in their neighborhood. My wife asked the Rebbe what she should do to encourage them. The Rebbe's answer surprised me again. He told us, “It is against the nature and psychology of children to tell parents how to live. Find someone in their

community to encourage them.” Once again, the message was clear. We were not to preach or push. Our job was to respect, not tell my in-laws how to live.

As the years have unfolded, I realize the power of the Rebbe's message. Observing others who faced a similar challenge, I saw that, sadly, the decision to become observant often meant severing ties with non-observant family members. Sometimes it was the child who broke the connection, out of fear that the parents would have a negative influence on their grandchildren. Other times, the parents chose to take a step back when their child demanded they make changes they weren't ready for. In both cases, it was clear that the restraint and respect the Rebbe advocated would have gone a long way to preserve these precious relationships.

On their own, my in-laws slowly strengthened their bond with Judaism. They moved back to Brooklyn. Whenever my children were in town, my father-in-law would bring his grandchildren to shul with pride, telling his buddies of their exploits around the world. On Sundays when I was in New York, invariably he would escort me to Crown Heights, where he would stand in line with me to receive a dollar and a blessing from the Rebbe.

After my father-in-law's passing, my mother-in-law moved back to L.A. to be close to us (we had moved to Yorba Linda, California, to open a Chabad center). On Shabbat morning on his way to shul, her grandson, my oldest, would stop by her apartment with her great-grandchildren in tow. They would spend some time with Bubbe, as she showered them with treats. Sitting at our community Seder, she would gently ask, “Nu, how much longer?”

Our last picture of Bubbe: Welcoming her 17th grandchild to the world.

Occasionally she would say to me, “Can't you get a real job? Why do you have to be a shliach?” To which I would respond, “Bubbe, you didn't get such a bad deal—six grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and who knows how many more on the way...”

Last year, on Lag BaOmer, she passed away. Just a few weeks earlier, she joined us in Cedars-Sinai Hospital to welcome her 17th great-grandchild to the world. My last picture of her is this treasured moment.

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Editor: Shlomie Naparstek

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA

Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

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WEEKLY VIDEO



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INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Religion in the Military

By the Grace of G-d
28th of Teveth, 5713 [January 10, 1953]
Brooklyn 13, N.Y.
Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 13th of Teveth in which you describe your studies at the Yeshiva and also about the other members of your family.

You write that in the army it is impossible to be religious. This is, of course, incorrect and you should impress this upon ---- There are thousands of Jewish soldiers in the army who observe the Mitzvah of Tefillin and prayer, etc. The Tefillin is especially important for Jewish boys in military service, for, apart from the Mitzvah involved, it is also a Segulah for safety and a return home in good health. Even if it is difficult to put on Tefillin in the morning because of military duties, or maneuvers, etc., it is still possible and necessary to put on Tefillin any time before sunset, even for a few moments. In such a case it is permissible to say the prayer in the morning without Tefillin, since the Tefillin will be put on later.

With regard to your question as to where to be on Pesach, you ought to discuss the matter with the head of the Yeshiva. Of course it has to be a place where it is strictly kosher for Pesach, in accordance with the Torah.

You ought to give half a penny for Tzedakah every Monday and Thursday before the morning prayers. You also ought to know by heart several psalms or several Mishnayoth, which you could revise in your mind whenever you are walking in the street, or riding in a car, and if there are no people around, you could even rehearse them to yourself aloud.

May G-d bless you in your learning of the Torah with Yiras Shomaim and that you be able to write good news about it to me.

With blessing,

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. Gutterman

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

Does What I Appear to Be Doing Matter?

Question: *In my Torah studies I've learnt that not only should you do the right thing, but you should also be seen to be doing the right thing. The example I was given was that a Jew shouldn't enter a non-kosher restaurant to use the facilities, lest someone think that he or she might be eating there. Should we be more concerned with the appearance of doing right (or wrong) or the actual practice?*

Answer: Certainly we should be more concerned about what we do than how we look. But this does not mean that we can completely ignore the way things appear to others.

We cannot be invisible. Nobody lives in a vacuum (unless you are a vacuum cleaner bag). Our actions impact others whether we like it or not. Every individual contributes to the social fabric. And so we are responsible not only for our actions, but also for the impression they make, because we are responsible for the morality of others, not just our own. Any behavior that might work against the furtherance of goodness is a moral problem.

It isn't about my reputation as much as it is about my influence. When I do something that looks wrong, even if I have a perfectly good and innocent explanation, the damage is done.

If I enter a non-kosher restaurant to use the facilities, while I have not broken any law of keeping kosher, I have bridged the divide between kosher and not kosher, and invite others to do the same. In the same way, if I have a glass of soy milk during a meal of steak, I give off the impression that I could drink milk with meat (unless the container is displayed prominently on the table).

But there's a deeper reason not to do something that just looks wrong, even if it isn't wrong, and even if no one is looking. And that is because not only can such activity affect others, it can affect us too.

Actors know that when you play a character, you can sometimes become that character. The self we project to others can sometimes be absorbed into our own identity. And so by looking like you are doing something wrong, you may come to actually do it. By feeling comfortable in a place you don't really belong, you may end up thinking you do belong there. You can't remain immune from your surroundings, or from your own actions.

This law, called marit ayin, teaches some powerful lessons: your morality is my business; I affect my surroundings and my surroundings affect me; and together we form a community, so everyone's actions count.

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Priorities

By Tuvia Bolton

The small room was crowded but no one spoke. Only the difficult breathing of the old man lying on the bed and the prayers of the Rabbis there broke the tense silence. Old Shlomo was dying. Several Rabbis of the Holy Society were standing around him silently reading Psalms, and behind them stood his family, but it was only a matter of minutes now.

For those of you that don't know, the "Holy Society" means the funeral staff. Traditionally in Judaism this task was (and still is) reserved for only the holiest and most spiritual of Jews and here they were none other than the holy Tzadik Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Braditchev and nine of his pupils.

Suddenly the Rabbi leaned over the sick man and spoke quietly but forcefully.

"Rav Shlomo! Rav Shlomo! Why are you sad?"

Everyone had noticed that tears were streaming down Shlomo's cheeks but no one made much of it.

"You should be happy!" continued the Rabbi, "Everyone has to die. No one lives forever until the raising of the dead. You've lived a long fruitful life. Here, just look at your beautiful family and all the good deeds you did! So why are you so sad? Why are you crying?"

"No no, not because of that!" the old man whispered. "Thank G-d, Thank G-d I'm not complaining. G-d forbid. It's just that, well...the Torah and the commandments...I never really cared. I always had other things on my mind. Who knows if I'll go to Heaven? Who knows? And even if I do, I'm pretty sure that it's not going to be very bright for me there." The tears kept running down his cheeks.

"Ahhh! That's your problem?" exclaimed Rav Levi Yitzchak. "How would you like my Heaven?"

"Ehhh!?" exclaimed the old man with all the surprise he could muster up.

"That's right, how would you like my 'Olom Ha Ba' (world to come)?" repeated the rabbi.

"Ehhh?" Said Shlomo as his eyes widened in disbelief and he raised his head slightly. "Ca...can you do that? Is such a thing possible? Are.... are you serious?"

"Certainly!" said the Tzadik as he turned to one of his pupils and asked him to bring a pen and a piece of paper. In just minutes he was dictating; "write, 'I Levi Yitzchak ben (son of) Sarah do hereby give my entire place in Heaven to Shlomo ben ehh...' what is your mother's name?" Ahh yes! Shlomo

ben Yenta, right?" Old Shlomo shook his head in astonished agreement as the Rabbi told his pupils to sign the deed. .

A warm smile of gratitude spread over his face as he took the precious document from the rabbi. If he had any energy left in his drained-out body he would have begun dancing. He gave one last loving glance at his benefactor, another at his family as though to say everything was all right, said the final "Shma Yisroel" prayer, closed his eyes and blissfully passed on to his now significantly enhanced heavenly reward.

Later that day, after the funeral, his pupils asked their master if he could explain. What type of merit did old Shlomo have that he deserved such a gift? Perhaps he did some unique deed or special mitzvah? It must have really been something unique, after all Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's afterlife was no small gift!!

"Maybe" answered the Tzadik, "But I don't know what it was."

"You don't know?" blurted out one of his pupils in disbelief, "Then why did you give him your entire heaven?!!"

"Well" answered Rav Levi Yitzchak "It's simple. I just reasoned that to make a Jew happy, even for a few moments, was worth my entire world-to-come. That's why I gave it to him."

Of course this is a very strange idea. A great tzadik like the Rabbi of Braditchev certainly had a very clear idea of the infinite pleasures awaiting him in the afterlife. But he gladly gave it all away because he knew that nothing would make G-d happier than to make a Jew happy!

In other words all that mattered to him was to make G-d happy.

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 16 - 17 March	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	7:20	8:16
Adelaide	7:15	8:09
Brisbane	5:46	6:37
Darwin	6:42	7:31
Gold Coast	5:44	6:36
Perth	6:15	7:08
Sydney	6:54	7:48
Canberra	7:03	7:57
Launceston	7:13	8:10
Auckland	7:21	8:16
Wellington	7:22	8:19
Hobart	7:12	8:11
Byron Bay	6:44	7:36

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

VAYIKRA/PARAH • 29 ADAR • 16 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	7.25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	7.55 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	10.22 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	7.15 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	7.20 PM
	MAARIV	8.05 PM