

# LAMPLIGHTER

12 Iyar  
Parshas  
Emor  
**1400**  
17 May  
5779/2019

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Emor, contains laws addressed particularly to the "Kohanim," or Priestly Order.

After the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, sacrifices were discontinued and the three daily prayer services were instituted in their place. There are many aspects of the daily prayers that parallel the laws in the offering of sacrifices. In addition, some of the preliminary prayers recount the actual sacrificial procedures.

In certain prayer rites, it is customary to recite daily prior to the morning prayers: "I hereby accept upon myself the mitzva of 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Two questions come to mind concerning this preface to prayer: What is the connection between this precept and prayer, to make it a fitting introduction? Second, how can one possibly be expected to love another person just as he loves himself?

Chasidic philosophy considers all Jews as one complete body, with each individual Jew corresponding to one of the body's organs. Some parallel the "head," others the "body," and yet others the "feet." Anyone who has ever experienced the pain of an ingrown toenail will be fully aware that a pain even in the lowest part of the body can impair the functioning of the head by causing an inability to concentrate or think clearly. This certainly illustrates that the body, with all its organs and limbs, is a completely integrated system.

Likewise, within the "body" of Jewry a malfunction in the "feet" can seriously disturb the "head." We find that the greatest Jewish sages, the most refined of people, would say Vidui, a prayer expressing remorse for such sins as stealing, committing violent acts, etc. For although they were far removed from such misdeeds, they felt a personal involvement with those Jews who had transgressed, and consequently considered themselves affected by their sins.

In light of the above explanation, we may understand how one can love another as oneself; for the entire Jewish people are one integrated "body" and every Jew has a part of himself within his fellow-Jew. Hence, in loving his fellow he is really showing affection for a part of himself!

Likewise, a Jew with hatred in his heart for another is really hating and rejecting a part of himself. By hating himself, the person becomes like a maimed sacrifice which was disqualified from being offered, or a "maimed" Priest, who was disqualified from offering sacrifices.

The connection between "Love your neighbor as yourself" and prayer becomes clear. In order to be able to stand in prayer before G-d, whole, not disfigured by hatred of others, we must first make a commitment to perform the mitzva of loving one's neighbor.

## The Reward of Teaching

*By Rabbi Ben A.*

"Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them..."

This week's portion begins with G-d's command to Moses to speak to the priests about the special laws and restrictions applicable to them.

What is the meaning of the seeming redundancy: "Speak to the priests... and say to them"? The traditional explanation recorded in the Talmud is that Moses must not only tell the priests about the laws they must follow, but see to it that the adult priests in turn teach their children what Moses had taught them. The original Hebrew of the Talmud reads: "lehazhir — (literally, to warn) the elders regarding the youngsters."

The word le hazhir can also mean "to shine." So, one could alternatively read the sentence, "To cause the elders to shine regarding the youngsters."

What is the connection between these two variant readings?

When one is given the responsibility to educate another, rather than viewing the obligation as an added burden, they should know that it is actually an opportunity for them, the teacher, to gain even more from teaching than the student gains from learning. It is the teacher's interaction with the student that causes the teacher to be enlightened. When the elder "warns" the youngster, the elder "shines." Along these same lines, there is a Chasidic saying that whenever one takes time away from one's own spiritual pursuits to assist and instruct another, his heart and mind are refined one thousand times.

For people in recovery, this principle is well known. When we turn our attention toward the needs of others who suffer from our disease, we may or may not always be able to help, but — if our concern for our fellow is genuine — we ourselves always benefit from the interaction. Time and again, we see that "giving away what we have been so freely given is fundamental to our continued sobriety."

One should not fool oneself into believing that by answering the Twelfth Step's call to "carry the message" that they are somehow making a sacrifice for the benefit of others. On the contrary, they are the one who benefits most. Experience tells us that when we don't give back, we often find ourselves struggling to maintain our own sobriety, while if we dedicate ourselves to helping other addicts, we are invariably strengthened in our own recovery. Indeed, we are disproportionately illuminated, enlightened and refined in a manner that cannot be achieved any other way. It is uniquely through our efforts with others that we truly shine.

# Slice of LIFE

## Making Peace

By Anonymous

For years, I was angry at my Aunt Arlene.

Before I was angry, I had always liked her. Growing up, whenever we met the Boston Leventhals at my grandmother's home in Philadelphia, Arlene would entertain us for hours with slideshows of her family's most recent hikes and adventures, or news of a revolutionary Political Science research project she had just begun at her university, or anecdotes about the many fascinating people she had recently befriended - punctuated, as always, with one of her infectious belly-laughs. I had always looked up to my aunt, uncle, and cousins from Boston. Before we children would set off from my grandmother's downtown apartment for the neighborhood playground, my mother would warn me and my sisters to stick close to our cousins who "know their way around the city." She didn't say this just because our cousins were older than us and were more familiar with Philadelphia than we were. It was that there was something worldlier, more sophisticated about my cousins than us Pittsburgh Leventhals. When we played follow-the-leader, stepping one by one across the logs surrounding the playground, the Boston Leventhals always led, and my sisters and I always followed.

My cousins were also far more knowledgeable in matters of Judaism than my sisters and me. While we attended two hours of "Cultural Studies" every Sunday morning at our Reform temple, my cousins attended a liberal Jewish day school where my uncle was a teacher for many years. At the family Passover Seder, my cousin Susie drew approving nods from my grandmother when she would comment on the grammar of Hebrew words in the Haggadah. I have rarely felt longing more keen than I felt in the shadow of my cousins' awe-inspiring Jewish wisdom.

Things started turning rocky between Aunt Arlene and me when I attended her son's wedding a few months after I completed law school.

Shortly before the wedding, I had started becoming traditionally observant. My extended family reacted to my very-unexpected "conversion" with great ambivalence. I was not sure what to expect when I would see them for the first time at my cousin's wedding.

My cousin got married on the shore of a breathtaking blue lake, as the sun set behind the couple and their hand-embroidered chupah. Jason had always been my favorite cousin, and I adored his bride, whom Jason had been dating since their senior prom. But still, no

matter how much I loved the couple, I did not feel a part of the festive toast-making and dancing and merrymaking that was taking place all around me.

At that point in my life, I still knew very little about Judaism. I had learned a little about keeping kosher, and wearing skirts, and taping light switches into place on Friday afternoon. But I had learned enough to know that no matter how much I loved Jason and his bride, the fact that Jason would be the first Leventhal in history to marry a non-Jewish woman meant that what was happening underneath that hand-made chuppah, the Jewish marriage canopy, was in fact, a tragedy of monumental proportions.

At the table of drinks, I ran into my Aunt Arlene. "Mazal Tov!" I lied, "What a wonderful wedding!" I forced myself to smile. Arlene smiled back, baring her teeth. I told Arlene how much I would love to see an album of photographs she had found of my grandparents' wedding. "Why would you want to see it?" she challenged me. "Your grandmother wasn't married in an Orthodox ceremony!" She spewed the word "Orthodox" as she might have if she were saying the words "ridiculous" or "disgusting" or "unforgivable."

Soon afterwards, I moved to Israel and I lost touch with my Aunt Arlene. And that was the way I wanted it. I was angry at her. Very angry.

I spent the next two years totally immersed in study of Jewish philosophy, the Bible, and the nitty-gritty details of Jewish law. And every year before Yom Kippur, our teachers would lecture us on the importance of not holding grudges, of making peace.

So every Yom Kippur I thought of Aunt Arlene, but I did nothing. I decided to stay angry.

At the end of those two years, I got engaged. I decided that this was the perfect opportunity to patch things up with Aunt Arlene and to move on. I sent a fax to Arlene to tell her the good news. There was no response. I sent her a wedding invitation with a handwritten note. Arlene didn't RSVP. I waited for a present to arrive for months, and then years. But it never came. She didn't even send a card.

So I stayed angry. One Yom Kippur passed, and then another. I had one child and then another. Eight Yom Kippur's passed, then nine. I grew older, and my Aunt Arlene grew older too.

When Arlene celebrated her 60th birthday, I sent a card congratulating her. She wrote back and congratulated me on the birth of my third child a few months before. The moment I saw her return address on the envelope, eleven years worth of bad feelings disappeared like water soaked up into a sandy beach. It was almost as though I had never been angry at all.

By the time we flew to America for a family Bar Mitzvah last year, I was looking forward to seeing my Aunt Arlene. It had been thirteen years since I had last spoken with her by that

table of drinks.

At the Bar Mitzvah, the moment I walked into the hall, Arlene pushed herself up with effort out of her chair. "It is so wonderful to see you!" She puckered her lips and gave me a big, noisy kiss on the cheek, followed by a big bear hug. I knew at that moment that it had been worth it to travel that whole way, just to feel myself in her arms - like the little girl I had once been in the embrace of her beloved aunt.

I told her that her grandson, the Bar Mitzvah boy, had read beautifully from the Torah. She told me, "I've never liked the services here so much. To tell you the truth, I've always preferred the Chabad synagogue," and she winked and flashed me a mischievous smile.

In the months following the Bar Mitzvah, Arlene and I emailed back and forth a few times. She had neighbors visiting Israel, could they contact me? She had a colleague who was writing a book about the Middle East peace process, could he call me to get my feedback? Maybe she and my uncle could come visit us the following Chanukah, what did I think?

I was due to give birth that December, so I told her that I was afraid it wasn't going to work out. They could come some other time, I thought. On the first night of Chanukah, I gave birth to a baby girl whom we named Shoshana Raizel. We named our daughter after my grandmother, who had passed away the previous summer.

A few days after the birth, I received the following email.

Congratulations on the birth of your daughter Shoshana Raizel. I am pleased and deeply moved with the recognition of my mother, of blessed memory. I am sure this honor you have bestowed upon her is something that would have brought my mother great happiness.

Love to all from Aunt Arlene

What a sweet feeling, I later told my husband. In Arlene's eyes, her wayward niece had finally done good.

I emailed Arlene back that same day, but I never heard back from her.

And, it turns out, I never will.

The week after I received that email, my older sister left me a message that I should call her back as soon as possible. And somehow, I knew right away.

When my sister told me that Arlene had died, I felt very sad. I also felt a feeling that surprised me. I felt tremendous relief.

Thank G-d, I realized, that Aunt Arlene and I had forgiven each other in time! What a terrible tragedy to hold onto anger until it is too late to forgive and forget.

How fragile, how volatile, are our relationships with those who are closest to us. How careful we must be with our families, immediate and extended - the human beings we can hate the most fiercely, or if we would only open our hearts, love the most dearly.

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ISSUE 1400

B"H

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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## A secretary's responsibility in a synagogue

This letter was sent to R. Menachem Nachum Auerbach, the secretary of Congregation Bnei Yisrael in Chicago.

26 Tammuz, 5711,  
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

Via the chassidic communal leader, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht, I received your request for blessing, for your son Meir Zaev who is presently in Korea.

When I visit the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, I will read your letter. May it be G-d's will that you be able to share good news with me very soon.

I see that you are listed as the secretary on the stationery of the Bnei Yisrael Synagogue. Certainly, as is the custom throughout the United States, the secretary is the active force [and the source] of vitality for the synagogue; the energy and life-force of the synagogue is dependent on him.

In particular, what is most important is the spiritual life of the synagogue: whether there are public study sessions in the synagogue and what is the nature of the prayer services on the nights following (i.e., Motzaei) Shabbos and festivals. Certainly, it is superfluous to motivate you regarding the importance of this matter. Nevertheless, I [am doing so,] relying on our Sages' dictum: "One only motivates the eager."

I would like to call your attention to the great importance of reciting the daily portion of Tehillim (as divided according to the monthly cycle) every day after the Morning Service. [Also,] you should endeavor that the Evening Service on Saturday night be conducted in a manner that will not lead to the desecration of the Shabbos. Also of great importance is to make sure that the mourners who come to [the shul to] recite Kaddish also put on tefillin. Many times, this is the way to habituate them to put on tefillin throughout their lives. There are many details of this nature that you, as one who knows the local situation and the character of the congregants, can appreciate on site. Through such details, you can increase the vitality of the synagogue and those who pray there, making them "live Jews." And, to cite the adage of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, "G-d does not remain a debtor." He repays "measure for measure," granting long life and an increase in life for all those who work in the above matters, that they and the members of their households be blessed through "the lamp of mitzvah, the light of the Torah, and the path of life" in everything that they need.

You will certainly inform me of good news about your son. I will conclude with good wishes for all the congregants. Tell them that our Sages called a synagogue "a sanctuary in microcosm." Conduct that is befitting "a sanctuary in microcosm" prepares us for, and precipitates, the hastening of the building of the Third Beis HaMikdash by Mashiach.

With blessing,

Enclosed is a receipt for your donation that was given to Lishkas Chasha'in. Gifts [given in this manner] represent one of the highest levels of gifts to charity.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*This Tuesday is Lag B'Omer, the yartzeit of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. The Rashbi, as he is known, was the first Jewish sage to reveal the esoteric teachings of the Torah in his Zohar, which eventually led to the development of Chasidus. The fundamental objective of all mystical teachings of the Torah is to reveal the underlying G-dliness of creation.*

*The essence of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's life is perhaps best expressed in a story related in the Midrash. When one of his disciples left the Land of Israel and became very wealthy, the other disciples were jealous. The Rashbi led them all to a valley outside Meron and cried out, "Ravine, ravine, fill up with golden dinars," whereupon the ravine was instantly filled with coins. The Rashbi told his students they could take as many as they liked; however, they should know that they would be taking away from their reward in the World to Come. The golden coins remained untouched.*

*The Torah is the source of all blessing, both material and spiritual. If we keep the Torah's laws, G-d promises us an abundance of blessing. During the exile, this direct, causal relationship is often obscured. But in the Messianic era it will be open and apparent.*

*Because the Rashbi was on such a high spiritual level, the exile did not prevent him from perceiving the world as it really exists. The gold coins gave his students a tangible demonstration of the Torah as the ultimate source of all blessing on the material plane.*

*This contains a timely lesson for our own times, on the threshold of Moshiach's arrival. By studying the Torah's mystical teachings, primarily Chasidus, we can also begin to perceive the underlying truth of existence. In fact, this is especially important now, as our Sages have likened our generation to the generation of the Rashbi.*

*Happy Lag B'Omer!*

*J. I. Gutterman*

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

### Why Pray at the Western Wall?

By Tzvi Freeman

**Question:** *Why do Jews pray at the Western Wall (or Wailing Wall) in Jerusalem? It seems redundant and out of place praying facing a wall, when one can pray in a synagogue or at home or anywhere, and G-d will listen to their prayers. Is G-d more prone to listen and answer prayers recited at the Western Wall than at other locations?*

**Answer:** I think what you're really asking is: If G-d is everywhere, why should prayer be more effective in one place than another? In truth, the same can be asked regarding praying in a synagogue vs. praying at home.

The question has been asked many times before in classical Jewish literature. The following answer was given by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), the first rebbe of Chabad.

The essence of his answer is that although G-d is everywhere, His light shines stronger in some places than in others. He compares this to the human body: You are everywhere in your body, yet you are far more conscious of your mind than of your toes. So too, in the universe that G-d created, there are places, times and states of being where we are able to be more aware of Him—and it is from those places/times/states that our prayers can fly best.

Any person is able to create for himself a time of day and a special place from which he or she reaches out to G-d. And we all should—somewhere in our homes or gardens, set aside a place of prayer and meditation, along with a time of day or week that we sit there and connect. Even more special is a place that was chosen not just by us, but by G-d as well. And that is the Temple Mount, which G-d chose as His dwelling place in the time of King David.

Ever since then, that specialness has never left the Western Wall, the only remnant left standing.

The Talmud tells us that every synagogue is a "minor Holy Temple." Thus the above also applies—in smaller measure—to any location designated to be a house of worship for G-d.

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## Crossroads Puzzle

By Yerachmiel Tilles

One Friday, the Chassidic master Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz (the famed "Seer of Lublin") was traveling with some of his disciples when they arrived at a fork in the road. The wagon driver asked which way to turn. Surprisingly, the "Seer" didn't seem to know what to answer. Shrugging, he said, "Loosen the reins. Let the horses go in whichever direction they will."

After a while, they arrived at a town. After several inquiries, they soon realized that not only was this not the place they were seeking, they weren't even on the right road.

"It's late. We'll stay here for Shabbat," the Seer announced. Then he added, "But don't reveal my identity to anyone or tell them that I am a Rebbe."

His followers were shocked. They had no money because the Seer never allowed any to be kept overnight. However much he had in his possession would be distributed to poor people before nightfall. If his identity were to be kept secret, how would they be able to provide for themselves for Shabbat?

When they asked him, he replied, "We'll do like all Jewish travelers. We'll go to the local shul tonight, and people will invite us when they see we have no place to go."

And so they did. They prayed at the back of the shul, and afterwards, all of the Rebbe's students and attendants were invited individually to different homes. The Seer, however, was left in the shul. He always took a long time for the Shabbat evening prayers, and this week was no exception. By the time he finished, everyone was gone.

In fact, there was just one other person in the shul, an old man of at least eighty years. He saw that the stranger was sitting and reciting Tikunei Shabbat (selected passages usually recited during the course of the meal on Friday night).

"Where are you going for your Shabbat meal?" he opened.

"I don't know."

"Why don't you eat at the inn where you are staying?" asked the elderly man, concerned. "If it is a problem of money, after Shabbat I'll collect some money to pay your bill."

"I saw they didn't light Shabbat candles, so I presume that I cannot trust the kashrut of the food they serve."

"I'm sorry," murmured the older man, "but at my home, my wife and I will have only bread and wine."

"I'm neither a glutton nor a guzzler."

"Come along then," said the apprehensive host. The Seer followed meekly.

After kiddush and hamotzi, while they were sitting calmly at the table, the elderly man asked him where he was from. Upon hearing his answer, he next asked him if he knew the Rebbe of Lublin.

"I am always with him," was the Seer's response.

"That's wonderful," said his host. "please tell me something about him."

"Why do you want to know about him?" queried the Seer.

"Because," said the man, "I was his teacher in cheder (school) when he was a young boy, and he was not noticeably exceptional in his studies. Now I hear that he is a great rabbi and does miracles."

"Did you notice anything unusual about him when he was a child?" the Seer asked.

"Only one thing," the retired teacher replied. "Each morning, when I would want to call upon him to read from the siddur, I could never find him. He vanished! Later, when he would re-appear, I would punish him for his unauthorized absence. One day, I decided, 'Enough already! I ought to find out where he disappears to.' I watched him closely out of the corner of my eye. When he exited the room I slipped out after him, keeping a good distance between us so he wouldn't sense my presence. He went into the forest. I followed. I peered through the trees and there he was, sitting next to a hive, being stung, and crying out, Shma Yisrael Ad-ny Elokeinu Ad-ny ehad ('Hear O Israel, the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is one')."

"After that, I never punished him again. Now, after all these years, I would like very much to be able to see him in his glory, but I don't know how it can be. I'm very poor and I've become weak in my old age, so it is impossible for me to make the journey to Lublin. Nevertheless, my desire is so strong, I fast one day a week that I should have the merit to see him with my own eyes."

Finally, the Seer understood why events had been directed to bring him to this particular town. Looking fondly at his host, he acknowledged gently, "I am he, the Rebbe of Lublin."

The old man fainted instantly. His wife and special guest were able to revive him only after great difficulty.

That Saturday night the Seer and his entourage departed the town and continued their journey. The elderly man escorted them briefly and then returned home. They stopped at the Seer's request at a not-too-distant village, in order to enjoy the melaveh malkah repast of Saturday night. After the meal, the Seer said, "Now let us return to that town to attend my childhood teacher's funeral and to deliver an appropriate eulogy."

*Biographical note:*

**R. Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz** (1745 - 1815), known as the **Seer of Lublin**, was the successor to **Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk** (1717-1787), and presided over the spread of Chassidism in Poland. Many of his insights were published posthumously in *Divrei Emmet*, *Zichron Zot*, and *Zot Zichron*.

## PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

The Torah section of Emor ("Speak") begins with the special laws pertaining to the kohanim ("priests"), the kohen gadol ("high priest"), and the Temple service: A kohen may not become ritually impure through contact with a dead body, save on the occasion of the death of a close relative. A kohen may not marry a divorcee, or a woman with a promiscuous past; a kohen gadol can marry only a virgin. A kohen with a physical deformity cannot serve in the Holy Temple, nor can a deformed animal be brought as an offering.

A newborn calf, lamb or kid must be left with its mother for seven days before being eligible for an offering; one may not slaughter an animal and its offspring on the same day.

The second part of Emor lists the annual Callings of Holiness—the festivals of the Jewish calendar: the weekly Shabbat; the bringing of the Passover offering on 14 Nissan; the seven-day Passover festival beginning on 15 Nissan; the bringing of the Omer offering from the first barley harvest on the second day of Passover, and the commencement, on that day, of the 49-day Counting of the Omer, culminating in the festival of Shavuot on the fiftieth day; a "remembrance of shofar blowing" on 1 Tishrei; a solemn fast day on 10 Tishrei; the Sukkot festival—during which we are to dwell in huts for seven days and take the "Four Kinds"—beginning on 15 Tishrei; and the immediately following holiday of the "eighth day" of Sukkot (Shemini Atzeret).

Next the Torah discusses the lighting of the menorah in the Temple, and the showbread (lechem hapanim) placed weekly on the table there.

Emor concludes with the incident of a man executed for blasphemy, and the penalties for murder (death) and for injuring one's fellow or destroying his property (monetary compensation).

## CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 17 - 18 May	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	5:00	5:59
Adelaide	5:02	5:59
Brisbane	4:48	5:43
Darwin	6:11	7:02
Gold Coast	4:46	5:40
Perth	5:09	6:05
Sydney	4:44	5:40
Canberra	4:49	5:46
Launceston	4:43	5:44
Auckland	5:03	6:01
Wellington	4:53	5:54
Hobart	4:38	5:41
Byron Bay	4:44	5:39

## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, ST KILDA EAST

### PARSHAS EMOR • 12 IYAR • 17 MAY

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	MINCHA	5:05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS	5:35 PM
<b>SHABBOS DAY:</b>	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	9:45 AM
	SHACHARIS	10:00 AM
	MINCHA	4:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS	5:59 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM
	MINCHA	5:00 PM
	MAARIV	5:50 PM