

# LAMPLIGHTER

12 Iyar  
Parshas  
Acharei-Kedoshim  
**1345**  
27 April  
5778/2018

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week we read two Torah portions, Acharei and Kedoshim. Kedoshim contains the commandment: "Sanctify yourselves and be holy." Man is commanded to sanctify himself even within the parameters of Torah law. Not only must he heed both positive and negative mitzvot (commandments), but he must also sanctify himself in those areas which the Torah has deemed permissible.

One might think that because these areas are not specifically spelled out in the Torah, this commandment is less important than others which are explained in great detail. But it is precisely this personal sanctification which has the power to bring the Final Redemption closer to reality.

Although learning Torah and performing mitzvot requires the individual to subjugate, to a certain extent, his own personal desires to G-d's will, this in no way ensures that his inner nature will be purified and refined. But when a person, of his own accord and of his own volition, consistently behaves in the same dignified and respectful manner, no matter what the endeavor, it demonstrates that the Torah's holiness has penetrated his inner being and that he is totally committed to G-d.

At the same time, this imbues one's entire life with meaning, not only those areas directly involved with religious observance. A person who strives to sanctify himself at all times, however mundane his activity, reveals the G-dliness within all of creation and proves that no aspect of life is too insignificant to be used in the service of G-d.

This commandment has particular meaning for us now, as we stand on the threshold of the Final Redemption, for one of the main changes that will occur when Moshiach comes is the revelation of G-dliness that will suddenly become apparent. When Moshiach comes we will realize that G-d is indeed everywhere and that truly "there is nothing besides Him."

At the present time, holiness is manifested in a limited way. Today, it is the physical objects we use to perform mitzvot that are related to as holy. During the Messianic Era, however, we will easily recognize the G-dliness inherent in every detail of creation.

When Moshiach comes, G-d will be perceived as He exists - without any limitations whatsoever. G-d's desire to establish a dwelling place for Himself "down below" will be totally fulfilled and the purpose of creation realized.

Sanctifying even the most mundane aspects of our lives, therefore, not only prepares us for the imminent Redemption, but serves to bring Moshiach even closer.

## Do We Love Too Much?

By Yanki Tauber

Short circuit (elect.): an abnormal, usually unintentional, condition of relatively low resistance between two points of different potential in a circuit, usually resulting in a flow of excess current.

*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*

Do we love too much?

Apparently we do. Many marriages fail for a dearth of love; an equal number are suffocated by an overabundance of the same.

So desirous are we for connection, so hungry for communion with another human being, that we forget that for love to endure it must be complemented with an equal measure of restraint. So eager are we to give of ourselves to the one we love—be it a spouse, a child or a friend—that we often give without consideration of the needs and desires of the recipient of our love.

When passion is mitigated with a degree of inhibition, when intimacy is tempered with a modicum of reserve, love flourishes. But when all limits are betrayed, love burns out.

A love relationship can thus be compared to an electrical circuit. In a circuit, the attraction between the positive and negative charges creates a current of energy joining the two; the current meets with a certain degree of resistance as it passes through the circuit, delimiting its intensity. The natural tendency of this attraction is to seek the shortest possible route, carrying the highest possible current, to join the attracted charges. But should this tendency be indulged—should the "resistance" fall—the circuit will "short": the current will escalate, ultimately causing the destruction of the circuit and the breakdown of the very connection which the current seeks to create.

The book of Leviticus speaks of the tragic death of Aaron's two elder sons, Nadav and Avihu.

After many months of labor and anticipation, the Sanctuary had finally been set up in the Israelite camp, and the Divine Presence came to rest within it. Amidst the joyous dedication ceremonies, "Nadav and Avihu each took his censer, and put fire in it, and put ketoret (incense) on it, and offered strange fire before G-d, which He commanded them not. A fire went out from G-d, and consumed them, and they died before G-d" (Leviticus 10:1-2).

In his commentary on the Torah, the great sage and mystic Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar explains that Nadav and Avihu died from an overdose of love.

Once a year, on Yom Kippur, the high priest would enter the innermost chamber of the Sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, to offer ketoret to G-d. This occasion—on which the most spiritual human being performed the most sacred service in the holiest place in the world on the holiest day of the year—was the point of utmost intimacy with G-d attained by man. Nadav and Avihu were priests, but not high priests (though they would have been, had they lived to succeed their father in that office); it was a very special occasion, marked by special offerings to G-d, but it was not Yom Kippur. But their thirst for intimacy with G-d could not be satisfied by anything less than the ultimate. They wanted to get closer yet, though "He commanded them not."

Human life is a love affair between the soul and her G-d. Our passion for life is a craving for the "spark of G-dliness" implicit within every one of G-d's creations; ultimately, everything we do is motivated by our soul's desire to draw closer to our Source. So powerful is this desire that it can lead us to do things that are contrary to G-d's will—things that violate the bounds of our love and destroy it.

For our marriage to live and thrive, we must feed our passion for life; but we must also know when to hold back. As in every truly loving relationship, we must learn to love in the manner that our beloved needs and desires to be loved.

# Slice of LIFE

## Connected No Matter What

My hands, accustomed by years of training, wound the smooth black leather straps of my tefillin as I removed them after completing the morning prayers. My mind, however, was drawn not to the ancient hide that bound my soul to its Creator, but to the swarming crowd around me.

I was nineteen years old and on my first trip abroad, and what better a place to spend a summer than Venice, Italy?

My flight had left New York the previous evening and, save for the boisterous singing of a few French students sporting "I love NYC" t-shirts in the row behind me, had made for a peaceful trip to Paris Charles De Gaulle airport where I was now spending a one hour stopover.

"This is the last boarding call for flight 832 to Bangladesh," came a crackling voice over the loudspeaker... People milled about... A family of five laden with bags and a screaming baby ran to make their flight... A businessman dressed in an expensive suit leisurely perused a paper... Such a vibrant and varied display of humanity could be found here.

Avi, my friend and traveling partner laughed.

"It's funny how people react when you pray in the airport. Some don't seem to notice, others don't get it. But then sometimes a person looks, walks a little bit, and then turns back for a second glance—that's certainly a Jew. Seeing us has somehow touched

that person."

A voice from behind us chimed in:

"Yeah, to think how many people don't understand that you're laying tefillin."

Avi and I simultaneously turned around. In the row of chairs behind sat the source of the voice—a middle-aged man sporting a blue Hawaiian shirt, shorts and dark shades perched above his forehead, and now pleasantly smiling at us. A moment of silence passed between us as we took each other in.

Three Jews bumping into each other in an international European airport; there had to be some inner meaning behind it all.

"Do you want to put on tefillin yourself?" I finally asked, my voice cracking slightly.

He looked into my eyes for a moment, and then shook his head.

"No..."

He had a story, though.

"I live on a small island off of Florida. Very few people live there, and even fewer Jews. But then there's the rabbi across the street. He's the best neighbor one could ask for. His kids have tzitzit; they're so well behaved... I watch them with pride. But where I'm at in life, I'm not up to putting on tefillin. When I grew up, my grandfather was orthodox; he laid tefillin every day and then went to his kosher deli. But where I am at now..."

Again he shook his head, and then with a deep sigh he stood up, pulling his travel-bag over his shoulder and stretching slightly. Looking at Avi and me he reached out and placed his large hands on our shoulders.

"Look, we're connected together no matter what. It may not

be how you guys want—but when I got off the plane from Miami, my wife asked me where I wanted to sit. I saw you two and said, 'I'm sitting with my boys.'"

He removed his hands and walked towards a lady standing off in the distance, the two of them turned to us, smiled, and then merged into the swarming crowd, seemingly forever lost in the sands of time.

Things felt odd, as if they ought not to have ended this way. After all, I had so many questions that had been left unanswered: Who was he? What he did for a living? Had his grandfather worked in the deli, or only eaten there... I hadn't even asked for his name!

In a perfect world, I told myself, we would have put on tefillin, cried a little, laughed a little, then stayed in touch. Reality had seemed to leave me alone, my tefillin still in my hands, in the center of a swirling mass of travelers.

His last words ran through my mind. "Look we're connected, together, no matter what."

True doing a mitzvah together would have bound us as one, but perhaps he was right, we were connected no matter what. There was the bond of one Jew to his fellow, and, what was more, there was the effect that our very presence in the airport seemed to have on him—hadn't he walked over and initiated a conversation with us? If the tzitzit of his neighbor's children had swayed him to speak to us, then perhaps our conversation with him would bring him to do even more next time!

True I hadn't even asked for his name. Yet somehow even without names I know him. He was right, we are connected.

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### WEEKLY VIDEO



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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## Is Education Only to Increase Knowledge?

By the Grace of G-d  
18th of Cheshvan, 5724 [November 5, 1963]  
Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 14th of Cheshvan with the enclosure. You are, of course, quite right in writing that the purpose of education is not merely the increase of knowledge, but the actual training and upbringing to live the Jewish way of life. This is especially true in our day and age, in view of the adverse influence of the environment, etc., which makes it all the more imperative to instill a goodly measure of Yiras HaShem into the children. Indeed this is the purpose of the Torah and Mitzvot, as it is written

There can be no difference of opinion as far as the purpose of Jewish education is concerned, which applies everywhere. There can only be a difference of approach and method as to how to attain this goal, and this may vary from generation to generation, from city to city and sometimes even from classroom to classroom.

Another point to remember is that inasmuch as parents are not always permeated with the idea that true Jewish education is truly vital for their children, it is necessary to follow the approach suggested by our Sages, of blessed memory. This is why it is often useful to emphasize the good side effects of Jewish education, until they will eventually understand also the essential aspects involved.

With regard to the question which you write towards the end of your letter, namely, about your present job and your difficulty with Parnosso, etc., an improvement would depend on those who must be approached and who have the final say. Therefore, it would be well for you to consult fully with such persons that know them personally, and who can judge their reaction to any particular approach.

May G-d, who feeds and sustains the whole world out of His generous and ample Hand, also give you your Parnosso with Kashrus and peace of mind, so that you should be able to concentrate on your efforts to strengthen and spread true Yiddishkeit to the utmost of your capacity.

Hoping to hear good news from you,  
With blessing,

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

### Separation in the Synagogue

**Question:** Why do men and women sit separately at traditional Jewish services?

**Answer:** All Jewish practices have their simple reasons as well as deeper, more spiritual explanations.

One obvious benefit of separate seating in a synagogue is that it helps ensure that the main focus is on the prayers and not on the opposite gender. There is no question that we don't act the same in a mixed crowd as we do in a same-gender one. There is nothing wrong with that. It is good and healthy that we are attracted to each other, but during prayers we shouldn't be trying to impress anyone other than G-d.

In addition to that, a synagogue should be a welcoming and inclusive place. No one should feel left out. Many single people feel extremely uncomfortable at a function or event at which everyone seems to be with a partner except them. No one should ever feel this way at a synagogue. When men and women sit separately, there is no discrimination between singles and couples. (There will always be a chance for singles to mingle afterwards at the Kiddush!)

But it goes deeper than that. Women and men are very different beings. Not only are we physically different; our thought processes, emotional states and psychology are all different. This is because our souls are different - they come from complementary but opposite sources. The prayer experience is supposed to be an opportunity to be with your true self, to communicate with your soul. Men and women need space from each other to help them become attuned to their higher selves.

Ironically, it is by sitting separately in prayer that we are able to truly come together in the other areas of our lives; because it is only when both male and female spiritual energies are allowed to flourish that we are complete as individuals, families and a community.

## A WORD

from the Director

*This coming Sunday is one month after Pesach (Passover) and is known as "Pesach Sheni - the Second Passover."*

*A year after our ancestors left Egyptian exile, they were poised to celebrate Pesach. However, some of them had become ritually impure and were not permitted to offer the Passover sacrifice. They begged Moses to intercede on their behalf and with G-d's permission they were allowed to offer the sacrifice one month later on 14 Iyar.*

*The Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn, wrote: "The theme of Pesach Sheni is that it is never too late! It is always possible to put things right. Even if one was ritually impure, or far away, and even in a case when this impurity or distance was deliberate - nonetheless it can be corrected."*

*It's never too late! We can always make up for a past misdeed, omission or failing through sincere desire and making amends.*

*It's never too late! What an inspiring and optimistic thought! There's always a chance to improve, to become better, to learn and do.*

*This is truly a motto worth memorizing (and hanging on the refrigerator). Rather than muttering about yourself or another person, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," realize that it's never too late.*

*You didn't put on tefillin yesterday? Today's a new day and it's never too late.*

*You didn't light candles for Shabbat last Friday night? Do it this week; it's never too late.*

*You never went to Hebrew school, so you can't read Hebrew? Enroll in an adult education course; it's never too late.*

*You never knew that Judaism had so much to offer? Now that you know, do something about it, because it's never too late!*

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED



**The Baal Shem Tov's Lag BaOmer Parade**

*By Yerachmiel Tilles*

Two weeks before Rosh Hashanah in 1734, on his 36th birthday, Rabbi Yisrael, the Baal Shem Tov, was revealed as an extraordinarily holy person and the leader of the fledgling Chassidic movement. Before that, he devoted himself to keeping his special qualities well hidden from the public eye. He dressed, spoke and carried himself like every other simple, uneducated poor Jew in the Ukraine. To support himself, he worked as a plain laborer. His intense prayers, his meditation and his deep Torah study were all carried out in secret. In conversation with other Jews, he would often encourage them with teachings and stories from the Midrash and Talmud that stressed the value of serving G-d simply but wholeheartedly. He strove to nourish in them a love for G-d, for Torah and for the entire Jewish people. But when he did so, it was always in the language and idiom of the common people. No one suspected him of being more than he appeared. Only his wife knew his capabilities.

Sometimes it happened that he would be forced to use his extraordinary powers to save Jews, or even whole communities, in distress. Whenever he did so, as soon as the time of need ended, he would immediately move to a new and distant location where nobody knew him. One of these occasions took place on Lag BaOmer.

In those days, Jewish communities in Eastern Europe were often subject to attack by wild bands of violent Cossacks and other such coarse anti-Semites. They would beat Jewish men, sometimes even fatally; rape the women; and plunder or destroy whatever Jewish property they could get their hands on. Once, the town where the Baal Shem Tov was living received word that such a gang of evil marauders was headed their way. The entire Jewish community decided to abandon their homes and hide in the hills for a few days, until the invading Cossacks would calm down and leave. The Baal Shem Tov accompanied them. The people took refuge in the numerous caves that dotted the rugged terrain.

From their lookout places they could see that the Cossack horde had arrived. Unable to find any Jews to physically assault, they vented their anger and frustration on Jewish property. They broke into the warehouse of wine, drank themselves into a state of crazed drunkenness, smashed the rest of the barrels and set fire to the building. The Jews all trembled in fear that the cruel Cossacks would decide to search the hills and their hiding places would be discovered.

A few days went by. The invaders stacked up piles of booty looted from Jewish homes and stores. The Jews were still terrified of being discovered. How startled they were to see that the nondescript Yisroelik (a nickname for Israel, the Baal Shem Tov's name) was assembling groups of their children outside of the caves, in broad daylight!

They protested, whereupon the Baal Shem Tov explained to them that it was the holy day of Lag BaOmer, a day to be outside in the fields, joyously celebrating the day of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. He assured them that not only would they not be endangered, but that the merit of their Lag BaOmer observance would help to protect and rescue the entire community.

Somehow his enthusiasm and conviction affected the nervous parents, and they gave their permission. The Baal Shem Tov went from cave to cave and gathered nearly all the children.

While many of the adults were still mulling over this startling turn of events, the Baal Shem Tov launched a mini-parade. The children marched along, singing happily, as they followed their new charismatic leader. At first, they were a bit afraid and sang only in whispers and low voices, but in just a short time their fear melted away as they raised their voices to join in the infectiously cheerful tunes of the day honoring Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

The parents gazed after their children with nervous affection, but their attention soon whipped to the Baal Shem Tov. It was as if he was a person they had never seen before. His face flamed with rapture as he sang, and all his movements reflected ecstasy in the divine, as he danced with the circle of children. The simple Yisroelik that they knew had been transformed in their eyes into the holiest of men. His voice combined with those of the pure innocent children to produce singing that seemed to be no less awesome than that of the angels in Heaven.

The parade and the singing continued for a long time. Afterwards, the Baal Shem Tov led the children to a small plateau, sat them on the grass, and distributed to each of them desserts that he had brought with him. He made sure that each child pronounced loudly the correct blessing for the food that he received. Then, after they had eaten, he told them riveting stories from the Talmud and the Midrash about Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and about Rabbi Akiva. The children listened attentively and felt the powerful love the Baal Shem Tov had for each of them, responding with great affection.

The parents and the other adults from the village remained very worried. How could Yisroelik stay so long in the open with their children? Their frightened glances switched rapidly back and forth from the smoke and fury in the village below to the rows of children seated in front of the Baal Shem Tov. They whispered prayers that all should end well and that everyone would be safe.

Suddenly, they saw the Cossack gang rush from the village and scatter in every direction, running with all their might. They left so suddenly that they didn't stop to take anything with them, abandoning their massive plunder. At first the Jews were afraid that the crazed invaders were searching for them again, but the speed with which the enemy disappeared from the vicinity soon calmed their fear. Soon after, all the Jews returned to their village. The danger was over!

Eventually, they were able to clarify what had happened. Somehow, the hooligans had found out—or thought they had found out—that a troop of government soldiers was rapidly approaching in their direction. Frightened, they had fled for their lives, abandoning everything that might slow down their flight.

The Jews returned to their homes with happy strides, amazed by the miracle that had taken place for them. They knew without doubt that the miracle occurred in the merit of their children's joyous celebration in honor of the great sage Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai on his day of joy, Lag BaOmer, with the heretofore hidden mystic, the Baal Shem Tov—who had already disappeared to another location.

**PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL**

Following the deaths of Nadav and Avihu, G-d warns against unauthorized entry "into the holy." Only one person, the kohen gadol ("high priest"), may, but once a year, on Yom Kippur, enter the innermost chamber in the Sanctuary to offer the sacred ketoret to G-d.

Another feature of the Day of Atonement service is the casting of lots over two goats, to determine which should be offered to G-d and which should be dispatched to carry off the sins of Israel to the wilderness.

The Parshah of Acharei also warns against bringing korbanot (animal or meal offerings) anywhere but in the Holy Temple, forbids the consumption of blood, and details the laws prohibiting incest and other deviant sexual relations. The Parshah of Kedoshim begins with the statement: "You shall be holy, for I, the L-rd your G-d, am holy." This is followed by dozens of mitzvot (divine commandments) through which the Jew sanctifies him- or herself and relates to the holiness of G-d.

These include: the prohibition against idolatry, the mitzvah of charity, the principle of equality before the law, Shabbat, sexual morality, honesty in business, honor and awe of one's parents, and the sacredness of life.

Also in Kedoshim is the dictum which the great sage Rabbi Akiva called a cardinal principle of Torah, and of which Hillel said, "This is the entire Torah, the rest is commentary"—"Love your fellow as yourself."

**CANDLE LIGHTING**



	Shabbos 27 - 28 April	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	5:20	6:17
Adelaide	5:20	6:15
Brisbane	5:02	5:55
Darwin	6:17	7:07
Gold Coast	5:00	5:53
Perth	5:25	6:19
Sydney	5:01	5:56
Canberra	5:07	6:03
Launceston	5:06	6:05
Auckland	5:22	6:19
Wellington	5:15	6:14
Hobart	5:02	6:02
Byron Bay	4:58	5:51

**CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH**

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

**PARSHAS ACHAREI-KEDOSHIM • 12 IYAR • 27 APRIL**

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	MINCHA	5.25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	5.55 PM
<b>SHABBOS DAY:</b>	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9.35 AM
	SHACHARIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	5.15 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	5.20 PM
	MAARIV	6.05 PM