

# LAMPLIGHTER

10 Adar Aleph  
Parshas  
Tetzaveh  
**1387**  
15 February  
5779/2019

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's portion, Tetzaveh, the Torah states: "Aaron shall burn incense each morning when he cleans the lamps. And he shall burn incense in the evening when he kindles the lamps." What purpose did the burning of incense serve in the Sanctuary, and later, in the First and Second Holy Temples? Furthermore, what can we learn from this to apply in our daily lives?

First of all, it is important to note that the command to build the incense altar and bring its offering are mentioned in the Torah as the final elements in the construction of the Sanctuary. In fact, the Divine Presence did not rest in the Sanctuary until the incense offering was brought.

What is the reason for its uniqueness? Our Sages explain that the sacrifices offered on the altar in the courtyard of the Sanctuary relate to a Jew's body, while the incense offering brought on the inner altar relates to a Jew's soul.

This concept is reflected in the Hebrew names used to describe these different offerings. The Hebrew word for "sacrifice" is "korban," which has its root in the word "karov," meaning "close." In contrast, the Hebrew for "incense" offering, "ketoret," relates to the root "ketar," Aramaic for "bond." By bringing a sacrifice, a Jew draws close to G-d. Through the incense offering, however, a Jew and G-d become fused in total unity.

Thus, it is only after the Torah describes the preparations necessary for the Sanctuary, whose purpose is to make it possible for the Divine Presence to dwell among - and thus within - the Jewish people, that it mentions the incense offering, which allows for a bond of oneness to be established between them.

This theme of oneness is also reflected in the dimensions of the incense altar, which measured one cubit by one cubit. Likewise, when the incense offering was brought, the priest making the offering was alone with G-d. No one else was allowed to assist.

These concepts must be paralleled in our daily service of G-d. Every day, a person arises as "a new creation." Every day, therefore, we must renew our inner bond with G-d, as expressed by the recitation in our daily prayers of the verses concerning the bringing of the incense offering, and how that offering was brought in connection with the cleaning and the kindling of the Menora. This teaches us that the bond between us and G-d must be extended into our worldly affairs, causing them to be carried out in the spirit of "All your deeds shall be for the sake of Heaven," and "Know Him in all your ways."

## A Priestly Class?

By Elisha Greenbaum

Who are you?

"I'm a lawyer."

"I'm a motor mechanic."

"I'm a rabbi."

"I'm a sanitation engineer."

Is this who you are, or what you do?

In modern day society, there has been a turn away from defining a person by his profession. True, some vocations enjoy greater pay packets and others entail superior social cachet, nonetheless, in an example of almost reverse snobbery it has become fashionable to insist that no one man is any better than another.

I agree, to an extent. To claim any innate superiority between races or to attempt to rank individuals is to erroneously claim that one person can be inherently more worthwhile or valuable in G-d's eyes.

However, this culture of equality we cultivate has its drawbacks. Australians are famous for their readiness to "cut down the tall poppy." Anyone judged to be striving too hard is dubbed a try-hard or a big-noter and mocked for his or her ambition. If everyone is equal, why waste time and effort struggling to succeed?

I believe that people are of equal worth, even as, simultaneously, each individual and nation has been assigned a specific role and distinct approach to fulfilling their purpose. Accepting this doctrine of "equal but different" allows and demands that each of us utilize our G-d-given talents to our maximum capacity while recognizing the essential dignity and importance of each individual.

To quote a school principal I know, "If the graduates of my school become street sweepers, fine, no problem; but let them be a mensch of a street-sweeper!"

What do you want me to do?

In this week's Parshah we read how, of all the Jews, a specific family was singled out for Priestly duties. Moshe was commanded to "draw Aaron, together with his sons, close to you, (separating them) from the children of Israel to serve Me as priests".

Priesthood was who they were, not just what they did; a calling, not a profession. Moses sanctified every member of the clan at G-d's direction. They and their descendants had no choice in the process. Should a member of the family attempt to protest, insist on being treated as a regular run-of-the-mill member of society, without onerous duties or subject to excessive demands, it makes no difference. "You are a Kohen," he was told, "you must live up to your responsibilities.

"For whatever reason, you have been chosen for a different role. Don't, however, think this makes you special; there is no reason for arrogance. Being singled out for greatness should not be a source of pride, rather it demands a sense of humility as you deal with your greater burden."

The same is true about every single one of us. In some way, shape or form there is a task waiting for each of us that no one else on this world can fulfil. You may not welcome your task; you may rail against your burden; but it is yours, and yours alone, to accomplish.

# Slice of LIFE

## The Power of Kiddush

By Avi Elkharrat

I am what they call a Sephardic Jew. My father was born and raised in Morocco, and my mother's family moved from Tunisia to France when she was six years old. Until he turned sixteen, my dad was partly raised by his grandfather, a well-respected and learned rabbi.

My parents met while studying medicine in Paris. At the time, neither of them were particularly religious. My dad, living on his own in Paris, had somehow lost most of the observance and traditions he had been raised with. My mom's family was driven to weed out much of their Jewish tradition, so that they could fit in.

For most of my childhood and adolescence, I was raised by my Tunisian grandparents, while my parents, both physicians, were busy saving lives. My grandparents were so-called "traditionalists." They kept whatever Jewish tradition fit easily into their lives, and discarded any practices that did not match the image of a suburban Parisian family.

Kosher food, for example, was flexible and rather blurry, along with many other observances. After all, their children were doctors and intellectuals; why did they need some crazy rabbi telling them what to do, and when to do it? I also recall celebrating Passover and other Jewish holidays on Sunday evening rather than the correct date, because that was the most convenient time for the family to gather.

There was, though, one mitzvah that my grandpa cherished and upheld as far back as I can remember, and up until he became unable to stand: kiddush. The blessing sanctifying the Shabbat, recited over a cup of wine every Friday night.

There is a Tunisian alcoholic beverage made from figs, called

bucha. My grandpa (who didn't have the opportunity to get a proper Torah education) used to recite the traditional wine blessing, Borei p'ri hagefen ("... Who creates the fruit of the vine"), on bucha, which certainly seems funny when one understands the meaning of the blessing, said over grape juice and wine...

But to the youngster that I was, it made all the sense in the world.

It meant Friday night. It meant "couscous boulettes" for dinner. It meant the comfort and protection of family togetherness, loving care and tenderness. When I recall those Shabbat dinners, I am filled with warm and wonderful memories.

Grandpa used to sing kiddush with the melodic, beautiful tones of Tunisian liturgy, a surprising mixture of Arabic and Jewish sounds, recalling with both joy and envy the sixth day when creation ended and G-d finally rested.

Each cousin added his or her personal touch to our Friday night gatherings. One cousin sewed a kippah (traditional head covering for men) with antennas for Grandpa, which he wore religiously. Sometimes we danced, sometimes we sang along with Grandpa, and sometimes we answered the traditional response, "Amen."

Then we grew up, and all the cousins carved out their own paths. I went to university to study physics. Somewhere along the road, I started recreating the link with my Jewish self.

At twenty-six, I decided it was time for me to find a nice Jewish girl to marry. My grandma's sister said to me, "If you're not willing to be even a little religious, you'll never find a nice Jewish girl to marry." Her words penetrated my solid heart, and little by little I started avoiding certain foods; I started reading about the weekly Torah portion; and that was just the beginning.

While working on my thesis, I was invited to spend a couple of weeks in Prague, working with a team of researchers whose subject of study

was closely related to mine. I enjoyed having a lively bunch of fellow students to spend my free time with, but quite strangely, no one was available on Friday night.

I decided to eat in a restaurant near my hotel, and right in the middle of this lonely meal, far from my family, I suddenly recalled that it was Friday night and that I was missing kiddush! I asked the waiter to bring me a glass of vodka (the closest thing to the traditional bucha my grandpa was using). Holding the glass of vodka in my right hand, I mumbled what I could remember of kiddush (and it was a pretty lousy amount), with the song-like tones that Grandpa used (these I remembered well).

At that very moment, I felt connected.

There, in a lonely restaurant in Prague, I felt the joy of Shabbat shine inside of me. I didn't know it then, but I was changing. And kiddush had called me back. Kiddush reminded me that I was Jewish, that I had something special to do on this Friday evening, and that it was closely related to family, joy, singing, dancing and bucha.

That experience became the turning point for me. I started becoming more observant. I went to the synagogue for Shabbat services, I bought tefillin, I ate kosher food. And when I recited kiddush on my own, I used the same beautiful tones that I had learned from Grandpa.

How do I understand this story, now that I am fully observant?

From where I stand now, I see that a broken kiddush, said wrongly, with little comprehension of the text and its meaning, kept the thread of Judaism alive in a boy who knew only that he was Jewish.

This broken kiddush awoke the dormant sentiment of Judaism inside me, in an unlikely place, at an unlikely time.

I call it the power of kiddush, but in more general terms, it is the power of a mitzvah. The power of kiddush taught me that no matter how religious one's family, no matter how far one may be from Judaism, it is never too late to do a mitzvah. And who knows where that may lead?

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the

**Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

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ISSUE 1387

B"H

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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## The potential of a Rebbe to elevate a person to a level equivalent to the Kohen Gadol

Greetings and blessings,

[I received your] letter with a note concerning what is written in Kuntreis Chag HaShavuos, 5711, [Sefer HaMaamarim 5711,] p. 278: Der Kohen Gadol, macht der Rebbe; "[The Divine service of] the Kohen Gadol, the Rebbe achieves." In my notes to the text, I stated that the intent there is somewhat [unclear and] requires analysis. You sought to explain the matter based on what is stated in Avodas Yisrael (by the Maggid of Koznitz) in the discourse regarding Yom Kippur, that tzaddikim elevate the Kohen Gadol and the sheliach tzibbur.

This does not appear to me to be the intent, because at present, there is no Kohen Gadol, and if his intent was the sheliach tzibbur, the fundamental point is not present in the text, [for no mention is made of him]. In my opinion, the intent is that the Rebbe Rashab explained the spiritual counterparts to all [the dimensions of] the service of the Beis HaMikdash in the individual Divine service that a person must bring about within his soul. When he reached [the service of] the Kohen Gadol, he said: to reach something comparable to the spiritual service of the Kohen Gadol, this is accomplished by the Rebbe. Once that is accomplished, a person who is motivated can carry out the spiritual equivalent of the service of the Kohen Gadol.

If this is the intent, there are two seemingly contradictory new concepts brought out by this teaching:

a) that everyone is obligated to carry out the service of the Kohen Gadol; as obvious, this refers to its spiritual counterpart. (See Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh, Epistle 29, [which states that every person will reincarnate until he fulfills all the mitzvos.] "except the mitzvos concerning a king," without making a similar exception regarding the mitzvos that concern a Kohen Gadol. See Shaar HaGilgulim, Hakdamah 11 and 16; Shaloh, the beginning of Chelek Torah Shebichsav, the introduction to Toldos Yaakov Yosef).

b) That it is impossible for him to begin this service until, at the outset, he is given assistance in becoming a Kohen Gadol.

Further analysis is still required.

With blessings for your recovery in the near future,

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

### Are Unicorns Real?

**Question:** Does Judaism believe in unicorns? I once heard that the Torah says they really do exist!

**Answer:** Yes, we do believe in unicorns. I have seen one. And I bet you have too.

The Torah relates that the Israelites made a Mishkan, a portable temple in the desert. G-d instructed them to make one of the roof coverings out of the skin of a mysterious animal called a tachash.

Our sages described the tachash as a desert animal with a stunning multicolored hide and one horn in the middle of its head. The tachash appeared suddenly when the Mishkan was being built, then disappeared without a trace, never to be seen again.

There is a powerful message behind this enchanting description. The building of the Temple is a symbol of our life mission to create a home for G-d in this world, to shape our lives into a sanctuary where holiness can dwell.

Life is made up of many fleeting moments. The years fly by, the days come and go, and opportunities appear and disappear—like the tachash—here today and gone tomorrow.

Each one of these moments is multicolored, multifaceted and multilayered. We have good days and not-such-good days. Even on a good day there can be some challenges, and on a not-such-good day there are blessings as well.

As many colors of the day as there are, there is only one horn pointing straight ahead. Everything we face, every day of our lives, all point in one direction. We are all here for a short while, to fulfill our mission to make our world kinder and happier. Every interaction we have, every experience we go through, every person we meet and every place we go comes to one point: make this moment a holy moment.

So you have seen the mysterious tachash. It is the beautiful moment you are living right now. It will soon disappear. Grab it by the horn.

## A WORD

from the Director

*This week's Torah portion, Tetzaveh, is the only portion in the Torah, from Moses' birth and on, where Moses' name does not appear. It is also the portion usually read during the week in which the anniversary of Moses' passing (7 Adar) occurs.*

*Our Sages explain that the reason for this omission was Moses' own request, made of G-d after the Children of Israel sinned with the golden calf: "If You will not forgive them, blot me out, I pray you, from Your book which You have written." The words of a tzadik, a righteous person, are always fulfilled, even if spoken conditionally. Thus, Moses' wish was granted in this week's portion.*

*However, we find an interesting phenomenon in Tetzaveh: This portion, which specifically does not mention Moses, begins with a direct address to him! "And you shall command (ve'ata tetzaveh)."*

*A name is a means of identification and of being known to others. But one does not need a name in order to live. The use of "you" expresses an even higher level of relationship than calling a person by his given name. If such is the case, then it follows that the omission of Moses' name underscores the very special essence of Moses, which was even higher than the mention of his name could express.*

*Moses' whole life was Torah. Yet, Moses was willing to sacrifice that which he held most dear on behalf of the sinners of the Jewish people. "Blot out my name from Your book," Moses pleaded with G-d, "if You will not forgive them even this grave sin".*

*Moses and the Jews formed one entity, each of whose existence was dependent upon the other. Rashi explains; "Moses is Israel, and Israel is Moses." It was Moses' self-sacrifice that expresses a unity beyond mere names. It is therefore precisely the portion in which Moses is not mentioned, that reveals his greatness. The willingness to sacrifice oneself for every fellow Jew, even one who sins, is the mark of every true leader of the Jewish People.*

J. I. Gutnick

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## Saved From the Monastery

By Asharon Baltazar

When Rabbi Schneur Zalman was still a young student under the tutelage of the famed Maggid of Mezerich, he boarded at a house owned by a local widow. One day, the young scholar arrived home to find his landlady on the floor wailing hysterically. Her only son, she sobbed, had decided to convert to Christianity, and was being held in a locked room in a monastery.

"Don't worry," Rabbi Schneur Zalman comforted her, "with G-d's help, we will bring your son back."

Bringing this woman's plight to the Maggid would be difficult. The Maggid stayed locked in his room throughout most of the day, which enabled him to quietly contemplate Torah. And outside his door stood his wary attendant, who was adept at keeping people away when the master wished to be alone.

"Listen to what I say," Rabbi Schneur Zalman said to the widow. "Tomorrow, Friday afternoon, while the attendant is away from the door for his pre-Shabbat bath, I will be able to open the door for you. Do not waste a second. Run inside and inform the Maggid of your dilemma."

The next day, Rabbi Schneur Zalman took advantage of the attendant's absence to open the door for the distraught widow. Inside, the Maggid, who was occupied with his spiritual preparations for the holy day of Shabbat, did not expect a strange woman to burst into his room, weeping uncontrollably. But the poor woman was so shattered that she stood silently at the door, unable to emit a single word. Apparently seeing no use for the interruption, the Maggid waved his hand, signaling her to leave. The woman emerged from the brief audience shattered and bitterly disappointed with herself.

But Rabbi Schneur Zalman was confident that the Maggid knew of the widow's misery down to the last detail. Righteous people, after all, are not bound by the conventional ways of learning information.

After the widow left, the Maggid did not make any mention of her or the purpose of her visit. But when the attendant returned from the bathroom, the Maggid suddenly instructed all of his students to enter his room to welcome the Shabbat together. Despite the unusual nature of the request, the group heeded the Maggid's words.

Immediately after prayers, the attendant rushed to set the table for the evening meal. Generally lengthy and peppered with mystical Torah insights, the Shabbat meal was eaten in a hurry, again leaving the students wondering at their master's unusual behavior. Grace After Meals was recited promptly after the meal.

All this time, the Maggid maintained deep concentration and spoke with a booming and forceful tone, a marked departure from the unassuming voice the students usually heard. Torah insights, the likes of which were never heard before, were expounded upon, his holy words interspersed with the occasional call to "listen, my brothers, to the Torah's sweetness."

Of all the students, only Rabbi Schneur Zalman knew the reason for the unusual change in routine. He sensed that from the moment the widow left the Maggid's office, the Maggid busied himself with reigning in her son's soul.

Then a mighty wind began to roar outside, steadily picking up speed. By this point, the Maggid's face was shining like a glowing torch. The students listened with growing trepidation to the wind that howled violently around them.

Boom!

Something thudded against one of the walls of the house and the students, concerned that the roof would collapse from the wind, bolted out of their seats. Unperturbed, the Maggid stopped his discourse and turned to his attendant: "Quickly take him to the nearby inn," he ordered.

The attendant hurried out the door and immediately stopped in his tracks. Lying on the ground outside the house was the widow's son, softly weeping. The attendant did not waste a second and proceeded to whisk the son away to the inn.

After the attendant left, the Maggid's serious demeanor, which had persisted throughout the entire evening, transitioned to joy, and he finished the discourse on a euphoric note. The Maggid then retired to his room, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman headed for the inn, curious to learn what led to the son's seemingly impossible release from the second floor of the monastery.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman found the young man sitting on the bed and reading the weekly Torah portion with large tears streaming down his face.

"How did you escape?" Rabbi Schneur Zalman asked gently.

The widow's son paused his tearful reading and began to tell his story.

"The beginning of my escape started two hours before nightfall. I was lying on my bed in a small cell on the monastery's second floor, determined to follow through with my choice. No amount of convincing would have made me change my mind. But then I had an overwhelming bout of longing for the G-d of my people, an urgent need to leave and reestablish my connection with the Jewish faith.

"I bolted from my bed and quickly strode to the cell door, intending to break it down. But the door remained steadfastly bolted from the outside. Discouraged, I collapsed back on my bed for about half an hour. But the pangs of yearning and love toward Judaism continued to intensify until I sensed my materialistic desires give away. This is how a dead person must feel, I thought; none of the things that had mattered so much to me seemed to have any consequence anymore.

"Lying there in bed, becoming more restless by the moment, I understood that this love could not have developed from myself. G-d was actively trying to protect my Jewish soul from self-destruction.

"Again, I unsuccessfully struggled to break down the door. There was no way out. I slumped on the bed, tears streaking my cheeks, and began to deliberate with myself. If G-d allowed me to experience this indescribable arousal of G-dly love, I had no doubt that He would surely come to my aid. I had to continue to try.

"I walked over to the cell's small window. I pushed it and, to my relief, it swung open. However, peering over the precarious ledge in the failing light, I was greeted by the sight of the hard flagstones far below. To jump from this height would leave all of my bones shattered, and even the prospect of a Jewish funeral was nonexistent. I was unsure what to do next.

"I rethought my decision several times, and made my way to the window, only to be discouraged again and again by the sheer drop.

"Darkness had already set in when I suddenly felt my legs dash across the room, leap onto the windowsill and carry me through the open window. I landed miraculously intact, aside from some minor pain in my feet. Despite this, my excitement was short lived. During my brief stay in the monastery, I had learned of the vicious dogs who guarded the premises. Chained away during the day, the dogs were set loose on the monastery grounds at night. Even if I managed to fend them off, their barking could easily alert the priests, who would surely take me back, and who knew what they would do to me then?

"G-d will help, I thought, and fearlessly strode towards the pack of dogs. They bounded towards me excitedly and circled around me eagerly, as though reuniting with one of their masters. Thankfully, they also kept silent, and I was able to slink cautiously across the monastery grounds. But then my heart fell. A towering stone wall separated me from my freedom. Topped with sharp spikes and the height of two men, the wall surrounded the monastery, its smooth surface providing no grip. It was impossible to scale.

"Raising my eyes once more, I pleadingly explained to G-d that I had tried everything that was humanly possible to escape, risking my life in the process. Now, standing beside the wall, I had nothing more to do.

"I was answered in the most incredible way. A strong gale immediately swept me off my feet and lifted me into the air. I was tossed over the unpassable wall and into the sky, tumbling over the countryside until I landed right beside the Maggid's house."

Displaying a zeal and aptitude that he had never known before, the young man applied himself to Torah study and the performance of good deeds for the rest of his days.

Years later, when Rabbi Schneur Zalman would have his own followers, he would recount this story on numerous occasions (noting that the young man's change of heart happened right around the time the Maggid began his devotions), testifying to the Maggid's greatness.

## PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

G-d tells Moses to receive from the children of Israel pure olive oil to feed the "everlasting flame" of the menorah, which Aaron is to kindle each day, "from evening till morning."

The priestly garments, to be worn by the kohanim (priests) while serving in the Sanctuary, are described. All kohanim wore: 1) the ketonet—a full-length linen tunic; 2) michnasayim—linen breeches; 3) mitznefet or migba'at—a linen turban; 4) avnet—a long sash wound above the waist.

In addition, the kohen gadol (high priest) wore: 5) the efod—an apron-like garment made of blue-, purple- and red-dyed wool, linen and gold thread; 6) the choshen—a breastplate containing twelve precious stones inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; 7) the me'il—a cloak of blue wool, with gold bells and decorative pomegranates on its hem; 8) the tzitz—a golden plate worn on the forehead, bearing the inscription "Holy to G-d."

Tetzaveh also includes G-d's detailed instructions for the seven-day initiation of Aaron and his four sons—Nadav, Avihu, Elazar and Itamar—into the priesthood, and for the making of the golden altar, on which the ketoret (incense) was burned.

## CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 15 - 16 February	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	8:01	8:59
Adelaide	7:52	8:49
Brisbane	6:15	7:08
Darwin	6:58	7:48
Gold Coast	6:14	7:07
Perth	6:49	7:44
Sydney	7:30	8:26
Canberra	7:41	8:37
Launceston	7:58	8:59
Auckland	8:01	8:58
Wellington	8:08	9:08
Hobart	8:00	9:02
Byron Bay	7:14	8:08

## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, ST KILDA EAST

### PARSHAS TETZAVEH • 10 ADAR ALEPH • 15 FEBRUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	MINCHA	8.05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	8.35 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	10.09 AM
	SHACHRIS	10.00 AM
	MINCHA	7.55 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS	8.59 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	8.00 PM
	MARIV	8.55 PM